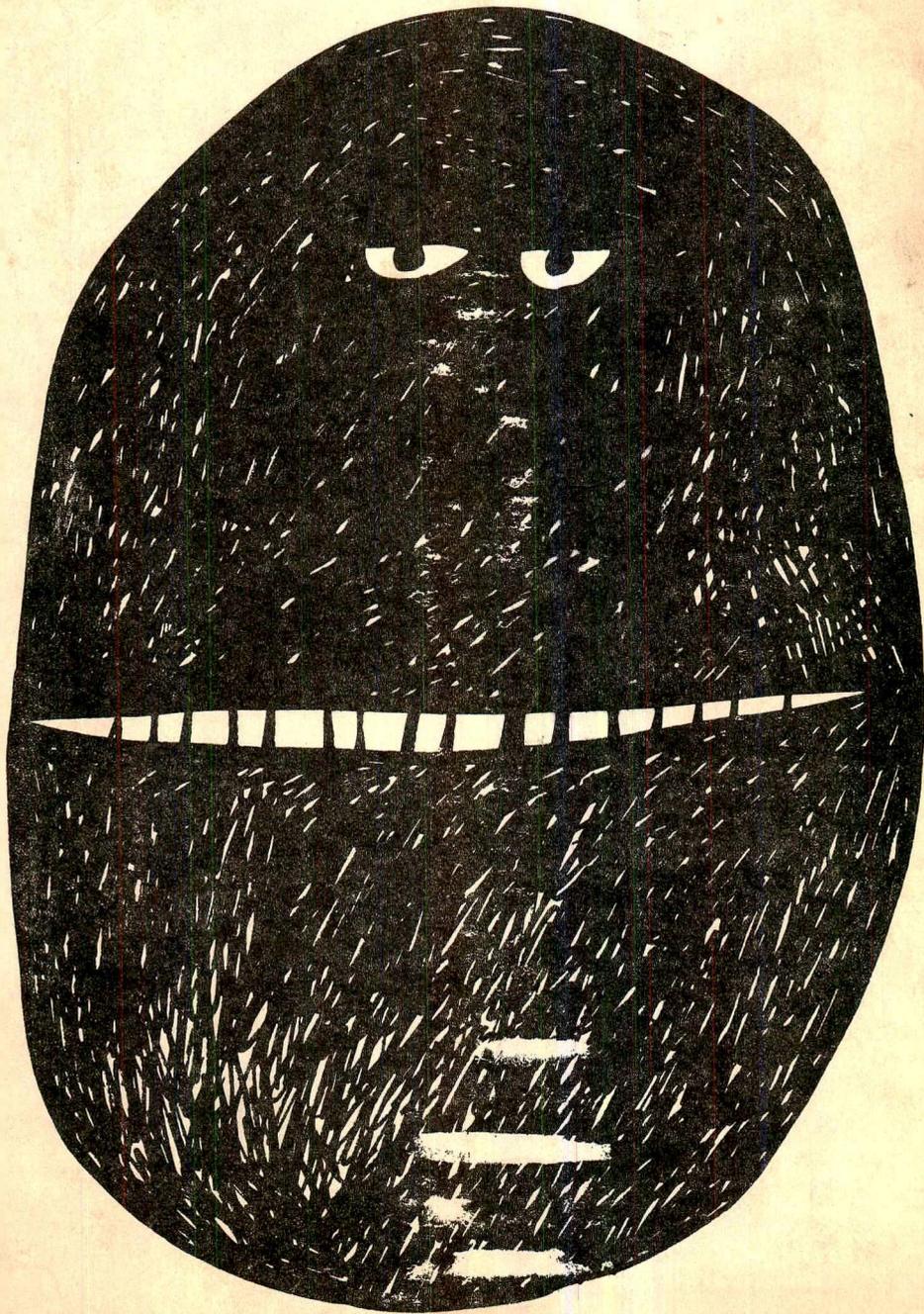


# PSYCHOTIC



I AM MASTER, HERE!

ROTSLER



# PSYCHOTIC

December '67

"Venice in '80"

22

Published on the Psychotic Press, PSY is issued for trades, contributions and a straight 25¢ per because the zine seems to be a natural 28 to 30 pager and so costs more money. But, whatthell, if YANDRO can get 25¢ so can I.

## CONTENTS

THE COUCH---by the editor who is happy with PSY this time and even manages to praise a book after giving out the PSYCHOTIC FUGGHEAD AWARD.

THE FICKLE FINGER WROTE... ---by Ted White who is becoming a fan historian of note by way of nostalgia and an astonishing memory.

A CHUCKLEHEAD HAS NO HONOR IN HIS OWN COUNTRY---by Bob Tucker who, like the Ghods, grinds slow but exceedingly fine. No reflection on Damon Knight intended.

THE VIOLENT WARD---by the editor who finds the fan-zines few but worthy of comment.

SECTION EIGHT---the letter column, and holy enchanted duplicator---most of the old crew are back! The life-blood of PSY flows again.

A VOICE FROM THE STYX ---a column by Harlan Ellison who Views with Alarm in "Slaughtering The Golden Goose In Hollywood."

SECOND SESSION---where the editor mutters to himself again.

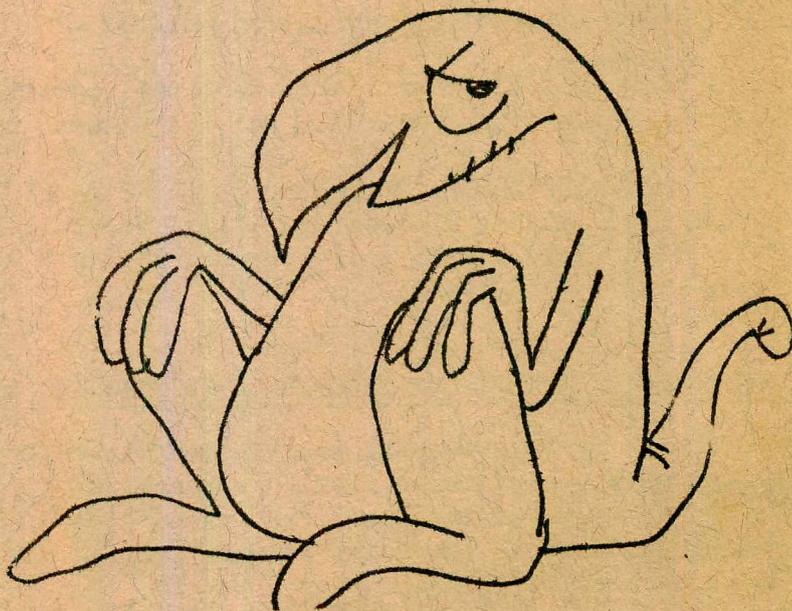
COVER BY BILL ROTSLER

ILLUSTRATIONS BY  
ROTSLER, PETERS  
AND---uhh....

PSYCHOTIC is a product of the fevered mind of the mad hermit of Venice.

Richard E. Geis  
5 Westminster Ave.  
Venice, California  
90291

Remember: no mail addressed to "Psychotic" or "The Mad Hermit" will reach me. It all goes to President Johnson.



# THE COUCH



-----  
where the editor rambles on and on and on and  
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## OF SIZE AND REGULARITY AND PAPER AND THINGS THAT GO HUMP-HUMP IN THE NIGHT

\* The response to PSY 21 so far has been fantastic. I am happy. I still have a couple pages of letters to stencil, still have to get some important artwork, and still have to do a few reviews, so I don't know exactly what the page total will be, but I Fear The Worst.

I was thinking of 20-22 pages a few weeks ago. Then the LoCs started coming in and in and in. Good LoCs, highly printable LoCs, from BNFs and others---pros, and old-time fans and...SECTION EIGHT has gotten longer and longer... But I like it this way. A dynamic letter column is the heart of a good zine.

But now, with Harlan Ellison's column added, I must think of 40 plus pages, which is Quite a Jump. Especially for a "monthly". I fear I have now lost Lee Hoffman and Rick Sneary who have warned me they don't usually read long, thick zines.

The trouble with a set page format is that you're usually crowded. I don't like to be crowded. So PSY will be whatever length it must be and will appear whenever it appears, but I hasten to add I expect to maintain at least a bi-monthly appearance. More likely five-six weekly.

Stop that wise muttering in your beards, out there!

...I'M DREAMING OF A 500 PAGE ANNISH...

\* The paper used in this issue is Fibretint from Kelly Paper Co., 1222 S. Hill St. at 95¢ per ream if you pick it up yourself. Well, you can imagine how many reams I can handle on a Harley scooter. So I had fifty reams shipped out here. It has become Crowded in this tiny efficiency apartment, I might add.

\* Anybody know Jim Harmon's new address?

\* Thanks to all who mentioned that nail polish remover is good for thinning corflu. I printed Bjo's info and edited out the others' to save space and avoid duplication.

\* The Things that go Hump-Hump in the Night? They are the people next door. Their bedroom wall is also my bathroom wall. The Wall Is Thin. Their bed is next to the wall. It is interesting to be wakened at 2 A.M by a woman in the loud throes of an orgasm. So I take notes.

## PONG GOES THE VUKAT! or THOSE WALK-IN FANS ARE BREAKING UP THAT OLD CON OF MINE

Both Bob Tucker, in PONG #2, and Fred Patten, in VUKAT #5, conclude that the local walk-in fans at whichever science fiction convention city is It are now a Problem that threatens to turn con bidding practices upside down three ways from Sunday. Unless there are changes made in the rules science fiction con sites will be decided by fringe-fans and three buck walk-ins.

Bob Tucker put it well in PONG: "The Los Angeles bid was unimaginative, dry, inert.

on and on and

Three hundred true fans in a smaller convention would have bought it anyway; 550 mixed fans in an outsized convention gave their votes (the majority of their votes) to the Bay Area in response to a brassy, funny, outspoken hard-sell. Like it or not, that is the shape of conventions to come. The winning cities of the future will use some variation of the technique; the losers will continue to be losers because they dislike, or distrust, or fail to recognize the hardsell. The day of the small con, attended only by the hardcore true fan is done."

Fred Patten made the same points and goes on to say: "There was a lot of talk about the walk-ins "overriding the will of Fandom", and the day after the bidding session, at the regular Business Session, a Committee was set up to look into needed changes in the campaigning and voting procedure, mostly with an eye toward limiting the voting privileges of first-Con neos, who don't know the social rules of what's going on, and don't care

"The best proposal I've heard yet is this: a Worldcon will sell advance memberships to the next year's Con, no matter where it is. Only those fans who buy these advance memberships get to vote on the site, at the bidding session later in the Con. Whoever wins gets all the advance memberships taken up to then, and can start operating on its own from that point. This insures that only those people interested enough to pay a couple of dollars would have the privilege of voting, and anybody who's that interested is going to take more than a casual interest in the merits of the opposing bidders. There'll be no more worry about a large bloc that's not really interested in the outcome letting itself be impressed by one or two speakers at the last minute. At the same time, it will not deny the ballot to the seriously interested neo at his first WorldCon, if he wants to pay to become a full member of Fandom. Other ideas have been proposed, but this sounds like the best one so far."

It does sound like a winner. Far better than giving "weighted" votes to certain classes of fans or arbitrarily limiting the voting to "recognized" fans...or letting things go on as they are now.

#### DESTROY THAT TRANSPORTER ROOM! (SORRY ABOUT THIS, HARLAN)

The STAR TREK episodes that occur on board the Enterprise are, with rare exceptions, far superior to those which require Captain Kirk, Spock, et. al. to beam down to a planet.

"Journey to Babel" was a perfect example. A gathering of aliens representing different planets and star systems on board the Enterprise for a journey to a special conference was the setting and background.

