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This is the second issue of REVIEW. It is also the last one. My original intentions regarding this magazine were to provide a sounding board for both myself and fandom, which would appear at frequent intervals and keep abreast of current happenings in the field. I felt that by stripping all frills from its production, I might be able to bring it out with the desired frequency. The use of hektography was partly inspired by the ease and rapidity with which it could be used.

But, I, personally, had never before used the process. I was appalled, upon buying my first set, to learn that a 24 hour waiting period was recommended between each usage. I attempted to follow this at first. But heavy shadows resulted even so. Then I discovered the shadows could be removed by washing with lukewarm water. And the hektograph could be used again immediately. This of course gradually wore away the surface of the hektograph. But I felt I could afford to purchase a new hektograph for each issue if necessary. However, this issue required three hektographs to produce. These layers of jelly are so thin that the sponge wears them away after nine or ten uses. So I'm throwing in the sponge. Of course, it is possible to mix the stuff yourself and I could get a deeper pan, but I understand you have to cook it, and, living in hotel rooms, I have access to no fires.

Getting into the mail fast was to be one of REVIEW's strong points. Due to the delays in having to order two hektographs by mail, this issue took over two weeks. And I'm so disgusted with the whole thing that I'm abandoning hektography completely. As explained previously, no other reproduction process for REVIEW is practicable as long as I am on the road, so this means the death of REVIEW. I'll have to admit this saddens me a bit, since I had high hopes for it as an unpretentious mag that could just roll on and on for years, like VOM. But it wasn't to be.

So all of you who have me marked as exchanges on your own fanzine list, kindly cross off my name. I no longer have anything to exchange. WASTEBASKET will probably cease publication after the next issue, and I have small hope of finding any method to continue it, even on an annual basis, as long as I am travelling.

To the half dozen or so of you who said kind things about REVIEW, thanks.



REVIEW is published and edited by Vernon L. McCain. This issue comes to you from Seattle, Washington but all correspondence of any sort should go to the editor at the following address, R.F.D.#3 Hampa, Idaho.

Some of you have asked about REVIEW's frequency. The answer is that REVIEW will appear whenever I feel like it, or to be more specific, whenever I simultaneously muster both the time and energy for the job. I expect that will be on the average of every six weeks, though a bit over that time has elapsed this time.

REVIEW is hoktoed, has no illustrations, no painfully hand-wrought headings, no fancy format...in other words, the simplest possible methods are used. For two reasons. First, because I don't want to make a full-time job out of this magazine but would still like to have it appear fairly frequently. So, whenever I can cut corners to save time I shall do so. Secondly, since much of REVIEW deals with publications currently available, the less time that elapses between ~~their publication~~ their publication and REVIEW's appearance, the better. So most of REVIEW is composed while it is typed. No rewriting is done. No dummying. No justifying. You will find plenty of typos, occasional misspellings, repetition, even poor grammar. Strikeover, such as the one three lines above, will be plentiful. I hope this doesn't offend the sensibilities of my readers, but that's the way it is. REVIEW is to be the ultimate in lack of pretensions. If it will help any, you may consider REVIEW to be a hurried letter which I dashed off to you, but simultaneously to twenty-nine other people.

For those who are reading this magazine for the first time, it is a tradezine. It is available in trade for your magazine. In no other way can you get a subscription, except for the slight exceptions made in this issue and elsewhere. Please don't ask me to put you on the regular mailing list of REVIEW unless you wish to trade. I may be able to squeeze out extra copies for some non-traders occasionally, but I can't guarantee to do it as a regular thing.

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I believe around ten years ago some fanzine specialized in polls. I'm thinking of doing the same with REVIEW. Perhaps not ever issue, but probably every other issue at the minimum, cards would be included asking your views on certain things. Naturally at least one poll a year would be devoted to balloting for the top fan of the year, and another to the top stories. But I think we can think of enough things on which the fan's interest and opinions are of general interest, to make it a year-round affair. The selection would be small, since REVIEW's circulation is limited. But practically all REVIEW readers will be quite active fans, which means their opinions are actually more representative of fandom than the average. Unlike other current polls, I would print complete returns, a complete breakdown, not just the winners. But here's the catch. Will YOU co-operate. You won't even have to pay postage. Just fill them out and mail them in. Will you do it? Do you like the idea. Unless I get a fairly enthusiastic response I'll junk the entire idea. Let me know.

REVIEWING REVIEW.....

This is to be the most important section of REVIEW.....  
but only if you make it that way....otherwise I'll be  
forced to fall back on reviews and columns.

WRAI BALLARD

Blanchard, N.D.

Dear Vernon,

Just got a copy of REVIEW Today, and I'm so flattered at  
being one of the 30 to receive copies, I'll even go so far as  
to answer it on such a hot, humid, heavy night.

Then, too, naturally I'd write to the editor of such a zine...  
any fan should go out of his way to encourage a struggling Neo-fan,  
and no-one but a neo-fan would hecto a zine nowadays. Oddly there  
was a fellow with a name just like yours, used to be in SAPS, and  
put out a printed mag...but if you strive, and seek to improve,  
perhaps someday you too will rise to such heights. I will admit  
this is a very good mag, and the hectoing was good enough that it  
didn't detract from the pleasure of reading it at all. In fact  
this was very good hectoing, and unless I happened to get an  
especially choice copy, it was about the best job of hectoing  
print that I've seen.

Like the idea of the mag, reviews, letters, and just comment  
on anything that you feel like commenting on. It sounds like your  
policy is to use anything you like, and I can't think of a better  
policy for a fan ed to follow. I particularly like your reviews...  
they agree with my ideas in the main...give new slants to things,  
and...heck they just remind me of mailing comments in the APAS,  
and I can enjoy mailing comments. A good fanzine commentary like  
this is something that is needed. In the last year or two I've  
almost stopped getting subscription fanzines...perhaps because they  
were never reviewed in a way that would make me interested enough  
to subscribe. Every once in a while some special zine would get  
an outstanding review, I'd get a copy, and it...OPUS, QUANDRY, and  
one or two others would be on my get list. I still don't care for  
all subscription zines, but there are a few I at least feel like  
getting. I think your reviews this time were about right...not  
too soft, or not too hard...pan stuff if you feel it calls for a  
bit of panning, but go easy on the new comers...when I used to play  
in High School band, we received grades for band work, and the system  
used was a sort of personal one...the director wouldn't grade you on  
just how well you could play, but how well you should play for the  
experience and training you had had. He felt that you should keep  
improving as long as you kept playing, and if he thought a member,  
say the first chair trombone player wasn't improving, or doing as  
good as he should, he'd give him a lower grade, even though the  
first chair player would be by far the best man in his section.  
It looks like you are planning to use the same system in your  
comments, and I'm all for that...what is very good for one fan,  
isn't at all praiseworthy for another. Your reviews of the zines  
I have read seem to hit it exactly.

Like the idea of the review and comments on the pro mags...  
strange that in fandom where we're all supposed to be critics of  
stf mags(at least that's what they tell us in the RHODOMAGNETIC  
DIGEST) few people ever mention pro-stf, let alone review it.  
Nice job of reviewing, I more or less agree with you, except I  
doubt if I liked as many stories as you did...Few stf stories pub-  
lished these days are memorable, although they almost all seem to

be written better than they were years ago. Sometimes it seems like they are all writing, and no story. ((To which I'd like to add a firm amon. This is, expressed in a nutshell, precisely what has been bethering me for some time. GALAXY, in particular, has been a frequent offender in producing this beautifully manufactured, but bodiless, weak tea. v.l.n.))

When mentioning stf stories to a correspondent...I mention stf stories every year or so just to let her know I still read stf. I remarked that THE LOVERS was an unusual story, but outside of the switch in what they'd use in a pulp zine, and its probable place as a turning point in stf, a history making story, it actually wasn't much of a story. Looks like you agreed. Wonder just what the letter column remarks on THE LOVERS will be? Perhaps some of the Star Bogotten will start a CCEZ (CRUSADE to Clean up Pro-Zines) Others will claim it to be the sign that stf is coming of age. Who knows, maybe it is.

Barbara Payton to ~~xxx~~ play the part in THE FOUR SIDED TRIANGLE? Well now I know why I don't get to the movies. Prevision.

So now I come to business...REVIEW is offered in trades for other fansines. Well I don't put out a fanzine, but I do put out a SAPSzine, and further down you put as a special note to Redd Boggs "I will trade for SAPSzines, though, and I've always thought the prettiest of blue are HURKLES".. This may mean that you'll trade for SAPSzines, or it may mean that you'll trade for SAPSzines named HURKLE. Mine is named OUTSIDERS, and enclosed is a copy...

It is legal to read OUTSIDERS now, since the SAPS dead-line was last SATURDAY.

I doubt if I am still on the mailing list for WASTE BASKET, but the only reason I didn't write and ask for it is because you only gave it away. I liked that zine...but I felt guilty getting it for nothing. Sometimes I think I should take time to develop my criminal instincts.

Sincerely

Wrai Ballard

BOB JOHNSON

822 -9th St.  
Greeley, Colo.

I enjoy review. Do keep me on your list. --Sometimes I have the feeling that you're a trifle too violently opinienated, however, Lem. But ~~just~~ I trade ORB FOR IT? This somehow leaves me with the hinkling of an unfair trade. Not that you aren't more erudite and sparkling than lil ol me. It's just that, ORB IS SO EXPENSIVE!  
(No, Bob, you don't have to trade ORB for it. You get this issue because you have a letter in it. Anybody who has a letter printed will get that issue, but only that one. So if you are able to produce a letter I feel is worth printing, and of general interest, each issue, you don't have to worry about trading. Otherwise, it is strictly up to you whether you want REVIEW badly enough to trade ORB for it. I'm perfectly willing to resubscribe to the latter. But REVIEW is a tradezine, and save for the exceptions I've made, it is unavailable otherwise.)  
I thought your fanzine reviews clever. RD features some artwork, carelessly reproduced. and some drud, carelessly reproduced. By

dint of effort, or guardian angel, it occasionally manages to be devastatingly clever. But not very often. I will eventually read the 4-sided tri/. However, Lem, I want to come to blows about dear little Babs. She does not admittedly, have the talent of Marsha Hunt or Cathy O'Donnell. However, she does have the talent of Ella Raines, Jane Wyman, Jean Peters or Nancy Guild. Seldom is she allowed to show it, however. I would be wild to see Marsha Hunt in the movie. However--let us not confuse intelligence, and personal magnetism- with acting perfection... except in the most ultimate tabulation.

Which is, what I think you are doing. Payton is quite close to being brainless. She is quite stupid. Yet, when she can be coaxed into acting, she does it quite credibly. Quite! She has the gift of perfect mimicry, plus the ability to control her movements gracefully, and remember dialogue. And she is astonishingly attractive. Once the director tells her what to do, she appears to be able to complete the finished action creditably. However, she is unable to inherently grasp the drama of a part, and give it a spark of inner warmth. Few actresses really can. Among blondes that could do Triangle, I can think of only a few: Shelley Winters, Dorothy McGuire, maybe Julie Hayden. Among the brunettes...Jan Simmons, Paula Raymond, Nancy Davis, or maybe Cyd Charisse. Undoubtedly, contracts would bar the last one...who would, incidentally, be almost the best. Especially Charisse. Her dramatic pictures have been artistic successes, boxoffice washouts. Nobody has heard of her. -In most s-f movies this is a necessary qualification.

Getting back to Our Barbars. Admittedly she is no Garbo or Davis. Not even a Crawford or a Kerr or a Jones. --But she's got everything that Hayworth, Grable, or Liz Taylor has. And those gals have been making producers and the American Male very happy for almost too many years. And...she costs less.

'Bye now,

Bob

((Well, each man to his tastes, but it's hard for me to see how anyone, except maybe Franchot Tone or Tom Neal, could call Barbara Payton astonishingly attractive. Personally, when it comes to attractive movie stars I'll take Debbie Reynolds or Marlene Dietrich, with various stopoffs in between.))

JAN ROMANOFF

26601 So. Western  
Apt. 341, Lomita, Calif.

I'm surprised very much with this little 'zine. Contrary to what you say in your editorial, the reproduction, considering, was remarkable! And the contents...God, I only wish we could pack half as much interest into forty pages as you manage to squeeze into seven or eight. You would be a fool not to consider making Review a fanzine of quality...providing you could make every issue as interesting as this one was...and you can quote me if you wish..