The story involving Spock, his Vulcan father and Earth mother was the focus of the episode. It was well done. The author, Fontana, and the producer and director are to be congratulated for a fine show.

But this episode brings to mind some larger questions about the show in the light of the article in the current (Nov. 18-24) TV GUIDE. The article mentions that in the beginning of the

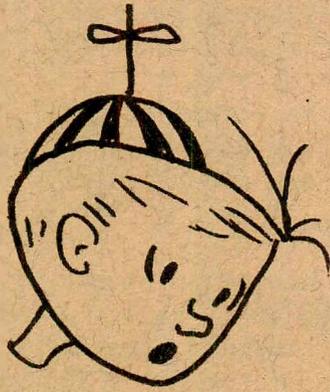


" I KNEW YOU  
VULCANS WERE  
DIFFERENT, BUT... "









# THE FICKLE FINGER WROTE



It is November, 1967. In the mail comes a copy of a fanzine, PSYCHOTIC 21. Accompanying it is a letter from the editor, Dick Geis. "PSYCHOTIC is back and all fandom is aghast," he says. He adds, "Hope you like the new PSY, Ted. Any chance of prying an article for it out of your time for fanac?" And my mind goes spinning back...back...through time.

AN ARTICLE  
BY  
TED  
WHITE

The first fanzine I ever received was BREVIZINE #1, from Warren A. Frieberg, fandom's own Forgotten .. Fugghead. It was January, 1952. I was thirteen, and had just taught myself to type, one fingered, on my mother's ancient L.C. Smith. As a rule, I drafted my correspondence first long-hand, then laboriously transcribed it on the typewriter. It was not long before that I had learned to add a space after periods and commas. (And it would not be for some years that I learned to add two spaces after periods.)

BREVIZINE was a scruffy little fanzine. It was pocket-sized, measuring four inches by six inches, and having maybe forty little pages---the equivalent of a ten page fanzine. But it printed my name in it (Warren and I were correspondents of a month's duration), and I was thrilled beyond belief.

It was a different world I lived in, those years. I had entered high school as a totally introverted recluse. I had few friends, most of them as Out Of It as I was myself. I had a high I.Q. and was an under-achiever, with a C and B- average which never improved. I distrusted society, and felt I was being exploited by adults, who, though less intelligent, enjoyed superior status over me.

Boy, was I ripe for fandom!

I fancied myself an artist in those days, and I sent Warren a full-page drawing on note-paper, since I had no idea how mimeographs worked and I assumed he could mechanically reduce the drawing to size. Surprisingly enough, he did, using it for a cover on his second issue. I also wrote full-length stories that ran less than a single page, single-spaced in typescript. They averaged four to six pages (with



illustrations) in BREVI-. I would receive an issue of BREVI- and go sleepless until I could think of another story or drawing with which to supply the next issue. I would scan the letter column eagerly to see what all these other people thought of my work. (They were too kind.) I lived and breathed and slept BREVIZINE for perhaps three-quarters of a year--the year I was a Freshman in high school--until, timidly, I began sending for other fanzines, and broadening my scope in fandom.

Looking back on that era now, I am struck by nostalgia for it. I think of it as 'Back in my day...', and I wonder if neofans today, in an era of instant apas, have ever known anything approaching the sense of wonder I felt upon entering fandom. How distant it seems. Eager to find out how mimeographs worked, I saved up ten dollars and ordered a postcard mimeo from Sears, Roebuck, along with styli, stencils, and a can each of red, blue and black ink.

At first I was content to play around, making designs and typing nonsense on stencils, just to have something to run off. I quickly discovered the black ink would not work well, and began using blue.

A big comics fan of the time (I had over ten thousand in my collection), I put together a pamphlet called "The True Facts Behind SUPERMAN," a four-pager (on 4" x 6" paper) with a cover illustration, a backcover illustration, and a couple of interior illustrations--plus perhaps two paragraphs of text. Vastly excited by this, I rewrote the pamphlet, added more art, made it a page or two longer, and advertised it in BREVI- for 5¢.

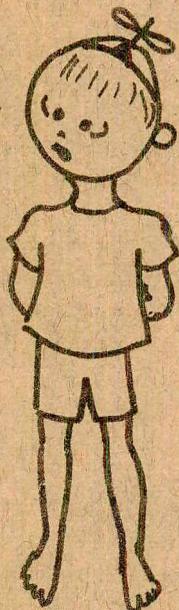
Two people responded. One was Eldon K. Everett (how the old names linger in one's memory!) and the other was Bobby Stewart, of Kirbyville, Texas--bhub Stewart, as he's better known today.

But this pamphlet was not a fanzine. It was just an excuse to play with a toy mimeograph.

In January, 1953, Joel Nydahl sent me, unsolicited, a copy of VEGA #3, the first issue to have any real circulation (the first two had been hectographed) and I contributed a cover which appeared on #5. My role in VEGA was remarkably minor, but, within a quarter year, VEGA had assumed QUANDRY's mantle as the major fannish monthly, and was publishing columns and articles by Tucker, Grennell, Marion Bradley, and other BNFs of the time. It was my first real exposure to fannishness, and it made an enormous impression on me.

Of particular impact was Marion Bradley's column, "What Every Neofan Should Know," in which she dealt each issue with a particular topic, with a rather motherly affection towards those of us too ignorant of fandom's traditions to already Be Aware. I have no idea whether I would find those columns of interest today, but when I read them I was exactly right for them, and they might have been addressed solely to me.

A point which Marion and many others emphasized was the importance of publishing one's First Issue. Fanzine publishing was not something a neofan should hurry rashly into, they counselled. One should bide one's time, watching and learn-



ing, absorbing fannish knowledge and wisdom, until one was ready to publish.

I believed that.

During spring and summer months, as I pushed a lawnmower around our huge yard (it took two or three hours--the better part of an afternoon), I fantasized great fan-publishing projects, working out elaborate layouts, fantastic feats of color mimeoing, and building--in my mind--great publishing chains founded upon my first, glorious, fanzine.

I saw myself someday a great prozine editor and publisher, and I had, already, the titles of the magazines I wanted to publish carefully sorted out in my mind. In school, I made countless drawings in my notebooks of cover layouts and logo designs. I saw this all as a far-off and most likely unrealizable dream--a sort of heaven akin to those in which I was a rich man, or the owner of a great automotive corporation, or something of that sort. Less ambition than daydream, my plans were.

And then, one day in late August, 1953, while sitting on my bed, staring at a pile of old (late '30s, early '40s) fanzines I'd bought, while sunlight streamed lazy and golden in the afternoon window, I Did It.

I decided to publish my first fanzine.

It was a heady, reckless moment. I knew damned well I wasn't sufficiently prepared. I hadn't met half the requirements I knew every fanzine editor must meet before publishing his First Issue. I had little material and few prospects for any. But I was going to bull ahead anyway. I felt strangely guilty about it. But I also felt adrenilated and excited. It was a major step, and none I've taken since--until now--has excited me so much.

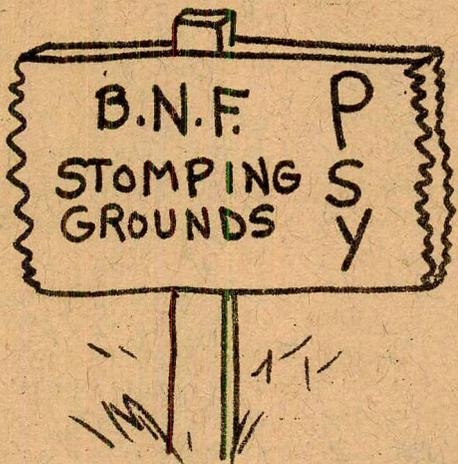
I will say little about ZIP #1. It was made up of material I wrote and a few reprints from the old fanzines, and it was illustrated exclusively by me--under several pseudonyms. It was pocket-size, ran about thirty pages, cost 5¢, and featured multi-colored mimeoing. The text was in blue. I cut the paper on my family's cutting-board (usually used by my father, a photographer) and the pages were not all exactly of a size. The covers were on colored construction paper. I spent as much time on each little quarter-size stencil as I would on two full-size stencils today. I published about thirty-five copies. It was an enormous undertaking.

I sent the zine out to people in VEGA's letter column, and to fan editors whose zines I saw reviewed. "I can't subscribe to all of them, but maybe I can work trades with them," I thought, thus thinking my first truly fannish thought. I mailed the copies out in greeting card envelopes.

Those were the days!

I lived for each letter that came in, for each subscription with its sticky nickels and dimes. I was reviewed by Mari Wolfe in IMAGINATION, and, later, by Rog Phillips in OTHER WORLDS/UNIVERSE. Warren Frieberg wrote a fuggheaded attack on fandom for ZIP #2 that actually made my zine a Center of Controversy. Warren told me that I was a nice guy, but didn't have what it took to Make It in Fandom. ZIP was just another mediocre fanzine.





It was, too. I'd learned how to work a mimeo, and, as time went on, I grew more and more ambitious with it. But I hadn't learned to say much, and this became painfully obvious when Mike May, a former EC comics fan turned stfan, asked me for an article for his new EPITOME. I found I could think of nothing to write about! I finally wrote a very lame piece about publishing a fanzine, as I recall. Details are mercifully gone from my memory.

I also thought of myself still as an artist, but when Harlan Ellison asked me to illustrate a story for his SCIENCE FANTASY BULLETIN (soon to become DIMENSIONS), and asked me to use black ink, I turned in such dreadful work that he never asked me again.

Fall of 1953, Joel published his VEGANNISH after a two-month delay, and went permanently gafia. A brilliant flash in the pan, Joel had become a BNF and put out the "top" fanzine all within the space of a year, and then called it quits. He was a year younger than I.

Fall, 1953 also witnessed the birth of PSYCHOTIC, and somewhere around its third or fifth issue, it assumed the role VEGA had taken from QUANDRY. It became the leader of Sixth Fandom. (Let's not argue about fandoms. It's my theory that Sixth Fandom died when PSY died, and not before. And that Seventh--true Seventh--Fandom ran from about 1958 to 1962. Eighth Fandom, if it's here, is only just beginning to show itself.)

I subscribed to PSY in early 1954. The first issue I saw was the seventh. I followed it throughout the remainder of its career largely as a bystander. I never succeeded in contributing to it, although I tried a couple of times with some dreadful art. I may have had a letter published in its pages, but I doubt it. PSY was the stamping ground for Vernon McCain, Bob Tucker, Bob Bloch, Dean Grennell, Bob Silverberg, Harlan Ellison, and the other BNFs. Like each leader of Sixth Fandom in its turn, PSY was topical and the focal point of fannish doings. When Harlan wrote his farewell to the phoney Seventh Fandom, it was for PSY, and it was in those pages that he uttered his immortal cry that "The Mad Dogs Have Knead Us In The Groin!" Later, when Jim Harmon broke down Harlan's door at the Midwestcon, the Door Incident (as it became known) was reported in all its bloody detail in PSY's pages.

There was no FANAC, no STARSPINKLE, no FOCAL POINT, no SFWEEKLY in those days. PSY was, for most of its career, monthly or nearly so. It was where we heard the news. It was where the clan gathered.

Like many fledging fen, I sat at the edge of the firelight and listened to my elders, my heroes talk. They reminisced, swapped jokes, and gossiped, all entertainingly. It never occurred to me to interrupt them.

PSY metamorphosed into SFREVIEW, and died a lingering death. Dick Geis has forgotten, but he published at least three issues of PSY after folding SFREVIEW. One appeared in FAPA in 1956. Another was a single-sheet or something of the like, published in late 1958. And the third, which memory tells me shared a cover with the "new" PSY, was published for the Cult, in 1959 or 1960.