CHARLES WELLS

405 E 62 St  
Savannah, Ga.

Say, why don't you rate fms like you do pmz stories; i.e. put them on a v.highly rec., and a rec. list.....please mention somewhere in nextish of REVIEW that STUFF has gone FAPA.

## PRO'S PROSE

### AMAZING STORIES -- Sep. '52

The word is that AMAZING is going digest soon. If this means, as I hope it does, that AMZ will be built into a full-fledged sister to FANTASTIC, it will be a great day for stfans. In one sweep, we will have lost two of our worst magazines, AMAZING and FA, and acquired a new quality zine. Of course, after the long and unenviable history of AS, I'd just as soon they'd kill it also. At any rate, such a move will leave only OTHER WORLDS in the godawful category. This issue of AMZ is typically bad. William P. McGivern has a fairish story on an ancient plot structure. And perhaps the hackiest hack of the thirties, John Russel Fearn, missing for some time, has found his way back into print courtesy of Editor Browne.

### ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION -- Aug. '52

Walter M. Miller Jr. isn't exactly another Heinlein. But he's the closest thing to it among the young new authors. And he manages to write more like Heinlein did a decade ago when he was at his best than Heinlein himself does now. His "Cold Awakening" in this issue is just another in the long list of very memorable stories. ....I'm told that gimmick stories are on their way out. Telepathy, telikinosis, all the ESP powers, the van Vogt styled supermen. These are all devices of the adolescent era of stf, 1940-50, and must now be laid aside for deeper probing into the philosophical and cerebral reaches of our coming maturity. Well, if this is so, I wanna stay adolescent. For this type story represents science-fiction ~~and~~ at its most alluring and fascinating, for me. I've always been a sucker for the story of the ordinary man who wakes up one morning to find he's acquired a brand-new above normal power, and I intend to stay that way. Which is undoubtedly why I enjoyed "Love They Neighbor" so much.....Mark Clifton whose first story was most exciting and whose second yarn started off in tremendous fashion, only to slump at the end, disappoints greatly with his third which is a slick and entertaining piece of nothingness.

### RAMBUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES -- Oct. '52

For a brief interlude in early 1945, after a brief acquaintance, a couple of much better than average issues and the wartime generated lack of competition, this was my favorite magazine. But I'm afraid, for me, it has now outlasted its excuse for existence. The one or two outstanding shorts a year fail to compensate the reader for the large amount of outdated trash which is dug up. I can't think of a really entertaining full-length novel FEM has published since 1948 (with the exception of that special issue which featured "The Time Machine" and "Denevan's Brain", both of which can be easily acquired at even a poorly-stocked public library) when they printed the infinitely amusing and UNK-ish "The Devil's Spen".

This issue has Sax Rohmer for those who like him and the best-known (but not best) story by John Collier, "Thus I Refute Beelzebub". This deft little short short is the definitive version of what I feel is the most heavily overworked plot in all fantasy, and that's going some. Since Collier and Tony Boucher have milked the invisible playmate idea of everything it possesses, is it asking too much to request all the lesser writers (including practically everyone among WEIRD TALES contributors) to abandon the idea?

#### FANTASTIC -- Fall '52

If not the brightest new star in the fantastic firmament, this is certainly the newest bright star. Browne lacks something as an editor, but he manages to compensate somewhat by the resources of his pocketbook. Such competent writers as Jerome Bixby and Fritz Leiber stub their toes badly in this issue. But the frequently slick, frothy, and inconsequential Eric Frank Russell produces the pleasant surprise in the issue, a ribald but not off-color piece called "The Sin of Hyacinth Peuch". This has about as much above-board and undisguised sex as I've ever come across in science-fiction, none of it necessary to the ~~story~~ plot. The entire story is told in a tongue-in-cheek manner, depicting the French characters as acting in precisely the manner Americans believe is typical of the French. (And for all the authentic information I have to the contrary they may actually act in this fashion.) It shows the difference between an honest guffaw at the amusing relationship between men and women and a behind-the-hand snigger.....Boucher's "The Star Dummy" is amusing, though hardly monumental. Sturgeon's "The Sex Opposite", distinctly one of his minor and less successful efforts, still manages to make just about every other author in the field look like a blundering amateur. Browne's passion for the detective yarn has induced him to include one out and out mystery "Man in the Dark" without the slightest pretensions toward either sf or fantasy, though H.B. tries to alibi this in the blurb. Truman Capote's "Miriam" impresses me much less than some other things I've read by the most precocious and precious of the younger set. The front cover is in slightly less poor taste than that of the first issue, while the back cover is almost as tremendously arresting and enjoyable as the first in this series, though the omission of the border previously used, tends to cheapen the impression. Whatever else his faults, Howard Browne deserves a vote of thanks for introducing authentic serious art to sf readers, many of whom have never had a chance previously to view anything more profound than the works of Hannes Bok.

#### FANTASTIC SCIENCE FICTION -- Aug. '52

SCOOPS and THRILLS have long had the race for the all-time worst promag strictly to themselves with OUT-OF-THIS-WORLD ADVENTURES holding an uncontested lead in the strictly American category. But there is a new contender for both titles. This magazine is almost unbelievably bad. Printed in girlie format and on the same type paper, it has been buried with those magazines on most stands which is just as well. We doubt if many would buy it after seeing the crude and washed-out batch of a cover anyway. This magazine carries a tremendous staff and stories bearing half a dozen different by-lines. But not one name concerned with this mag is one which has ever been associated with either sf or fandom. The stories seem a trifle more smoothly written than those in some of the earlier defunct mag. But they are just as unreadable, or mayb

a trifle more. I was only able to wade through one story, and the science (?) in it made even me gag, though I've been a longtime opponent of the school which would make the science in each story check out to the final decimal.....If this magazine sees a second issue, I'll be mildly surprised. A Third issue would make me drop dead from pure astonishment. This thing even makes the infamous FANTASY FICTION/FANTASTIC STORIES look good.

#### FANTASTIC STORY MAGAZINE -- Sept. '52

I've been reading and indexing a lot of old magazines in the last year. Among the most recent into which I've delved are WONDER and STARTLING. Of the entire Gernsbach WONDERS, I can think of not a single full-length novel which was really readable. And in the novels printed regularly by STARTLING, I've found only one true classic in all the issues prior to the time when I started reading it regularly in the fall of 1944, co-incidental with the accession of Merwin. This novel was, of course, "The Black Flame". FSM which must delve into these old magazines for its lead novels printed this fine story issue before last. And of all the novels printed by anyone during this era, one stands out. In fact, I would say it is probably the most famous and popular of novel of all-time (exempting the H.G. Wells novels which are well-known chiefly as items of historical interest). I am speaking, of course, of SLAN. FSM broke precedent by going outside their own properties and acquiring reprint rights to an abridged version of this story, which appeared last issue. After these two titans, it was difficult to see how the magazine could match them. And it didn't. Presumably the Merwin yarns are too recent to be reprinted, and the buying of rights is reserved for very special and rare occasions. This leaves FSM with a choice only among the aforementioned unmemorable material. Easily the best contributor of novels (or anything else) to the early STARTLING's was Henry Kuttner. So FSM made about as good a choice as they could in picking one of the many Kuttner novels for a follow-up. And, as I remember it, "A Million Years to Conquer" (which I read only about three months ago so I didn't bother rereading at this time) was about the best of the Kuttner yarns. But it's weak tea compared to "The Black Flame" and "Slan"..... FSM seems to have switched over completely to a policy of one reprint novel and the rest new short stories, each issue, which has my complete approval. They've been working in that direction for some time. So the story by stf's eldest writer, his first in a couple of years, is presumably a new one. And, surprisingly, Ray Cummings, who never was better than a second-stringer even at stf's weakest, has come up with one of the most amusing shorts of the issue, which merely tells the length to which a he-pecked millionaire with a bit of scientific genius thrown in will go to escape from a persistent mother-in-law. Don Wilcox wakes a try for a GALAXY type need piece and fails. The gimmick, about a man who has never set feet on a planet, is a good one, however.

#### FUTURE SCIENCE FICTION -- Sep. '52

Competition is just getting to rough for FUTURE. Its editor, Bob Lowndes, is one of the best, but the miniscule rates he pays are evidently just too low to bring him the calibre story he once managed to purchase, despite all the laws of economics. Wallace West mercifully ends his Atlantis series. The first was amusingly different when it appeared in ASTOUNDING STORIES in 1934, but the field has advanced a bit since then. Alan Neuree, a usually fine writer makes himself ridiculous in a yarn about men who go mad at

the opportunity to pick up fabulous diamond treasure on Mars. Evidently Neurse has forgotten that diamonds have no intrinsic value, except for certain commercial uses, and bring high prices only because of an artificial monopoly; perhaps the only successful one in the world today. The story would have been more plausible if he'd even made it that old-standby of primitive of aurers, gold, which does have a certain amount of genuine value, even despite the attempts of recent decades to debunk it. Bud didn't you know, Alan. Nowadays the only thing which can bring that rapacious gleam to the villain's eye is uranium or plutonium, or the undraped lady on the cover. "Small Fry" by Hunt Collins is a faithful imitation of either Sturgeon's "Mehwu's Jet" or Leigh Brackett's "The Truants" or perhaps both, but this story lacks their understanding of grown-up--childhood psychology and is merely laughable where they were eerie and convincing. A second-string ASTOUNDING psychological gimmick yarn is contributed by second-string ASTOUNDING writer, H.B. Fyfe. But hitherto amateurish writer, Dave Dryrees, contributes the one completely enjoyable story in the magazine; a definitely amusing story called "The Facts of Life". Yes, Junior, just what you're thinking of.....only not in quite the way you're thinking.

#### GALAXY SCIENCE FICTION -- Aug. '52

I enjoyed James Blish's "Surface Tension" when I read it...but had completely forgotten it by the time I sat down to write this review, and had to look at the pictures to remember it. Fritz Leiber has one of his usually powerful yarns. Leiber fans need be told no more. A couple of newcomers come up with typical GALAXY tales which are well-written but not much else. "Gravy Planet" manages to generate a little excitement in the first part of the last installment but all in all, this is the poorest of the three, and it still manages to leave a bad taste in my mouth.

#### IF -- Sep. '52

Wonder who the new editor of this will be? Fairman is now with Ziff-Davis, though this issue still carries his name on the masthead..... A few years ago a young writer, a protege of Fredric Brown's, nevaed on the scene of science-fiction, then vanished, but not before he had left the field richer by many fine ~~xxxxxx~~ stories. He still turns up an occasional story, but his best stuff was written while living in Tass, N.M., near Brown, and showed the Brown influence. I'd say that Mr John D. MacDonald, under his various pen names, turned out at least half of the best stories in the postwar SUPER ~~xxxx~~ SCIENCE (quite a good magazine, for a while) during this period, at the same time contributing heavily to other magazines. But probably his finest story was the epochal "Cosmetics" which I would unhesitatingly list as one of the fifteen best stories ASF has printed since the war. Charles Beaumont's "The Beautiful People" would have much more impact, if it did not invite comparison to "Cosmetics" to such a tremendous extent. But it's interesting to read, if only to see what another writer can do with this ear ~~idea~~. It's a tribute to MacDonald that no one has attempted to ~~to~~ to with him before in this usually larceneous field.

plots are concerned. L. Major Reynolds "Holes, Incorporated" is the sort of thing the lesser magazines printed in great quantities ten years ago. Quite simple, but still amusing. "Marley's Chain" by Alan Nurse carries a wallop, though it is a bit obvious. But where did he get the nickname 'Sharkie'? I never did figure that out. Mari Wolf is almost as good a writer as Reg Phillips, if that is possible. L. Sprague de Camp is present with a footnote to his languishing career, a story called "The Space Clause". But even at his most insignificant, de Camp like many of his contemporaries manages to put the younger set to shame with his possession of the quality that eludes them, pure class. This magazine could be very good but seems to be suffering from schizophrenia, and ~~it~~ insists on printing a little Ziff-Davis styled rubbish every so often.

#### IMAGINATION -- Sep. '52

This magazine just can't seem to get off the ground. Not as bad as OW or the Z-D pulps, it still has a tremendous lack of worthwhile stories. There was "Special Delivery".....and when else have they ever printed a really great yarn? Top-notcherman Damian Knight has a GALAXY-slanted story which evidently didn't make the grade with Gold (understandably) in this issue. Daniel F. Galouye has a really chilling little horror yarn. And Bill Venable, about the only really active fan today who manages to sell to the press at the same time has an amusing short which is definitely a notch above the usual IMAGINATION calibre. I would be something less than broken-hearted if the magazine suffered the same fate as the last one which Hamling edited. On the other hand I have no aching desires to be rid of it, a la OTHER WORLDS.