But PSY began dying when Geis became ambitious. Switching first from ditto to offset, he eventually ended up with a Gestetner, but the change to offset and half-

size spelled the beginning of the end. PSY was about the only fannish offset zine published, and Dick managed to make that cold black print seem more friendly and warm than it ever had before (or since), but it was a move toward formalism and what some felt to be pretentiousness. Readers argued about it and then sighed and gave up when Dick announced an all-sf-reviews policy with the name-change.

It was about the year PSY died (1955? 1956?) that I finally learned to write intelligently in fanzines. I'd been active for three or four years. I was about to graduate high school. I was about to publish my first good fanzine, STELLAR. And PSY died. I never really had a chance to move into the firelight.

It's funny how everything ties together. That prozine I wanted to publish, way back in 1952, was to be called STELLAR STORIES of Science Fiction. In order to protect the title, I used it as a fanzine title, copyrighting the issues. Its ultimate use remained a daydream that receded into the back of my mind.

This summer someone who conned me into thinking him a friend, after hearing me talk about my long-held plans for a prozine STELLAR, tried to steal the title from me for his own purposes. (I say "steal" advisedly; he did his best to keep me from knowing until it would be too late for me to protest.) In order to maintain my nebulous and admittedly moral-only right to the title, I planned an "ashcan edition" of a photo-offset pseudoprozine to be called STELLAR. Distribution on one newsstand would establish my rights to the title.

At the end of this month, STELLAR Stories of Imagination will be published. Planned for bookstore distribution, it will be professionally printed, use a full-color cover painting by Jack Gaughan, feature stories by Roger Zelazny, Samuel R. Delany, Alexei Panshin, Lee Hoffman, and myself, as well as interior illustrations by Gray Morrow, Jack Gaughan, Jeff Jones, and Mike Hinge. Priced at \$1.00 a copy (75¢ by mail directly from me), it is intended to be a low-volume production, but a full-fledged prozine. It will pay its writers and artists a royalty based on actual sales, rather than a flat fee. If we can achieve sales of only ten thousand, we will be able to match the rates of every prozine but ANALOG.

I am editor and co-publisher. As I have assembled the material and put together the layouts for the first issue, I have become more and more excited and thrilled by the whole project. I haven't felt this way since I embarked upon ZIP #1.

I continued ZIP's numbering with my fanzine STELLAR, and on through GAMBIT, its successor. The new STELLAR will be vol.5, no. 1, whole number 53. Its roots run deep.

Times change. And yet, as Papa Hugo was fond of saying, "The more times change, the more they are the same." We all change, grow up, and --sometimes--we realize our dreams. But by then we've usually forgotten they were our dreams of yesteryear.

I'm indebted to Dick for two things: reviving PSY, a touch of the past; and asking me to write something for it, at long last...

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# A CHUCKLEHEAD HAS NO HIS OWN COUNTRY <sup>AN</sup> ARTICLE

Quote: "Take, for example, Jerry Sohl's The Altered Ego, in which a character sees his face clearly in a washbasin full of water. This happens to be impossible in a normally lighted room, and Sohl, supposing he knew where to look for a washbasin, could have found it out."

Eleven years ago (or perhaps twelve by the time you read this; the editor does admit to a pause between issues) Damon Knight published a book of criticism on the science fiction field as it then existed. Many of the chapters were reprinted (and perhaps revised) from his magazine columns. You may have read it--the book was quite popular. (IN SEARCH OF WONDER, Advent: Publishers, 1956.) A second and greatly enlarged edition was published by the same company in 1967; this new edition contained 306 pages, as opposed to the 180 in the first printing. The price went up by two dollars too, but it is still a bargain.

Because Damon is Damon, a sweet and lovable rascal of long tenure in fandom, some of the more entertaining chapters in the book are those entitled "Chuckleheads," "More Chuckleheads," and "Half Bad Writers." In these chapters, he happily skewers such masters of science fiction as Austin Hall, Homer Eon Flint, Stanley Mullen, Taylor Caldwell, and Jerry Sohl. I will admit that I sailed merrily through the chapters, enjoying the skewering, until I reached the name of Jerry Sohl. The discovery of that name was a distinct shock, an outrage, because the person who had discovered Sohl and unleashed him on an unsuspecting fandom was old me. Sohl was my protege.

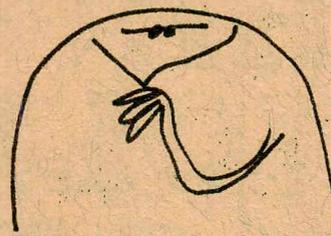
To be accurate, Sohl and I discovered each other on the same day. It was in the long, long ago--perhaps 1950 or later--when he was a newspaperman working on The Daily Pantagraph, the Bloomington sheet then partially owned by Adlai Stevenson. I had a new mystery novel in the stores that year, whenever it was, and Sohl was dispatched by his editor to interview me. He did, and we got the matter over as quickly as possible. Afterwards, we sat around drinking and shooting the breeze, and Sohl told me that he was also writing something, but he wasn't having any success at it, so I suggested the mystery and science fiction fields. I loaned him some books and magazines, and gave him my blessing. That wasn't worth anything, but I gave it to him anyway, along with the names and addresses of a clutch of New York literary agents. He went his way, and in due time began to sell short stories, and then novels.

Fandom greeted his efforts with something approaching a yawn, and lovable old Damon pounced on him. Point Ultimate, another Sohl novel, was cut to bleeding ribbons.

I suppose I was luckier than Jerry in that I had produced both good and bad yarns, and although Damon gave the back of his hand to the poor offerings, he devoted a considerable amount of space to praising the good one. (One.) I was lucky in that I didn't find myself lumped in with those other chuckleheads. So I read the

# HONOR IN

BY  
BOB TUCKER



disparaging comment about the character who saw his face mirrored in the washbasin, reacted as Damon intended his readers to react, wiped away a tear for poor Jerry, and went on with my reading. But--for some oddball reason--the criticism stayed with me for all of those eleven years; it was one of those unexplainable little things that cling to the memory for no worthwhile reason.

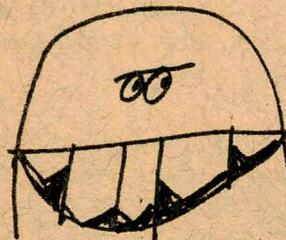
When I acquired a copy of the new edition this past summer, I immediately went searching for that same passage. It was there as before, unchanged except for the insertion of a comma. And it bugged me. I suppose Jerry Sohl has long since shrugged it off and forgotten it, but it bugged me.

There was naught to do but make an experiment. We physicists know that science is best served only by the controlled experiment.

I ran a washbasin full of water, turned on the overhead shaving light, opened a little decorative shutter partially covering the nearby window, and looked down. My own wrinkled face looked back at me from that placid pool. Perhaps I shouted Eureka! But still experimenting, I dumped the cold water and filled the basin with hot water. The mirroring liquid performed as before. I turned off the overhead light, and about half of the face disappeared. The shutter was then closed, and the face vanished altogether. Damon had specified a "normally lighted room," and this bathroom was normally lit when the electric was on and sunlight was spilling in the window. My face was there, Damon was in error, and Jerry Sohl was vindicated! I felt like dashing off to the telegraph office to whip out hot wires to Sohl in far away exotic Hollywood, and to Damon sulking in Milford, Pennsylvania.

Fortunately for my peace of mind, I did not.

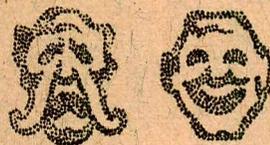
The next two discoveries, following quickly after that first, were of world-shaking import in that they forever shattered my sense of wonder. After dumping the water and turning off the light, I moved to the window to adjust the shutter and casually glanced down to be sure of my footing. That same face was clearly mirrored in the placid clear water of the toilet bowl. Stunned, unsure of where to turn, I stumbled into the kitchen (also normally lighted) and gulped down a cup of coffee. The third astonishing discovery completely unnerved me. My face was reflected in the bottom of the coffee cup. The coffee was gone, of course, but a wet film of...of, well, wetness coated the bottom of the china cup, and there was that confounded face again!



I don't believe Damon and science is ready for this.

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# THE VIOLENT WARD



FANZINE  
REVIEWS

FOOLSCAP #2, from John Berry, Box 6801, Stanford, Calif. 94305. You can get it for 25¢, trades, LoCs and, probably, a bit of grass, a sugar cube...

As in #1, FOOL is alive and kicking strongest when Berry is at the typer. His ditto repro is regrettable, however, and I suspect is mostly the fault of his typer and his disinclination to correct mistakes.

This issue was "theoretically" the July issue, named on the cover the September issue and was mailed in November. But, who cares? The style and layout and casual editorial quality remind me immodestly of the early issues of PSY. Except that I think John is better at reviewing fanzines than I was then. He's a better artist, too.

S.F. WEEKLY, from Andy Porter, 24 East 82nd St., New York, NY 10028. Available in exchange for news or 14/\$1.00.

I sent Andy a dollar and he sent me, first class, about 40 different issues! Ghod! I owe him news like crazy for the rest of my natural life! Here's something, Andy: Flash! Richard E. Geis, boy pornographer, has just sold a book to Midwood titled COME FILL MY BED. Book will be under his "Peggy Swanson" pseudo! What, Andy? That isn't the kind of news you want?

But, seriously, folks, SF WEEKLY is a service-zine fandom needs and must have. Andy works hard at it and is to be appreciated and supported. I only hope he can keep it up for years and years. He does an excellent job...like forgetting to publish #193.



FOGGY DAY, from Bob Lichtman, 112 Lundy's Lane, San Francisco, Cal. 94110, for friends and FAPA. Interesting discussion of hippies, including a history of the Haight-Ashbury scene. And, in The American Revolution, II, Bob points out what should be done for the poor blacks and whites in the cities if there are to continue to be cities, and a country that doesn't resemble a racist concentration camp. He calls for a radical restructuring of society. But I wonder if the Big Money will sit still for it. Ideally, yes, a complete rebuilding should be done, but society don't work that way short of a cataclysmic upheaval involving a sudden depression, a war that Hurts and, prob-

ably, city-stopping riots involving loss of electricity, water, gas... A right-wing coup is more likely, by the military-industrial combination who would be supported by the Frightened Middle Class. Then there would be civil war---with guerrilla bands in the cities and countryside. Napalm dropped on Hartford City...

YANDRO #176, from Robert and Juanity Coulson, Rte. 3, Hartford City, Indiana 47348. Single copy 35¢, 3 for \$1.00, 12 for \$3.00. Now irregularly monthly, whatever that means, really.

A damned good issue, highlighted by Ted White's column, Buck's fanzine and book reviews, and the letter section. Only better art reproduction (Gestefaxed art) and headings would be needed to make this a truly first class zine in every respect. I'm croggled that Buck somehow manages to read as much science fiction as he does. YANDRO is an institution. It is a Must Get fanzine.

Hey, Buck, are we trading or do I have to continue my sub?

THE PULP ERA #67, bi-monthly, from Lynn Hickman, 413 Ottokee St., Wauseon, Ohio 43567. It is usually 50¢, but this is a special Anniversary issue, runs to 130 pages! and costs \$1.50. Well worth it, though, if you are a collector and enthusiast of the old pulp magazines.

I haven't read all of this yet, but the article about the Columbia pulps by Robert W. Lowndes is outstanding. And it's a small publishing world: he mentions working with Harry Shorten and Milt Luros---Mr. Shorten is now high up in the Tower Publishing corp., and Mr. Luros has a publishing empire in North Hollywood...and I'm writing books for both of these men.

The portfolio of drawings by Dave Prosser of World War I airplanes is beautiful. Collector's items, these.