#### NEW WORLDS -- July '52

Little known in this country (most of his best work has appeared in England), J. T. McIntosh runs neck and neck with Walter Miller for the title of best writer of the past couple of years. McIntosh doesn't write quite so many good stories as Miller, but he doesn't (unlike Miller) seem to write any bad ones. He isn't very prolific, so his first novel (and the first serial NEW WORLDS has run) is more than welcome. Its supermannish (or rather, supervemannish) theme tends to bring McIntosh closer to the label of 'the post-war van Vogt', which I have hesitated to use. But McIntosh has much more feeling and emotion than van Vogt ever displayed. F.G. Rayer, Britain's most prolific and dullest writer, tries a sequel to his only good story to date, "Time War". He shouldn't've. EE E.C. Tubb's "Men Only" tends to nail down his position as the new discovery of British science-fiction. (McIntosh and most of the others seem to have first appeared in American magazines). American fans who don't bother getting this magazine are missing a publication which easily tops all but the big four in America.

#### OTHER WORLDS -- Aug. '52

Why Walter Miller finds it necessary to sell to this type of market, I can't fathom, but he keeps doing it. Fandom's senior graduate must have had a bad day when he bought this story. It's nearly up to Miller's usual grade, so is obviously way over the head of RAF's readers. In fact, Palmer must have had a bad week. There is a quite readable van Vogtish yarn by Charles DeVet in this issue, also.

## PLANET STORIES -- Sep. '52

Despite claims that Paul Andersen enjoys writing PLANET-styled yarns to the ASTOUNDING-type story which Andersen himself carried to its ultimate perfection, he still manages to insert a bit of quality into his stories every so often. "The Star Plunderer" is ~~an~~ thud-and-blunder of a very high grade. There is some nice irony in a piece called "The Gun". This is the sort of yarn for which I remember PLANET when I first started reading it, but it has been regrettably absent for some time. I wonder why. Rest of the issue is the usual PLANET pabulum. Don't bother with it.

## STARTLING STORIES - Sep. '52

I found the going to rough on Jack Vance's lead novel "Big Planet" to read very far. Surprising since Vance has developed a very smooth style during the last couple of years. R.J. McGreger has a very fine short, "The Perfect Gentleman", which makes up for Vance's defection however. But the other short by Charles E. Fritch can be described only as peurile.

## THRILLING WONDER STORIES -- Oct. '52

Since WONDER is a much older magazine and has always maintained a higher average standard of quality, it was something of surprise when Standard picked STARTLING to go monthly. It was possible that they merely didn't want to experiment with their more valuable property, TWS (as Ziff-Davis appears to have done in the case of AMAZING), but this reader, for one, hoped that they would soon switch to a monthly format also. But the current issue of TWS announces a fourth magazine for their string, SPACE STORIES (not to be confused with del Ray's SPACE SCIENCE FICTION -- it looks like publishers and editors have completely run out of new ideas, judging from the many near duplications now or recently in the field) which sounds like a rival for PLANET. Personally, I would much rather have six more issues of TWS each year. I have doubts about the feasibility of the plan. PLANET is the only magazine which has ever succeeded in making space opera pay over a long period of time.....at any rate, TWS, which had been indistinguishable from STARTLING for a time, is now taking the lead over its sister once again. Both of the two latest issues have been quite superior. This one leads off with a typical recent-style TWS yarn by Wallace West, but still a good one.....Ken Crossen is present again. I once labelled him the poor man's de Camp; but considering the manner in which Crossen is improving and the dead embers that were once de Camp, I'm afraid the simile should be turned round the other way. Crossen is definitely doing better work, now, though still not up to de Camp's prewar standard when he set a mark for humorous stfantasy never equalled before or since. Onetime planet editor, Paul Payne, has a story about religion which even I find acceptable, while Roger Dee comes up with a typical old-style TWS yarn (better than the new-style ones in my unreconstructed opinion) which is thoroughly amusing. Big weak spot of this issue is the revival of Magnus Ridolph. Why, when most of us were willing to forgive and forget Jack Vance's early attempts to ruin science fiction?

WEIRD TALES -- Sep. '52

When SUPER SCIENCE folded, it left a void. No other magazine seemed to be able to assume the position of best illustrated publication in the field, a title which SSS had filled, however imperfectly. But WT, which continues to publish the same old stuff, has thoroughly overhauled its art department in the last year. This issue has a Finlay cover which looks more like it was done by Freas (no insult intended there to either artist). WT has practically abandoned Lee Brown Coyo and their mere mediocre artists. In their places are a whole crew of promising young artists such as Arfstrom. Bright new star at WT, however, is Eberle, probably the best illustrator currently working in the field. This particular issue has (with the exception of a couple of small unsigned cuts) nothing but large quantities of Finlay and Eberle. Which is quite a change from several years ago when WT was the most peerily illustrated magazine in the field, with the possible exceptions of Palmer's horrors. Fiction is the usual thing. The overrun of Gavagan's Bar tales from MOF adds a note of sorely-needed humor to this magazine. August Derleth wastes his time belaboring that peer old child's invisible playmate story again, and still manages to come up with one of the, if not the, best story in the issue. Also fairish stories by St. Clair, ~~and~~ Curtis W. Casewit, and David Eymen. It's a pity Margaret St Clair never lived up to the promise her early stories showed.

FANTASTIC ADVENTURES -- Sep. '52

Goody! Only one more issue of this. This magazine brought us the two best novels of 1950, "The Dreaming Jewels" and "You're All Alone" plus a scattering of good short stories but its average quality was so low that I'm happy to see it go. This issue is the usual mental sweepings with the exception of a quite good story by Harry Walton, "The Hollow World". The theory presented here is a bit hard to swallow; the method used presents some obvious flaws; and I, personally, have strong doubts about the drawbacks of the life depicted. But it is still a story well worth reading.

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ONE SHOTS --- a department devoted to novels presented in paper back form, or magazines which carry only one story per issue.