PULP ERA is a labor of love and is the kind of publication you get and save. If you are over thirty and did any pulp reading in the Good Old Days, this is a must get for nostalgia's sake.

STROON #9, from Anthony Lewis, 124 Longwood Ave., Brookline, Mass. 02146. 25¢ per.

Ah, at last, a crudzine to put down... Lousy artwork, uneven dittoing, only redeeming feature an article by Harry Warner, Jr. But the zine has a curious awful charm and I don't mind trading. Keep on publishing, Tony!

TRUMPET #s 3-4-5-6, from Tom Reamy, 2508 17th Street, Plano, Texas 75074. 60¢ or five for \$2.00.

I nearly swallowed my teeth when I saw these! I'm still croggled and bug-eyed. This lovely, professionally printed job is a fanzine? Incredible, but true! And, man, the artwork, especially by George Barr, Reamy, J. Gardner, Hollis Williford... only great. Strictly pro. I drool. And this just in #6.

The slant is toward s-f and fantasy movies, but not by much, and the continuing adaptation of Poul Anderson's THE BROKEN SWORD by Reamy and George Barr, in comic strip form, is another classic Must Get. A fine effort.

Again, I haven't had time to read all these from cover to cover, but have seen and read enough to recommend this zine to anyone even marginally interested in s-f or fantasy. Another labor of love combined with infinite pains and lots of money.

PULP ADVERTISER AND COLLECTOR, from James Hevelin, 6594 Germantown Pike, Miamisburg, Ohio 45342. Subscription to the 4 to tenth issue is \$2.00; single copy is 40¢ in stamps. The zine is strictly what it says, with a 600 circulation. Hmm. I'm tempted to advertize PSY---"A pulp fanzine!"

Ahh...line 55...space running out... Briefly noted: STEFANFASY #61, Bill Danner, R.D. 1, Kennerdell, Pa. Free to those who trade and make friendly faces, I imagine. This is a real hand-set letter-press fanzine, and you can't hardly get this kind no more. Very good. -- DYNATRON #34, Roy Tackett, 915 Green Valley Road NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87107. For apas and trades and 25¢. I enjoyed it. Casual but good.

SECTION  
EIGHT  
FIGHT



Bob Bloch

PSYCHOTIC arrived and congratulations on a brave beginning. Hope its appearance will flush some of the old-line PSYCH. fans out of the woodwork.

As for your note to me, "Alas, I had to sort of pan CATSPAW", I can only echo your reaction.

When I submitted my idea last February, Halloween was far in the future and far from my thoughts. All I had in mind was, "Would it be possible to do a fantasy on a science fiction show?" I was assured it would be and my notion -- a planet operating on the basis of sorcery just as ours operates on the basis of technological "science" -- was welcomed.

Then the changes began. Bear in mind, such changes are never requested en masse. The network and the powers-that-be in production ask for a few alterations in the treatment. Then they want some revisions in the first draft. Then they get the second draft and it's accepted and by this time you've made quite a few concessions but still (you fondly believe) managed to retain the basic concept of the show and the elements you think will "work". And if you have had any experience in television you shrug and accept a certain amount of concessions and compromises as inevitable; you are willing to lose a few battles in order to win the war.

Such, at least, was my attitude. But, truth to tell, in this case it wouldn't have mattered a damn if I'd made changes or refused. Because it turns out that after my final draft was in and accepted, the producer of the show, Mr. Gene Coon, decided to rewrite it entirely. What he had in mind I don't really know, and since it appears he is no longer with the show, I doubt if I'll ever find out. Nor do I quite understand why Mr. Pevney, the director, decided to alter the shots and photograph some of the action the way he did so as to come up with what appeared on the tube. I'm sure everyone operated out of the best of intentions; after all, no one sets out to deliberately botch a show -- but that's sure as hell what happened. And I'm willing to take responsibility for the alterations I made, but damned if I'll pretend that I am responsible for anything else. What I set up as a somewhat tongue-in-cheek romp into fantasy was transformed into a hybrid where all the characters kept insisting from the beginning that "This is all unreal -- there has to be a scientific explanation somewhere". I suppose the idea was to make everything appear adult; the result, as you point out, was to emphasize the juvenility. Very much as if one were

to set out writing ALICE IN WONDERLAND and carefully substituting Sam Spade for Alice. Heaven knows, a hardboiled private eye is much more "realistic" than Alice, but once you adopt this attitude you might as well forget about Wonderland.

So, as you so aptly put it -- "Alas", indeed!

As you probably noticed, Bob, Mr. Coon is back with STAR TREK, at least as a producer and/or writer. The Nov. 10 episode, "Metamorphosis" was written and produced by him. It was a passable effort at a small scale use of the Shangri-La theme. But again the basic premise---that the captain, first officer and chief medical officer of a star ship would go off on a small shuttle craft to do a midshipman's work---is simply incredible. --REG

Dean A. Grennell

Talk about a sensation of creaking unreality...

Last night I happened upon an ancient file folder of correspondence to and from Vernon L. McCain and sat, all bemused, reading about the things that had seemed pressing or at least timely in the pre-1958 era. And then to shamble all unsuspecting into the Covina P.O. this morning to find a copy of the latest PSY: well-1-11!

Suffice to say, it was a goodness. I identified the Kellogg illo on page (hey: you forgot to number the furschlugginer pages) 9 and checked the TOC page as a mere formality. It is most fitting to have a Kellogg illo in the revenant issue of PSY; his work contributed immensely to the unique flavor of the old original. I have copious quantities of material entombed in an old cardboard box against the chance that an irresistible urge may strike to do another GRUE some day (long walks and cold hip baths to no avail), but not one solitary thing left unpublished from Bob Kellogg, dammit. I even have a few gloatingly hoarded ESHM illo's, but no Kelloggs at all. The faan world suffered a smashing loss when he turned to making breakfast food.

I suppose I really should make a more earnest effort to master the grokking of STAR TREK. I've been long out of practice at gawking the boobtube and I think I may've seen two, possibly three, episodes of ST. They were mildly diverting -- let us say, easily preferable to being jabbed in the face with a sharp stick -- but somewhat less than sufficiently enthralling to hook me. In fact, I can't absently recall which night of the week the show is being screened this season. It's just that I've spent too many years becoming accustomed to getting in some of my most productive work during what is, I believe, called Prime Time. I'm a night people, workwise, and can but rarely afford to waste time sitting about watching a screen when I could be tickling the Grey Beask's keyboard here.

As for the westcoast con brouhaha, the whole situation leaves me singularly unmoved. Like you, I care for con's but scantily (the pic of you came out rather well, by the by, and I may be able to make a commercial success of it by charging people to see an acksheril photograph of Richard E. Geis). My few hasty drip-ins at the Westercon were my first con touring since the Chi thing in '62 and, I estimate, I can get by just fine till at least '72, now. So far's I'm concerned, having it go to Berkeley gives me an admirable excuse for not turning up. I've missed other cons that were closer than that.

I feel as you do about Bob Kellogg. We should enlist all of fandom in a manhunt for him...or all of mandom for a fanhunt... --REG

Bob Tucker

Imagine hearing from you again, after these several ages!

You may not realize it, but I have been thinking of another issue of LeZ. Dean Grennell offered to print it for me, and I have a contribution from a Star Contributor, but that was as far as I got.

Sixth Fandom shall rise again! Welcome back to fandom, Bob. -REG

Philip K. Dick

Thank you for your nice letter and the copy of PSYCHOTIC. It is a good fanzine, I think; there is a proper amount of material devoted to s-f and not so much gossip that is used as filler for so many fanzines (What it was like crossing the country in my VW, etc.). Your comment on MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE interested me; I agree it's the best I've done. The man Tagomi is as real to me as anyone I know, and, to speak cornily, I wrote my heart out in depicting his tribulations ...and especially the scene---which is the climax of the novel---when he refuses to turn the captured jew over to the Nazi officials. Tagomi's state of mind at that moment reminds me of a phrase by the Irish poet James Stephens; he speaks of timid rage. I will always love Mr. Tagomi for refusing to comply with the Germans' request; it is one of those tiny heroisms which is overlooked and yet fills a great part in the living of human---true human---life.

I also liked your review of my novel ZAP GUN. I would say that it is the most astute so far of any comments on any of my writing. It forms an interesting contrast to Judy Merrill's lengthy analysis of my overall work in the November F&SF, which, although brilliant, has no relationship to my work whatsoever. She has manufactured it all in her own mind. What especially impressed me was the amount of synopsis ---and accurate---which you developed in a single page. Have you considered the possibility of writing professionally? I think you should. You say a lot in a few words, and what you say is both interesting and meaningful. ((My ego thanks you, kind sir.))

One final word. Yes, there is a basic satire and humor throughout my writing. Like Abraham Lincoln, I have to see the funny side of life, the pataphysical side, or otherwise the tragedy, the many little sorrows, become too much for me.

Donald R. Benson, Editor-in-Chief, Pyramid Publications, Inc.

Thanks for the very interesting review of THE ZAP GUN in PSYCHOTIC. I'm glad you liked it, to the extent that you did, anyway. The origin of the book was interesting: my publishers have a strong preference for "real science fiction" titles for S-F books---hence the retitling of Raymond Jones' RENAISSANCE, which we put out as MAN OF TWO WORLDS; many other books, especially originals, had this happen. Naturally, I got bugged, losing arguments on this point all the time, and decided to start with "real science fiction titles" nobody could fault. I made up two, SPACE OPERA and THE ZAP GUN, and found writers for them, Jack Vance and Phil Dick. Curiously enough, I had, at the last minute, trouble with these titles, one representative of Management saying: "SPACE OPERA---that doesn't sound like science fiction...."

Come to think of it, neither does THE ZAP GUN!! --REG

Bjo Trimble

Well, it certainly was a surprise to see you show up in our mailbox once more! Welcome back and thank you for putting us on the mailing list. If you plan to continue doing multilith covers, let me know; I've some artists on the art show list who do very good work for that medium.

Thank you for your comments anent "The Con Game"; I could not have expressed myself in such a manner, and yet this is exactly what I have wished to say about the whole thing. As you may know, John and I were in on the Pan-Pacific bid, and while we are working with Baycon to some extent (putting on the art show) we are not particularly happy about it.

It took several weeks of bugging them to get Donaho to send us a copy of his HOW WE WON, which is full of Bill's usual almost-but-not-quite-on-the-mark-so-why-get-excited "facts" that he uses too well to build a case. Mostly, we have been amused that Donaho felt moved to offer this rationalization; if he truly felt that Baycon had won really fair and square, it would not have been necessary. An obvious case of guilty conscience speaking.

Alva has not sent us a copy of HOT AXE #3, but has put on a face of being very friendly and so on. I dunno. I'm not really interested anymore, and am rather happy that they have the work of all this and not us. Let us just say that while the heat of the trouble died down (with us Trimbles) some time ago, we are still wary and watchful, and would not trust Baycon as far as we could throw Donaho.

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To thin corflu, use non-oily fingernail polish remover, obtainable at any drug or dime store. Oily (or lanolin-based) remover won't aid corflu in adhering.

---

Arnie Katz presents a good case against Dannie Plachta more than against Columbus, which may or may not be the same thing. I don't know much about the group; Larry Smith has been quite pleasant in his letters to us, and though on the neo-fannish side, he seemed to be OK. We all started as neo-fans...didn't we?

((Not Bob Tucker. He sprang full grown, a BNF, from Bloch's brow.))

But my reason for supporting St. Louis is a basic one of ACTION; while we were struggling with an art show, Ray Fisher (chairman of the St. Louis bid) came in with a collection of cold drinks for us. He offered the theory that he couldn't see what he could do, in the room, to help, but since it was obvious that all the workers needed something wet and cold, he could do that! Much, much better than someone demanding that you stop your job to tell him what he can do to help...it often takes more time to do that than to do the job. And, even more often, there are jobs to be done that are obvious if the so-called "helper" will just look around. Everytime we needed an errand run, or something done, or the desk taken over for a while, it seemed that a St. Louis person was there to help out.

When a piece of art was stolen from the show, and the Nycon didn't even offer to help pay for it, I got mad and threatened to close down the shows forever. Joyce Fisher asked if I'd toll her how to run a show; that it was too good to lose, and she'd try to carry on. People like this, who are willing to work, deserve a con.

I can't speak for future bids from the Los Angeles area. Deciding on a "if I can't be Chief, I'm not going to play Indians" attitude toward the whole thing, I won't be on another convention bid unless I'm running the show my way. Since that likelihood is about as possible as George Scithers abandoning that plaid jacket,

fandom needn't worry about it.

However, as you well know, several factions of L.A. fandom exist, and the Pan-Pacificcon bidders were only one small group. We played it fair, and played the "good guys" and everyone saw how far it got us. The next group seemingly coming up for a con-bid are not going to get trapped by that, and they are likely to play it a bit harder and tighter and rougher. They could throw in such goodies as the "Boondoggle" caper, and so on...something which Baycon was hoping we'd be too ethical to do (in fact, they were banking on it, complained at every turn if anyone on the Pan-Pacificcon concum mentioned it even obliquely, and carried on a great front of "playing fair" about it. Now, of course, Donaho is using the winning of the bid as indication that fandom vindicates his move, after all).

I don't know if you've gone to LASFS meetings yet ("The Hill", 508 S. St. Andrews Pl., L.A. 9005. 384-6810....still every single Thursday night of the cotton-pickin' year!) but you'll find that it has changed a lot. There aren't many of the old faces, and the new ones are different types. I can't tell you if the newer ones will be to your liking; we never know each other well enough for that, but you might give it a try and see what you think.

((I've turned into an anti-social hermit; I shoot visitors on sight now, which makes for a messy hallway since I live in an apartment house, but there is great tolerance in Venice for non-conformist behavior. For instance, there was a movie crew shooting scenes a block away today, with Peter Sellers, but I merely passed on by with my morning paper and paid them no mind.))

I've had people send me clippings of Ron Cobb's cartoons from the L.A. Free Press. He is very good, but my favorite work of his is still "The Eraser Eater"; tell him I said hello, and I'd like to see some of his art in one of my shows.

Harry Warner's article was appreciated, for the simple reason that it was interesting to see how he started out. Perhaps his problems with SPACEWAYS is the root of his writing letters to every fanzine that is just starting out. If nobody else writes you a LoC on your brand new fanzine, CRUDSHEET, you can at least be comforted by the fact that any day now the mailman will bring you a large, carefully critical, and vastly encouraging letter from Harry Warner! Sometimes, it can even encourage you to put out a second issue of CRUDSHEET, which is probably not a particular advantage to anyone (but somehow Harry never gets blamed for this!).

I can remember gleaning addresses from Astounding and other magazines, and all the LASFS addresses I had, plus an FA roster someone had given me, when Steve Tolliver and I published our first fanzine, MIMSY. It was a terrible zine, but we promptly got a letter from Harry Warner, telling us that our efforts were appreciated, and suggesting that we look up some fans who knew more about ditto work than we obviously did, and giving us some hints on typing articles (clean your typer, I think, was one suggestion). We blithely ignored all the letters telling us to "get lost" and went on to publish 3 or 4 more issues of MIMSY.

It's all Harry Warner's fault.

I agree with your remarks on STAR TREK, by the way, and wish they were better this season to assure their being on next season; that worries me. I'm more of a fan, I guess, of the ST people: Gene Roddenberry, Bob Hellstrom, etc. I hope you sent a copy of your zine to them; Gene likes to see articles on the show (Desilu Studios, 780 Gower St., Hollywood 90038), even if they are critical.

As a matter of fact, I sent Roddenberry about a dozen copies of #21, but the

Legal Dept. suspected the large, fat envelope contained an unsolicited manuscript! Horrors! And they sent it back, unopened, by registered mail! However, undaunted, I have sent them back to Roddenberry with the envelope marked "MAGAZINE---Not A Manuscript!" and a separate letter alerting him of the Coming of PSYCHOTIC.

The studios are Terribly Afraid of being sued for plagiarism, so, man, they won't look at nothin'! Hmmm. This could be a Weapon! There's this awful show on tv you want to get rid of, see, so you think up good ideas that would help it, see, and by hook or crook get somebody important in the production company to read them. Those ideas are automatically OUT and cannot be used after that because you might sue! The show dies and you are triumphant!

Hmm! My Ghod---does this mean I've killed STAR TREK? --REG

### Ted White

Although Arnie Katz had warned me, PSY "21" was still a surprise---a pleasant surprise. The way you've picked up all the old department titles, the headings, everything about this issue of PSY hits me square in my nostalgia center. It is a fine resumption, and I hope you stay with it for at least a couple years---long enough to put PSY back where it was in its heyday.

One thing: Arnie Katz is wrong about your numbering, and I'm sorry to see you add to the confusion by denying (numerically) at least three issues which carried the PSYCHOTIC title. I'm referring to the issue (dittoed) distributed through FAPA in the fall of 1956, the single-sheeter of winter, 1958-59, and the issue published for the Cult around winter, 1959-60 (all dates from memory) ((And what a memory!)) which used, I think, the same Ron Cobb cover on the new "21". I haven't any of these issues to hand, so I can't say definitely what your numbering should be, but I suspect somewhere around 27, 28 or 29...

((Well...the damage has been done. Besides, the FAPA PSYCHOTICs and that Cult PSYCHOTIC were not, in my mind, True Issues. Only the genzine PSYCHOTIC counts. Thass the rationalization, anyway. It makes for a nice little footnote in fan history, too.))

I'm not a STAR TREK fan, and I've said enough about it in YANDRO so that I feel no urge to add much to that comment. But since STAR TREK shifted to Friday nights, I've had to sit through every other show (on the nights of Fanoclast meetings), and none of these have added much to my appreciation of the series. (The most recent, the one with all the androids, was by far the best I've seen; the science was as lousy as usual, the acting and lines by the regulars as embarrassing as usual, but at least they had a fine character actor working with them for a change, and the script had a little real humor.) You raise many of the points of criticism I've felt, and I quite agree with you that throwing all the ship's officers into danger each week is assinine. That's why I feel the basic conception of the show is its weakest point.

It seems as though every three or four years, Bill Donaho feels compelled to do something monumentally stupid. In 1964, he turned the Breen situation into a genuine fandom-wide war, when very little caution on his part could have prevented it. Now, with the publication of HOW WE WON, he seems delighted to rub salt and sand into the open wounds of the L.A. group he defeated. Or, as George Scithers put it recently, "It seems as though in L.A. they don't know how to lose, and in the Bay Area they don't know how to win."

I wonder what Columbus's reaction to Arnie's article will be. A brief note in

the WSFA JOURNAL, chiding Larry Smith for the way he's embarrassed Roger Zalazny with his antics brought me an amazingly pompous, to say nothing of assinine, letter from Smith in which he demanded my apologies. Oh well. In any case, if Arnie's article needs any corroboration, I'll be glad to supply it. The Columbus fans make the bids from Baltimore and Boston (in 1966) look polished and mature by comparison.

Warner's article was excellent. It should be noted that his ancient ABDick mimeo lasted yet another ten years before giving up the ghost in 1958. Pretty good for a \$10 church cast-off. If you can dig up more interesting reprints by FAPA's '40s Brain Trust, by all means do so. I've read much of their material from that period, but I'd be happy to read it again...

Harry Warner, Jr.

The 21st PSYCHOTIC delighted me for the straightforward, non-self-conscious way in which you went about resuming the task of publishing an excellent fanzine. I'm sure I would have been so self-conscious and so inhibited by stage-fright that the results would be painful, assuming that this was my present self suddenly having produced the first new issue of SPACEWAYS in a couple of decades. You'll never keep up to that monthly schedule, unless you've mutated into a super fan during your long dormant period, but I'd be glad to settle for a half dozen or so issues of this a year for as long as I last.

Of course, I felt some relief to discover the subject matter of the article you reprinted. It couldn't do any harm to the living or the mundane whom it mentions and the writing isn't quite as pretentious and prolix as most of the stuff I used to put into HORIZONS. It's odd how memory works. Reading this for the first time in twenty years, I recognized instantly something in the <sup>first</sup> paragraph, because D. B. Thompson gave me a sound scolding in the next FAPA mailing for using "irregardless" and it probably hasn't slipped through anything I've published since. Yet I find it impossible to believe some of the things in this article, because my memory of them has changed over the intervening years. For instance, nothing but this reprinted evidence could have convinced me that the Doubledoubletoilandtrouble Mimeograph cost \$10; some subconscious factor has caused me to drop its price in memory down to \$5 somewhere down through those years, and I've probably used the \$5 figure in some nostalgic article or other in recent years.

You might be amused to learn that I spent my last hours at the Nycon searching for a fan named Avery---not my old co-editor, but his son. The son must be nearing the end of his teens by now. I didn't know he was at the worldcon until I went to bed early the last night I spent there, and was just about to get to sleep when the telephone rang. It was the second generation Avery, telling me that he wanted to meet me as a curious link to a previous way of fannish existence. My sore back hurt too much for me to get up and dress then, so we agreed to get together the next noon, but we never did succeed in finding one another in the mob around the meeting hall, and I fled the Nycon and New York in order to get some peace from that ache in the back. Avery now lives at Newport News, Va., where he is in newspaper work. The son has published several issues of a little fanzine, somewhat against his father's wishes.

((A moldy hectograph leaves an indelible impression.))

STAR TREK is a subject on which I can no longer compare reactions, because Friday is the night when I have no hope at all of getting away from the office long enough to watch television. But I was never a real enthusiast for the series. The impressive main sets and a fairly good atmosphere of far worlds conveyed in most of the episodes were counteracted for me by a strong tendency to very bad acting by both the

regulars and guest stars, and much too slackness in the momentum that should drive the episodes forward. I kept wishing most hours had been tightened to about twenty minutes.

Disputes for the right to have a con are about the only fannish area where I've succeeded in keeping my mouth shut the greater part of the time. So I don't intend to say anything partisan about Los Angeles, San Francisco, Columbus, or St. Louis. The last time I broke the rule of non-involvement, I got virtually all Baltimore fandom angry at me, and the fans are just about the only redeeming feature of Baltimore, so Maryland's only big city is now a complete loss to me.

Your illustrations are splendid, particularly the front cover. Somehow, they don't draw today fanzine covers that give such an impression of people and objects curving gradually through three dimensions.

Bjo Trimble with an insert and footnote to her letter two-three pages back.

Well, if you are going to put my letter whole into the zine, I'd like to add an insert. This may not make much sense, unless you know the people involved; they are the greatest nit-pickers in the world, and unless the whole point is better explained, Alva will make such a case of it, you wouldn't believe! He will claim that since HOT AXE is for a private apa, he didn't think we'd be interested, etc, etc, etc... and of course he'll send us a copy, we had but to ask (knowing full well that if we didn't know of it...) anyway, you see?

So, to the sentence where I say, "Alva has not sent us a copy of HOT AXE #3" at that comma, please insert "he has said other things behind our (Pan-Pacificon) collective backs, including letters which were shown around and so forth, but" and go on with the rest of the sentence about acting friendly.

All this will do is show him (and other readers) that we are aware of the letters, and that we certainly do know what he is saying, whatever he is saying to us. OK?