"Alien Impact" by E.C.C. Tubb, AUTHENTIC SCIENCE FICTION #21

Tubb has been Ted Carnell's number one discovery and here Tubb branches out for another publisher which has hitherto devoted itself solely to juvenilia. The plot isn't original, the writing could have stood polishing, and there are a few flaws in the plotting which indicate lack of sufficient forethought. But this is still at least twice as good as any previous offering by the British ASF, and must be counted as its entrance into the adult sf field. It kicks off with precisely the same gimmick as Asimov's "Half-Breed" and from there on the action comes thick and heavy. Ditto intrigue. But on an adult plane.

"Rat Race" by Jay Franklin, GALAXY SCIENCE FICTION NOVEL #10

In the first issue of GALAXY, Greff Conklin reviewed this story, reprised the plot, and panned it unmercifully. But Conklin's review

only ~~xxxxxxxx~~ succeeded in making me anxious to read it. Evidently the same was true of Gold, or else he doesn't agree with his book review for here it is as a GSF novel. Mr. Franklin obviously idealized the late Franklin Roosevelt and what he stood for. This political slant is given full ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ play in the book and like most extremist viewpoints, appears amusing at times when examined by someone who doesn't share it. But making allowances for Mr. Franklin's somewhat distorted views of how the world is run, and the fact that this book is not written in the conventional sf manner but with all the devices customarily reserved for the sexy 'hard-boiled' detective novel, it is quite enjoyable. This originally appeared in a slick magazine, and the writing is quite slick also. Not recommended if you're ~~xxxx~~ a dyed-in-the-wool conservative who's sensitive about his views. Otherwise, this is good fun.

"Rogue Queen" by L. Sprague de Camp, DELL pocket reprints.

This novel got more hoopla than anything else published last year, perhaps 25% of it deserved. It is well handled, the characterization is much more firmly grounded than in most sf novels, and it is far above anything else de Camp has produced since the war. But it is a pedestrian plodding thing compared to some of his glorious prewar larks in UNKNOWN and ASTOUNDING. The highly advertised sexual element is actually less potent and more academic than in several recent pulp-published stories.

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RECOMMENDED STORIES

- XThe Beautiful People - Charles Beaumont - IF, September
- Cold Awakening - Walter M. Miller Jr. - ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION
- XThe Dangerous Doll - Daniel F. Galouye - IMAGINATION, September
- The Esp Worlds - J.T.M. Intosh - NEW WORLDS, July
- XThe Gun - Philip K. Dick - PLANET, September
- The Hollow World - Harry Walton - FANTASTIC ADVENTURES, September
- Love Thy Neighbor - M.C. Pease - ASTOUNDING, August
- Men Only - E.C. Tubb - NEW WORLDS, July
- XA Million Years to Conquer - Henry Kuttner - FANTASTIC STORY MAG.
- The Perfect Gentleman - R.J. McGregor - STARTLING, September
- Please Me Plus Three - Walter M. Miller, Jr. - OTHER WORLDS, Aug.
- The Polluxian Pretender - Kendall Fester Crossen - THRILLING WONDER
- The Rat Race - Jay Franklin
- XThe Reasonable People - Roger Dee, THRILLING WONDER STORIES, Oct.
- Rogue Queen - L. Sprague de Camp
- XThe Sex Opposite - Theodore Sturgeon, - FANTASTIC, Fall
- The Sin of Hyacinth Peuch - Eric Frank Russell - FANTASTIC, Fall
- Thus I Refute Beelzy - John Collier - FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES
- XYesterday House - Fritz Leiber - GALAXY, August

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Not a single Very Highly Recommended story this time, and a small selection of Recommended, considering the large number of magazines reviewed. No magazine got over two recommends and GALAXY got only one. Could be the field is overproducing, huh? --- Upon looking this list over, I decided I'd been overgenerous, even so, so these with an x in front of the title are stories about which I had certain reservations in recommending, although I personally enjoyed all the above.

## GRAIG COMMENTS

If I were going to be at the convention, this fall, I should move that fandom express a vote of thanks to NEWSWEEK magazine, the only national magazine I know of which consistently uses straight-forward reporting where fandom and science-fiction are concerned.

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Speaking of the convention this fall, isn't this about the first nameless convention anyone has ever had in fandom? The logical and traditional name would have been CHICON II. But it seems Kershak and a few of his cohorts decided that this was to be a dignified convention, and dignity evidently precludes nicknames. The official title they decided upon was THE TENTH ANNUAL SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION. Which has all the modernity and flavor of the Whig party, the brevity of the SPWSSTEM, and the attraction of an ice-cold shower to an Eskimo. Naturally, no fan was stupid enough to try and actually refer to it by this title. But the convention did succeed in stopping use of the name CHICON. So a semi-compromise was made with some of the fans referring to it as TASFIC, which sounds like something you'd reach for at the table to season your meat. But this wasn't an exact reproduction of the con's initials and was only slightly better than the original. So the convention remains nameless.

What was wrong with the old system of naming cons, anyway. The results were attractive, catchy, and easily remembered. The names themselves undoubtedly attracted a bit of interest. And while no one wants fandom to become the slave of tradition, tradition is still something very nice to have when kept at its proper proportions. And fandom isn't so old, nor so wonderful, that it ~~can~~ can afford to so casually toss away one of the few beneficial, and universally accepted, traditions it had. But evidently leaving anything alone, even when there is no valid reason for changing it, is anathema to some fans. In this case we've cut off our titles to spite our conventions.

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I hold no brief for that group of fans which sets out, every year, to undermine the convention. The personnel of this group changes, but their tactics remain the same. However I hope I can say, without aligning myself with them, that this year's convention, judging from advance ballyhoo, bids fair to be the dullest and least interesting since I've been around. I regret very much that I won't be able to attend, but only because I'd like to meet Walt Willis, who probably won't have a chance to attend another for years. I think it might be a good idea, in the future, to restrict the convention award to cities with currently active fan groups. Chicago does not fall into this category, and to many of us who did not attend the convention, it remains a mystery how Chicago was awarded the nod in competition with such active cities as Atlanta, Detroit, and Berkely.

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To end once and for all the bickering about whether the con should be devoted to fandom or prodom, might I make a suggestion? How about two cons per year? One fandom convention, one science-fiction convention.

CURRENT FANZINE PAGE

CONFUSION, vln10, box 493, in Lynn Haven, Fla., 5¢ per each, 50¢ a doz.