((I had already stenciled the letter, Bjo, when your revisions arrove. Your meaning is clearer this way, I think.))

A seemingly minor point, but one which gets blown to all sizes with that crew!

At Nyeon (the world's lousiest con so far) we pulled in about \$2200.00 on the show, gross. And only 15% of that goes to the show, remember; the rest to the artists, themselves. Not bad for a li'l in-group deal!

Larry Smith

Thanks for the courtesy copy of PSY 21. Herewith are the comments on Mr. Katz's article that you wanted. As an aside, I've been fending off various and sundry accusations of "maneuvering" and other misdoings by several other fen from New York; perhaps one reply will suffice.

As far as the quoted conversation goes, I cannot say whether or not it was accurate. I don't pretend to have a photographic memory, and I rather doubt that Arnie Katz has one either. To settle the main point of Mr. Katz's "argument": Dannie Plachta is a personal friend of mine. He is most definitely NOT, however, by any definition or under any circumstances, the "Secret Master of the Columbus worldcon

bid." He is simply an advisor, as are some thirty or so other well known fen, who were contacted in the hopes that they would agree to let me borrow their knowledge of fandom and of conventioning. Those of them, including Mr. Plachta, who did agree to support my bid were fully and exactly aware of what I was asking of them, and I was not asking for someone else to organize, operate or dictate my bid. Mr. Plachta was the first to offer his services, and he has been one of the most active of my supporters, but neither Mr. Plachta nor I consider this prima facie evidence of his being in charge.

I could refute St. Louis' "advantages" (as listed by Mr. Katz), but this would not be fair to the St. LouisCon Committee, since they would not have the chance to rebut. I'll simply say that the Couches (Secretary and Treasurer of the St. Louis-Con) have been in fandom no longer than I have, and have been to fewer conventions. Mr. Fisher, the Chairman of the St. LouisCon, has, to my knowledge, been to only one con other than his local Ozarkons. I don't know long Ray has been an actifan, but I would presume at least as long as the Couches have. I, on the other hand, have at least two members of my committee with at least 15 years of continuous activity in fandom; one of them is a member of First Fandom. This gives me quite a bit of experience to draw on, I think.

Except for a few fen with an axe to grind, Roger Zelazny's name has been cleared of any adverse connections with the Columbus bid. Your publication of Mr. Katz's article was rather unfortunate, in a way, since both Mr. Zelazny and I were hoping that the issue would be forgotten. Alas, with Katz in the picture, this is apparently not to be. And I can tell you that Mr. Zelazny's name was prematurely released inadvertently, due to lack of knowledge on one hand, and possible editorial carelessness on the other, not because I wished to capitalize on Mr. Zelazny's name and fame. I wish you'd send a copy of PSY 21 to Mr. Zelazny and ask for his comments.

My, but Arnie seems to have a remarkably selective memory. All that I've said about St. Louis is "Yes, they're planning to bid for the '69 con, but I don't know anything more than that." Until lately, this was perfectly true; then Ray Fisher released the name of his bid and his officers to Andy Porter's SF WEEKLY. There may have been times when I wasn't sure how likely St. Louis was as a bidder, especially after doing some correspondence, but I cannot remember ever saying flatly that they weren't going to bid. And, since Mr. Katz has met me only at the Midwestcon, where St. Louis was also holding a bid party, I doubt if I would have been stupid enough to make a claim that they weren't bidding in his presence.

And Katz is trying to tell us that block voting for the fanzine HUGO is a crime solely committed by Columbus? Remarkable, considering that ERB-DOM won on the strength of its having a core of fen solidly behind it, or so I've heard. I'm not excusing block voting - it's a bad thing all around, and C/SFS goofed there, even tho those of us who voted were sincere - but I do object to being singled out and accused as the sole perpetrator of something that seems to be all too common in fandom. And John Ayotte has not dissociated himself from the SCCon Committee, to my knowledge; he's just too busy with mundane problems to make all the cons and keep up the fanac he'd like to.

And I don't remember clouting anyone across the back at this year's Midwestcon. Perhaps the fan who was so grossly abused would care to convince me differently? Since Arnie prefers not to mention the innocent victim publicly, perhaps he would care to write said victim privately and ask him to write me?

Thanks again for PSY, and please let me know what, if anything, comes of this whole mess. I'd appreciate any comments from someone with a valid point to contribute. And I trust that anyone who wishes to attack me will at least have the cour-

tesy to make sure that his facts are entirely accurate before he goes to the trouble of writing to the fan press with his attack.

Lee Hoffman

Tx for the slender PSYCHOTIC. Don't let it get too fat. I have a tendency to read slim zines and to put the big fat ones aside to be gone over "when I have the time", which is--of course--never.

STAR TREK seems to be a roaring success in fandom, to judge by the amount of attention it gets. Albeit, there's a lot of criticism, it's still apparently a major topic of conversation, which sure suggests that fans watch it and care about it. (Since they switched over to Friday nights, I don't see it, so I can't say whether I agree or not.)

Re the big bash between SF and LA for the con next year, separate and apart from whatever SF may or may not have done, LA seemed to go out of their way to lose the bid with their presentation at the NYCon, especially that speech by Gene Roddenberry. Nigh about anyone who was around for the NYCon II would have been quite turned off by all the exciting things Roddenberry offered in behalf of LA. If LA really wanted the con, they should have tried a little harder to put on an interesting appeal for it. Even if they thought they had it socked up, that's no excuse for offering a presentation that would turn off those people listening. After all, one assumes that if they wanted the con, they'd want attendance, too. And those speeches sure weren't such as to make the audience lust to attend the con in question.

Earl Evers

TO THE MAD HERMIT OF THE LAND WHERE THE SUN SETS  
FROM THE MAD HERMIT OF THE LAND WHERE THE SUN RISES  
GREETINGS

((taciturn silence))

Something about the cover struck me as disturbingly familiar. I've seen those vaguely disturbing faces and that unworldly prospective before. Then I read your editorial and said of course. Ron Cobb does those sickly pseudo-psychedelic-type drawings for the LAFFP. The trouble is, that whole art style turns me off. It always reminds me of the feeling I get on DMT - the world looks distorted, but it's not a happy distortion. Maybe it would be better to say things look deformed. And that's my impression of a lot of the West Coast psychedelic art, especially the SF and LA Oracles.

I think it stems from the fact that most of the artists are either speed freaks or turn on to speed to do their drawings - meth makes you feel great, but it does all kinds of horrible things to your physical nervous system, and something in the back of your brain knows this and your artwork on speed takes on this seedy-looking, sick quality.

I get this same impression of a lot of the writing of Phil Dick - I was strung out on speed when I first became a real PK Dick fan and read about ten of his books in a couple of weeks. Somehow there was something in his view of the world, the way he strings words and thoughts together, the way plot twists pop up out of nowhere at great speed, etcet that betrays him as a fellow speed freak. Later, I found out

that he does do a lot of his writing on amphetamine.

Maybe this is one approach for understanding Dick's writing. I find all his meanings perfectly clear, or at least clear in the sense that he writes a given passage to mean one thing, then probably rereads it later, finds another possible meaning, and bases further passages on the second meaning, or on both, or on some sort of synthesis that compromises between both. Now whenever I'm high on amphetamine, I get the impression of being much more perceptive and able to communicate these self-obvious truths much easier. This is partly illusory in my case and in the case of about every writer I've read who uses speed, but it still influences the writing.

Speed makes you think and write at a high subjective rate of speed, and it makes your thoughts go down on paper in short, jerky bursts, with a lot of weaving back and forth. It takes a good mind to keep yourself under control and not write a mess of disorganized fragments. Usually, PK Dick manages to keep his story under control, but when he errs it's usually on the side of incomprehensibility rather than on the side of tedium.

So if you read his books with the idea in mind that the author was writing in short rapid bursts, with each passage popping into his mind almost by automatic writing like a sort of minor revelation, and that it's only by force of will that he manages to tie the whole thing together. (That's the difference between Phil Dick and an amateur such as myself - he knows enough about plotting to tie the speed-fragments together, and I don't.)

Speed gives most people the idea that they have discovered the Secret of the Universe and are perfectly capable of revealing this awesome knowledge to the world. (Oh, it's not always that blatant, but it's usually there somewhere behind the euphoria and the increased energy.) And this can impart a strong sense of wonder to the writing, enough so that I can almost see how writers might think it justified to go through all the hassles taking speed entails just to achieve it. (Actually, the main reason I've taken speed to write was to crash through writing blocks and get a volume of words down on paper. And of course for me it didn't work - I found I didn't have the basic plotting skills and my writing on speed was much worse than my writing on the ground.)

Giving credit where credit is due; thanks, Harlan Ellison. If you hadn't mentioned that Phil Dick turns on to speed in your introduction to his story in your recent SF collection, I wouldn't have felt it cool to put these thoughts down on paper.

I wonder how I'd write while flying on speed. But I wouldn't dare try it; as it is I get so jittery and active on two cups of black coffee I rarely resort to even that when my energy is low. Tea is my favorite mild stimulant.

--REG

Rick Sneary

Received PSYCHOTIC this am, with more pleasure and interest than I would have expected. I haven't been finding fanzines greatly interesting for the past few years -- my fault, not really theirs -- but I take spells. Seeing an old name is a pleasant surprise in it self, when you get past the Age of Trust. The 25; sub enclosed is to assure I see the next one...if there is a next one. (After all, you might be just having a "spell" too.) Beside your usual neat layout, let me say I'm grateful for the size.. I like a fanzine that knows when to quit.. To many of those 60 page monsters don't get read around here, because they take to long... Passing note, ODD-#17 just the other day, from Fisher...

Regarding STAR TREK, I hope you sent a copy to Ed Cox (Ed Cox for TAFF), as he was privately griping last year about the same point you made.. That the Captain of a ship the size of the Enterprise would never in real life expose himself and his staff to that much danger. It is general science fiction tradition, but is damned stupid and has always erked me... I have not watched S.T. since the third or fourth show, finding it somehow embarrassing. I have heard nothing to make me feel that I am missing much... I do not believe it is science fiction of an adult, or even a believable juvenile level.. And I do not expect that we will ever live to see the day when what we would critically say was good science fiction will ever appear regularly on The Box.. It is not that I don't think it can be done, or that there aren't people who will try it.. But think about this. Good science fiction, while popular today, still appears to be popular with much less than 20% of the total reading population.. To last on the tube a show has to pull about 20%, right! So it has one strike against it... To be good s-f, it should also be a "good story"--at least nearly as well done as say, STUDIO ONE. Right?! Strike two! Right? Then there is the fact that no BEM or alien planet, etc, etc., will ever look as real on TV, as the one Heinlein or Kuttner or Bradbury made you see in your mind.. --- Let those who wish praise what good there is, but I for one suggest that Fandom not get very excited one way or the other.. Not unless TV itself gets about 350% better.

I don't agree. Firstly, youth is dominating TV now and youth is receptive to s-f. And while STAR TREK has its faults it is still presenting the best s-f on TV that has ever been presented, and is familiarizing the public with basic s-f themes and concepts---making possible in a few years some really fine "pure" science fiction.

Secondly, I think you're overrating STUDIO ONE. I don't remember it as being as great as some claim. I believe that if we had a chance to look at a lot of "old-time" TV now we'd all say "Ugh!" TV has improved in spite of what some critics say. The general public has become more sophisticated and mature.

---REG

Tom Reamy

Thanks for PSYCHOTIC 21. I thought when reading The Couch, Geis' memory really has failed when he says the Cobb cover is "finally used." Ho, ho, still thinking, he's already used it and I check my fanzine accumulation. Not too difficult as they are unfannishly arranged alphabetically; and there it is. Same cover; identical down to the small tear in the upper left corner. Then I turn to the first page to magnanimously let you know on which issue your memory revolted and it says "PSYCHOTIC #25"!! You figure it out. I just unearth mysteries, not solve them. ((There is no solution! Obviously in my ancient brain a bloodvessel blew out and ruined a memory area labeled PSY 22-25. It was just a stroke of bad luck.))

Arnie and I seldom agree on anything but this time we do. I never talked to Smith but I watched him talk to others. Anyway, I plan to push the St. Louis bid enthusiastically in TRUMPET.

I'm a devoted STAR TREK watcher but I agree with most everything you say. Something else I've noticed is the similarity of various plots. So far, Kirk and his intrepid crew have saved three planets from the domination of a computer, and (especially in the first season) an uncountable number of aliens and crewmen with strange powers have run amuck in the Enterprise.

Again, the Enterprise is supposed to be exploring "uncharted" areas of space but they always seem to know where everything is and who's who though it hasn't reached the point of LOST IN SPACE. Everytime they meet an alien race, the robot gives them a run-down on the alien's culture. I wonder who programmed that silly thing; because

the Jupiter is the first ship to leave the "galaxy" (that's what Irwin Allen thinks the sun and the nine planets are called). ((Ten planets, counting Pluto. Nit-picker, mæ.)) They also seem to have forgotten that Dr. Smith tried to murder them all in the first episode.

I've read that STAR TREK's ratings have slipped considerably this season and I have serious doubts that it will be back for a third. I also had dire misgivings about THE AVENGERS' time slot when they returned; I could just see them being slipped opposite STAR TREK. However, plans just announced allayed my fears.

As I recall, THE AVENGERS will air opposite LOST IN SPACE. --REG

Calvin Demmon

Your fanzine came just as I was thinking about leaving off my current semi-gafia and actually Publishing, and I was glad to see that somebody could do it. It might amuse you to learn that I entered fandom as a neo-fan, made a Name for myself, published Weekly Fanzines, attended Conventions, sold stories to Professional Magazines, and Burned Myself Out, all in less time than it has taken for your #21 to follow your #20. ((You're just a fruit fly, Calvin.))

But your #21 is a good fanzine, and I thank you very much for sending it. I especially liked your review of ZAP GUN. Philip K. Dick's novels always grab me right where I live--in that bright insane zone where just when you think you've got it all figured out enormous cracks and tears appear and you become aware of a Whole New Scene beyond the rubble. (Well, I don't live there all the time, coming out now and then for a smoke and a bite to eat, and to earn a Living.) I might think that he doesn't plan his novels at all, but that he just writes and writes until the whole thing gets too big and then explodes, whereupon he picks up the pieces and starts over (& I wouldn't criticize him, if he did, because he could do it if anybody could)--except that I once saw an outline of a proposed Dick novel and it was obvious he had planned everything out from the beginning.

As for STAR TREK, gee, we don't have a tv, being very busy and all and both of us (the little woman & I) being Old TV Addicts--we had a tv once and watched it for two days straight and just about starved to death and just about got fired and kicked out of school, so we gave it to the Poor--but I saw one episode at a friend's house once and wasn't impressed. It didn't look like outer space to me. I don't think any SF on the Media will ever hold my interest as much as SPACE PATROL used to do on Saturday morning radio. You couldn't get anyone to build its sets, nor would tv's gluey-seamed monsters get a second glance beside SPACE PATROL's--it was all in one's head, after all. And when SPACE PATROL went on television I refused to watch it--how could all that glorious inter-galactic running around be contained in a 12" (diagonal measurement) grey and white picture? I think maybe that's why I don't like STAR TREK--who ever heard of a 15" spaceship?

But, Sir, I like your new fanzine very much & hope you'll send me #22, even though I'll be an old man by November, 1977.

Andy Porter

Personally, as Secretary of the NYCon, I didn't have too much time to step back and notice how the con was going. I missed all the program, most of the parties, and much sleep. That's why I'm bidding for New York in '75... However, I did get Bill Donaho's HOW WE WON, which was, in my estimation, slightly fantastic. I've talked to

others in the NY area about it, and we all seem to agree that it was definitely the worst publication Bill Donaho could have circulated at this time in fandom. Having survived the Boondoggle, Bill has put his typer into it neatly with this publication designed to gain the lasting and permanent enmity of the LA in '68 bidders. It was the worst possible thing the Baycon committee could have allowed into the mails, and I only assume that Ben Stark and Alva Rogers didn't see it before it was published and mailed; these two have much more sense of Fannish ethics than to allow HOW WE WON to be published as representative of the attitudes of the Baycon committee.

Arnie Katz's article is ~~forced, stilted and unpleasant~~ one of the most hard-hitting I've seen on the idiocies of the Columbus in '69 conbidders. The lack of Fannish sensibility, of respect for Roger Zelazny as a person, and the vast display of sheer immature enthusiasm they have displayed is simply incredible. I suggested, half humorously, at the PhillyCon that we have a Fannish Crusade to ~~slay the dragon~~ vanquish Columbus. We could rob their banks, bomb their hotels, rape their femme-fans; burn their mimeo paper, and all sorts of rotten and dastardly things... About all I can say is that SF WEEKLY is very strongly for St. Louis; I know a number of very fine people live there, and several of them are on the St. LouisCon Bidding Committee.

Harlan Ellison

MiGod! First THE SPECTRE, then DEADMAN, and now you. It is a season of bloody resurrections. I expect at almost any moment the wraiths of Claude Degler, Sigler, John Magnus and Karl Olsen to emerge from the protoplasmic ooze, with the shades of Aimee Semple Macpherson, Amelia Earhart, Judge Crater, Ambrose Bierce and Yog-Sothoth slithering along behind decrying their aeons-long horniness. (As I understand it, in the lands of death and gafia, no one gets laid.) ((Wrong---they rest in peace.))

You seem to have lost none of your old panache for gibbering fantalk. Rather refreshing, what with all the serious constructive elements abounding. Your comments anent the "theft" of the consite from LA by the Berkely Bunch are no closer to the truth than Donaho's reprehensible bragging. I don't think anyone will ever know the truth, and as a semi-innocent victim of the bidding backblast, I wish to God someone would filter all the stories down through a loaf of pumpernickel, cut it half and half with Hawaiian Punch and boil it out so we could distill a little rationale from all the vicious backbiting nastiness. I'm beginning to believe all the bad publicity, and that, yes, I indeed did do something underhanded and sneaky by seconding the Oakland bid. I'd at least like someone to tell me what it was that I did that was a no-no. Frankly, all this fan bidding nonsense is imbecilic. And I don't know who are the more unpleasant to live with: the sore losers or the impolite winners. Were I not so firmly convinced that St. Louis should win the consite bid next year, I would follow my instincts and simply not get involved in seconding or pumping-for any bidder. But I swear, after the St. Louis bid at Oakland, never again! Or as the late Ambrose J. Weems was so fond of saying: "You can fool some of the people some of the time, and some of the people some of the time, but you can't fool some of the people some of the time." Simple truths are the best.

Kindly do me a small favor, which I ask on the basis of all we used to mean to each other: don't waste any more space talking about half-baked STAR TREK scripts. It's like doing a learned treatise on the collected novels of Vargo Statten. STAR TREK is perhaps superior TV fare, but it is so much more inferior in every way to the cheapest, jerkiest science fiction story ever published in, say, COSMOS, that I find it offensive and wearying to constantly encounter this slavish adoration of second rate gruel in the fanzines. If these plots were being handed to us by ANALOG or GALAXY we'd be up in arms screaming about a return to Ray Palmer drivel. But because it

comes all a-flutter, moving and squeaking, in full color, we abase ourselves before the Roddenberry altar. Granted, you only applauded them en passant in an interlineation, and the bulk of the notice was a pan, even so, finding intelligent comment of any sort in my favorite medium, on a subject of very little consequence, distresses me. And since we both know what a delicate nature I possess, why not use potential STAR TREK review space to discuss the new Anne McCaffrey novel that's been running in ANALOG—a series that bids well to be as potent as Frank Herbert's DRAGON IN THE SEA. Or examine the question of what merit all the "first novels" by unknown names may hold, as they seem to be published in paperback original almost weekly. Or inquire into the emotional and artistic quandary of Fred Pohl, who is buying "new wave" fiction but doesn't really like or understand it. Or develop a book review section that will rival Damon Knight's commentary, or Wm. Atheling's.

In fact, to this end, may I offer my services? ((Well-1-1...okay.))

As to my own personal writings and doings, the following:

Short story THE BEAST THAT SHOUTED LOVE AT THE WORLD coming up as cover story in GALAXY shortly...an attempt to update the space opera idiom in a short novelette titled WORLDS TO KILL in an upcoming IF as cover story...DANGEROUS VISIONS has sold over 3000 copies in less than a month, three times the sales rate of the usual sf book...a FLYING NUN segment I wrote titled YOU CAN'T GET THERE FROM HERE will air later this season, as will a CIMARRON STRIP segment about Jack The Ripper titled KNIFE IN THE DARKNESS...currently working on a pilot script for a new series slated for NBC next season based on the old Frank Buck BRING 'EM BACK ALIVE books (but I've written it more like I LOVE A MYSTERY than Dactari or Cowboy in Africa)...THE FACE OF HELENE BOURNOUW with a great Dillon illo in the current issue of CAD...a new fantasy titled ERNEST & THE GOD MACHINE in the current KNIGHT...sold DANIEL WHITE FOR THE GREATER GOOD to an independent filming company in New York...Trident Press will bring out my new collection LOVE AIN'T NOTHING BUT SEX MISPELLED in March, hardcover...Belmont will release a fantasy collection titled FROM THE LAND OF FEAR in December or January...Gold Medal will release NIGHTSHADE & DAMNATIONS, the finest stories of Gerald Kersh, edited by Harlan Ellison, about the same time...February or March will see an expanded and updated version of my first sf novel THE MAN WITH NINE LIVES which was butchered in its original incarnation via Ace, under the original title THE SOUND OF A SCYTHE, from Belmont. About twenty thousand more words than the 1956 Ace edition...a Sheckley-Ellison collaboration in F&SF ought to be out about the time you get this letter... have been running around the country doing college lectures last few months; pursuant to this, I'll be guest lecturer for a week in July at Clairmont College's SF Workshop. Pennsylvania, that it.

I Is that enough of a reply to a fucking 18-page unnumbered fanzine?

Let's see now... You sent a 15 page ms for your column, a three page letter... Pretty thin, Harlan.

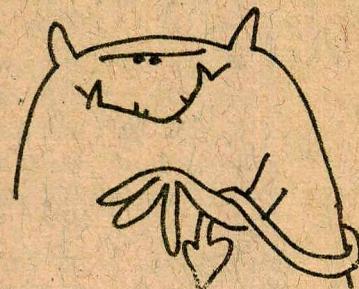
I have two letters I'd like to quote at length, but don't have room for. Like, there has to be a limit somewhere.

Dwain Kaiser disagrees with me re the Con Game editorial. He says, "Some fans have little or no maturity. When they lose they cry, and cry loudly...it's a cruel, rough world...nothing is given out for free, things have to be fought for, when some L.A. fen learn this perhaps they'll be on the road to growing up."

And Buz Busby discusses STAR TREK interestingly, but too late. Next time write sooner, please. I will, however, forward his comments to Roddenberry....