This is the big economy issue of of, and the nearest thing Shelby has yet produced to Hoffman's QUANNISH. Typical of stuff, but of a higher than average quality and quantity than usual. Star item is Manly Banister's "Walter the Willis- Saga of the Belfast Bem", which shows the effect a copy of "Slant" and a few strategically placed tendrils can have on a pure-souled, innocent Irish lad.

COSMAG-science fiction digest, 57 East Park Lane, N.E., Atlanta 5, Ga. published bi-monthly by the Atlanta Science-Fiction Organization, 25¢ per single copy-- \$1.25 per annum or two copies of your fanzine in exchange.

And still another format for C-sfd. This is perhaps the least attractive yet. Both covers, especially the COSMAG one, come out poorly. It looks as if the original drawings were actually enlarged, which may sound all right to those of you who've never tried it, but the more you reduce pictures from their original size, the better they look. The errors and wavers in the lines vanish into smallness and the whole thing looks more professional. At any rate this cover is a very washed-out looking affair. The interior has printed headings which are quite adequate but ~~xxxx~~ the text is mimeed on a coated paper stock. Ian is to be congratulated for having achieved as good results as he did, but mimee and slick paper just don't mix. The actual material was up to COSMAG's usual standard, perhaps even higher. But personally I liked the FANSCIENT-sized C\*SFD better than anything else they've tried. SFD appears in small letters above since this issue contains only a cover and a two page mimeed plaint by Burwell relating the trials and tribulations in trying to set up a print shop and actually produce decent results. Burwell does some slandering of my favorite reproduction process, but I'll have to admit we ran into many of the same difficulties in Eugene, including the discovery that you can't handset a really good-sized fanzine and expect to produce it oftener than two or three times a year.

HYPHEN -- The British American Fanmag (be dmaned if I'll play stooge and put that hyphen between B & A) Hyphen is produced between issues of SLANT by Walt Willis and Chuck Harris, 170 Upper Newtownards Rd., Belfast, Ireland. One issue for two US SF prems (oops, I got that backward but it wouldn't hurt you any to send it that way, anyway, payable to Willis, or deductible from subs to SLANT.

This magazine shows exactly why all self-respecting fans despise and detest Walt Willis and why a movement has been started to run Willis out of fandom. In his usual patronising manner, Willis has tossed this out casually, between ~~xxxxxxx~~ issues of SLANT. It reeks of such objectionable material as the same old hilarious Willis humor, the genius inspired puns, the never-ceasing imagination, and Walt has even snagged an article from Britain's cleverest writer, William F. Temple, who turned me down on a request for material for W. This sort of performance by Willis is an insult to all fandom, which labors long and hard to produce something sub-mediocre. With Willis around, who is going to pay any attention to our painfully wrought efforts at egebes? And to add insult to injury, it is quite obvious the

entire issue was produced with little forethought or care. Willis just ~~flies~~ over this way, naturally. Are you going to let him keep ~~bringing~~ this to us? Can we stand idly by and see this Irish anarchist bringing fandom down around us in shreds? Arist., Fandom! Drive this menace from us. Join the Society to Drive Willis From Fandom. Do it today! Don't put off! Membership is only \$10.00 a piece, and a bargain at the price. Anyone who would put a price upon insurance of his future egoboo is no fan! (Associate memberships available at one buck apiece). ~~Send your money~~ Send your money to Shelby Vick, WAW fund, Box 493, Lynn Haven, Fla. Be sure and state this is for the fund to drive Willis from fandom. I'm sure if you do, Shelby will be only too happy to provide you with a certificate certifying that you have helped do your bit to save fandom. (This offer open only to those paying for full membership) DON'T DELAY!!! Do it toonite....

IMPHANTASAGORICA -- Special Edition, October, 1951.

This was delayed either in the publishing or in reaching me. This is just another of Willis' insults and is fascinating reading, obviously not the sort of thing which any fan would care to be caught reading. Down with Willis!

OPERATION FANTAST NEWSLETTER #8, April/May, 1952

The usual interest crammed Slater-zine, but while I usually don't object to small type, this is carrying reduction just a bit too far. I have 20/20 vision, but even I found this a definite effort, and a painful one, to read.

PEON, July 1952, a "Fantascience Publication", is published irregularly (but at least four times a year), by Charles Lee Riddle, 108 Eunham Street, Norwich, Connecticut. Subscription price, 10¢ per single issue, \$1.00 for 12 issues.

This is the best issue of PEON in ages, perhaps the best ever. Star piece is a fine article by H.L. Gold with which I ~~expressly~~ disagree highly. While reading it, I resolved to write Gold a letter about certain points. As I found more and more things with which I thought I had evidence at variance, and the letter stretched out more and more, I decided to send a carbon to Riddle, for possible publication. But when I came to the end of the article I found Riddle actually soliciting rebuttals, which took all the sport out of it. And since I was too short of time to take up the matter immediately, my enthusiasm had waned before I got around to it, which deprived H.L. Gold of a wonderful chance to ignore me/make mincemeat out of me. Ah, well, he'll probably never realize what an opportunity he lost. Dave Mason is present with some views on politics which seem to indicate he believes any form of political or economic thought is fallacious and a result of environment and prejudice. You know, Dave, there are such things as a man's freedom to make up his own mind which can't be discarded in the airy superficial manner you use (and which I'll admit has been the vogue recently with what a friend of mine calls epithelial intellectuals) as just conditioning. The fact remains that only a warped mind can label such a freedom as undesirable, that we have had and still have this freedom to a great extent, and that the Russians don't. To this extent our society is observably more desirable than that of the Communists. I'll concede it may be more difficult to prove our economic system superior, but only that it is more difficult to prove.

somehow the two fanzines below got pulled out of the pile and weren't reviewed with the rest.

FANTASTIC WORLDS, published quarterly at 1942 Telegraph Avenue, Stockton, California. Subscription \$1.00 per year, 25¢ the copy.

This fanzine has had the biggest advance ballyhoo of any fanz I know of. After the intense buildup, it is only natural that the first issue should be a disappointment. Not that it's a bad fanzine. Far from it. It immediately takes its place as one of the top half-dozen mags. But not yet is it a NEKRO-MAETIKON or a SLANT. The artwork throughout is uniformly poor. Ralph Rayburn Phillips, who cluttered up NEKRO is present in great quantity, more's the pity. The editorial columns could use some pepping up. Evidently they are still feeling their way. This will probably be remedied with #2. Something of a publishing scoop is Derleth's history of Arkham House, probably acquired through Associate Editor Sackett. After reading the article, however, I am left with the same feeling ~~frustration~~ I get upon contemplation of NSF authors. With so little reward, and so much frustration, why did Derleth persist? There is an embarrassingly worshipful interview with well-known fan but little-known pro Gene Hunter. But high spot of the issue is Walt Willis' "The Immortal Gael" which details an attempt to revive '30s Belfast fandom. This is one of Willis' very best pieces. It had been thought that FANTASTIC WORLDS was to be dominantly a fiction mag but only three stories are present in this issue. A typical Forrest J. Ackerman story, a typically bad fan story, and a very fine little yarn of near-pre quality by Toby Duane. Most remarkable item of the whole issue is the advertising. Evidently FW's staff made a major assault on advertising bastions and with some success. A number of the ads are professional, though associated with the field (i.e., magazine dealers or the sort of literary agent who advertises he can help amateurs) but one ad on the inside cover is an ad for linguaphone, precisely the same ad which ASF has been running off and on for some time. I dunno how FW did it, but more power to them. Maybe they'll make fannish publishing pay, yet. All in all, a most promising magazine, and a good one already, even though not up to what is expected of it. Now if they can only jazz up their artstaff somehow. Maybe they could find some way to lure Arfstrom or Grossman back to the field.

SCIENCE FICTION ADVERTISER, 1745 Kenneth Road, Glendale 1, Calif. Subscription price is 75¢ a year, or 8 issues, \$1.

Fandom's most professional magazine continues to wend its successful but unsensational way. Much of the magazine is ads, and of little interest to this reader, but their articles are perhaps the best in the field since science-fantasy review folded. Arthur Jean Cox finishes his study of A.E. van Vogt. I could have used more study of the man and less of dianetics and semantics myself, especially the worship of the latter, but all in all it is still a most article for those who wish to know the why's behind an author as well as the what's that he produces. There is one of Dallen's usual fine productions on the cover.

with all the impact, if not the writing skill, of a NEW YORKER piece. Both issues contain installments of a most amusing story called "The Preacher and the Pussycat", only the second piece of readable fiction I've ever come across in an apa mailing.

**MURKLE - Redd Boggs**

Best of the SAPSazines. And, because of its informality, perhaps the best of the Boggsazines. A fascinating and well-documented resume of the Sacco-Vanzetti case winds up in this issue. Regrettably I missed the first installment. I say regrettably since this is the first time I've ever heard any real facts about the case. Other things are always being compared to it, and it is mentioned as if everyone should be cognizant of it. It is undoubtedly one of the four most famous court trials of the 20th century. The other three are of course the Hiss case, the Dreyfus case, and perhaps the Loeb-Leopold trial. The first of course I followed as it happened. The last, thanks to a movie fictionalization of it, received a resume a number of places several years ago. And Leopold has made news on several occasions, recently. But I'm still just as much in the dark about the Dreyfus case as ever. It remains just a name which I associate with French politics. It might be a worth-while followup project for the research minded Mr. Boggs. Except I seem to remember some hints of sexual aberration tied up with it, which might make it taboo for circulation of SAPS if that organization has some members as prudish or innocent as certain PAPAs claim to be.

**OUTSIDERS - Wrai Ballard**

This was always the best illustrated SAPSzine. And since I left SAPS, the contents has improved also. Poetry Hater's Corner has great possibilities which are not being exploited.

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**AS OTHERS SEE US---- I**

a new department, devoted to quotable quotes from letters I receive which can be reproduced in no other way, for obvious reason.

".....is hardly the phrase I'd use but it will suffice for the nonce. I had the pleasure, if you want to be polite of having ~~that~~ in my home a couple nights last week. Of all the egotistical, insufferable, rude, ill mannered BRATS I've yet encountered in fandom (with the possible exception of one youthful Cleveland faned) he cops the door prize. The original Gosh-wow-oh-boy-oh-boy himself."

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Jim Harmon uses his column to lay bare, with admirable frankness, the motives behind some of his more recent 'eccentricities'. So honest about it all is Jim that I've taken him out of the category of 'a deranged mind', as I had mentally labelled him, and have now upgraded him to the position of 'a twisted mind'. I wonder if Riddle things these Degler-esque rantings actually do PEOB any good. Lee Hoffman's "I Was Robert Bloch" is amusing. But I was disappointed to see T.E. Watkins giving a tentative seal of approval to the fan boax.

SCIENCE FICTION CLUB DIRECTORY, 10", Barclay Johnson, 878 Oak Street Winnetka, Illinois.

A one-shooter. Part of this is amusing. The rest is just what the name implies, and isn't.

SCIENCE FICTION NEWSSCOPE, June 1952 No. 17 Vol. 2, Issue 12 times yearly by the Pandomain Press, 43 Tremont Street, Malden 48, Mass.

This magazine seems to have practically abandoned its former makeup as a newsmagazine for columns of comment and review. Not that I consider reviews and opinion automatically bad, or I wouldn't be editing this. But in this case much of the opinion is provided by the above-mentioned Mr. Harmon.

SCIENTILLA, 2716 Smoky Lane, Billings, Mont.

Improved in appearance and layout, but still much poorer than it should be in material. Tip to the editors: even the worst non-fiction is usually more readable than the fiction to which the average fanzine has access.

SHANONI LA, official publication of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, 915 South Sherbourne Drive, Los Angeles 33, Calif.

If the LASFS is as dead as its club organ, it proves that this club is not exempt from some comments I made about local clubs a few months ago, after all. However, to be just, the trouble is probably due to LASFS appalling habit of having a different editor each issue. They could use Burbee back.

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SAPSIZES -- the below are magazines which I receive in trade for REVIEW. They frequently may not be available otherwise, but are reviewed for the record. However, the reviews will probably be briefer than of ordinary zines, due to lesser interest among REVIEW's readers.

DZYAN -- Walt Coslet

A typical Coswalzine, with some fairly interesting reviews of ancient books and some godawful ackermanese spelling in his mailing reviews.

GEM JONES - SACS 18 & 20 - G.M. Carr

Your reviewer left SACS because of confusing, annoying, and too frequent mailing requirements, and also because of the generally lower readability of SACS material as compared with PAPA. But Mrs. Carr consistently does her better work for the former. I dunno why. #18 has a hard-hitting little article called "HIGGER"