END OF LETTERS

# A VOICE FROM THE STYX



The resurgence of PSYCHOTIC and Richard Geis from a premature gafia grave has so unsettled me, I have responded to a preciously-worded appeal from the editor for material with the column you see below. It proposes to be the first installment of a column that will deal with speculative fiction and its writing. I realize and recognize the difficulties inherent in trying to discuss this subject in a fanzine, where such topics as "The Caliper-Measurements of Mr. Spock's Ears As A Force For Good In Our Time" and "Con Bids I Have Thwarted" by (here the list of possible authors is endless) are more looked on with favor. But, being a writer (sometimes) of speculative fiction, having grown up in the field and with fandom, I like to think there are still a few people who would rather discuss the genre of writing that gave fandom its birth, and not the idiot emanations of the Kallikak Tube.

To this end, A VOICE FROM THE STYX will attempt serious literary comment anent the craft and purpose of speculative fiction, in the vein of elegant criticism once proffered by Damon Knight, James Blish (as William Atheling, Jr.), Algis Budrys and Renfrew Pemberton (as F.M. Busby).

My success in this endeavor will rest heavily on the amount of feedback I can elicit from PSYCHOTIC's readership. I can promise very little but honesty, conviction, an attention to detail and minutiae in reportage; and, of course, a desire to entertain you. Opinions expressed are, to be sure, those of the columnist and not

A COLUMN BY HARLAN ELLISON

necessarily the management of this magazine. If I pleasureth you not, I will expect the same degree of passion in taking me to task that I will expend in taking to task those who dishonor the craft we admire at its highest level of performance. This is, in other words, rather a serious endeavor, and with it I will try to codify my highly subjective feelings about speculative fiction, in the form of essays in depth with one or another current book as the focus of the topic. Twice yearly (if the magazine or my metabolism continue to hold out) I will do a column answering my critics. That way, the feedback will flow freely, and people won't have to mutter in their beards about the impunity of the printed word.

Insofar as tone is concerned, I will promise never to use this column as a vehicle of personal vilification, revenge or pique. The criticism I will deliver with the utmost attention to sparkling bandinage, but cruelty will be kept at a minimum.

A major intention of this column will be to bring to the attention of fans those books which deserve notice as possible Hugo nominees. Around nominating time I will offer my personal list of titles which seem to be most especially noteworthy, to refresh and prod your memories.

As a first installment, the article that follows is a departure from what I will do here henceforth. It is a piece I wrote for the limited circulation SFWA Bulletin, but is pursuant to a topic of extreme urgency, and so I have asked the Editor if he will consider it a first installment, thereby serving the end of wider and more intelligent attention to a problem of growing importance.

It is rather a pleasure to be back with PSYCHOTIC after eleven or twelve years. I hope you will find it a pleasure as well. If not, tough shit.

# SLAUGHTERING THE GOLDEN GOOSE IN HOLLYWOOD

Since I am not altogether reluctantly saddled with President Silverberg's appellation, "SFWA's leading authority on the TV world", the time has come, my flock, to talk of many things. We can pass on the shoes and ships and sealing-wax, and get right to the nitty-gritty, which is about Producers and Plagiarism and Paranoia. Not to mention an endemic cultural evil that seems destined to manifest itself among SFWA members as "The Amateur Grabbios".

I am brought to the position of having to write this article, and possibly even slap some wrists, on behalf of the membership in toto, whose greater interests are potentially threatened by the members themselves, and an almost half-conscious philosophy that asserts itself whenever the opportunity arises to deal with the motion picture industry. The philosophy is composed part of ignorance, part of naivete and chiefly of immoral greed. I'll get into the basics of this, and its ramifications (which are extremely serious to us all) in a moment. But first, a true-life story.

On October 13th, I received a letter from a member with numerous credits. He's a good writer. I've liked his work, his reputation has always been sound. The letter came to me through Silverberg's suggestion to this member that he contact me

ament a "grievance" against a science fiction television program.

The letter was fairly simple. The producer of the sf TV show in question had publicly asked SFWA to submit story-ideas for possible purchase. The member had sent him "34 ideas in four weeks beginning March 15 and got them back in May."

In a network advertisement plugging the new TV season, the member had seen, in the 12 September New York Times, a blurb for that evening's installment of the series to which he had submitted his ideas. It seemed to the member to parallel an idea he had written and mailed to the Producer of that series on 24 March. He was aroused.

(At this point I am torn. I wish to keep the name of the member, and the TV series strictly confidential. Yet, it seems to me, in fairness to the member, that I must quote the evidence he submitted to me, as a basis for his claim of claim-jumping. The quotes however, will "give away" the series to anyone who is at all familiar with what's being aired this season. I preface the quotes to come with all of this so the reader will understand that I'm doing my damndest to report everything pertinent to the matter.)

From the member's letter:

"My idea dated March 24, 1967 contains this key sentence: 'The computer projects the figures and predicts exactly when and where the next alien ship will land.'

"In the September 12, 1967 N.Y. Times, the ABC Network's ad plugging the new TV season has this wording in its summary of that evening's ... installment: 'Aided by a man who can predict when and where the spaceships from an alien planet will land...'"

The member's letter summed with an inquiry as to how much Writers Guild "members are paid for such submissions, before I get my lawyer into the act." As I have been acting de facto as SFWA's Hollywood liaison, I felt very strongly that I should expend every effort to find out if the member's suspicions were founded. The results of my investigation were rather conclusive. They were conclusions drawn after half a day spent in the offices of the TV producer, examining his records, the script, and talking with him.

I was convinced the member was wrong. There was no collusion on the part of the writer and producer. They had not stolen the member's idea.

Production #554, titled "The Saucer", was written by Daniel B. Ullman. The date of the contract for the writing of this script was 23 March. This means--based on my experience that before a deal is ever "set" a series of story conferences are held between writer and producer--that Ullman came in with his story at least three weeks before the date of the contract, because the wheels of studio business grind extremely slowly.

By the member's own words, his idea was mailed on the 24th of March. The contract alone was dated the day before he mailed it. The actual story submission by Ullman was made weeks prior to that.

Other factors, however, entered into my belief that there was no culpability on the part of the producer.

1. The producer is known to me personally. He is one of the handful of acknowledged honest men in the game. In the Industry, a thief is quickly named, and

His rep precedes him. This producer's record is more than unblemished. When writers speak of producers for whom they will work again, or for whom they would rather not work again, this man's name enters the listings in the former category.

2. The writer is known to me. He looks on plagiarism as a cardinal sin among writers. He would be appalled if he knew his name was even being mentioned in this context.

3. The member had not seen the segment, had no idea if the story paralleled his own, and in fact had nothing to go on but a flimsy quotation cadged from a viewing of the segment by a network flak-man.

(During my subsequent conversation with the member, he told me his story, and it in no way resembled the script of "The Saucer" that I read. In "The Saucer" it was the case of a man who had seen several saucer landings, in his vicinity, and was able to plot out their landing schedules from the phase of the moon, etcetera. In the member's story, it was a matter of computers postulating where saucers would land. Beyond even that vague similarity, which is an eventuality in this particular series--i.e., an idea that had to be submitted by the nature of the show--there is no point of parallel that seems, to me, valid.)

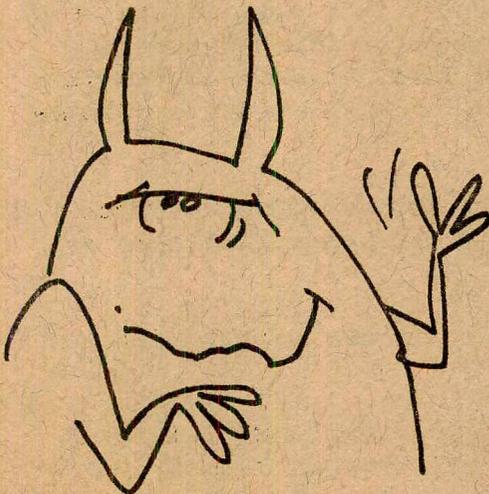
4. The most a producer pays for a "raw idea" which he could give to a scenarist...an idea such as plotting a saucer sighting...is \$200. It is not worth it to a huge operation such as this producing company, to steal an idea and risk being sued, when for \$200 they can buy it.

5. Studios never solicit ideas from open groups such as SFWA, because of just such situations as this one arising. That the producer did solicit material from SFWA members was an act of friendship on his part, an attempt to win the approbation of toilers in a vinyard he was entering as a novice. (When the producing company's attorneys found out about this, in point of fact, they panicked, and insisted that everything that came in unsolicited be sent for clearance to them first. These ideas were then scrutinized by the attorneys and sealed in envelopes, to eliminate any shadow of contention as to their possible pilferage. The member's ideas were among those so handled, as I understand it.)

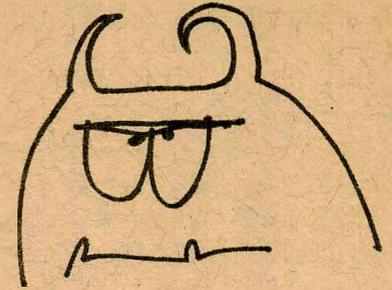
When I was satisfied that the producer was, in fact, clean, I called the member long distance at my expense, to ease his mind, and tell him that I thought the matter was fairly simple, and that he had no case.

The member suggested that the idea might have been given to the writer after the deal had been made. That this element had been added (without the scenarist's knowledge that it came from any source but the producer) to reinforce an otherwise weak plot. I read that script. The idea of the plotting of the saucer landings was integral. It was obviously there from the outset. It was not larded in as an afterthought.

I expressed in the strongest possible terms my feelings about this matter. The member paused a moment and then asked me how much I thought such an idea might be worth. I told him that my experience was that most series didn't even buy such ideas (the producer in question, in-



identally, could only remember once in his entire career having bought a "raw idea") because most non-visual writers did not offer ideas that were reasonably translatable, and that if this idea was worth anything, it might be--ideally--worth two hundred dollars. I felt this was an accurate estimation of the worth of a one-liner such as the member was getting contentious about. I thought certainly what I had said and found out would serve to dissuade him from pressing what seemed a hopeless and incorrect position. He said:



"Well, I guess I'll go ahead with it. I can split the two hundred dollars with the attorney. They can afford it."

#

We live in a time in which an honest man loses The Game. The Game is played by running up three grand worth of "whiplash therapy" after a car accident in which you are unhurt, because the insurance companies don't judge damages in terms of actual, or realized hurt, but by multiplying the cost of doctor bills by five, or seven, or nine times. The Game is played by rigging the repair estimates on household plumbing so you'll not only eliminate the deductible, but you'll get a kickback as well. It is the age of the clipster, the fraud, the cheat. An honest man only loses and looks the fool. And worse, knows he's a fool. So the system is set up to encourage greed and dishonesty. Add to that a total lack of understanding of professionalism in terms of dealing with such big operations as insurance companies or motion picture producing companies, and you have "the Amateur Grabbies": they can afford it.

I've gone into such specific detail about this matter, because it foreshadows at attitude by all of us that is dangerous, and might prove terribly, irrevocably costly. This member is not alone in his attempt to grab a few bucks on a maybe. As many of you know, I am currently laboring under a similar circumstance pursuant to a stupid blunder I made in writing a television script last season; so the situation is painfully close to me, business-wise, at the moment.

To all of us it becomes important in terms of where the money is these days, and where it will be in the immediate future. Each of us has an immensely valuable backlog of stories that may well come to the attention of filmmakers. Potentially valuable stories that may well be optioned or bought outright for television or feature films. The least likely of us may have dashed off a hack penny-a-worder ten years ago that some movie maker will see as a film. Ten thousand dollars. Bang!

But the studios are deluged yearly by exponents of "the Amateur Grabbies". People who see a vague similarity between something they muddled out and submitted, and a fully-fleshed film years later. Their egos refuse to believe that anyone else could arrive at the same idea unaided. (As writers we certainly know how ridiculous this idea is: there's very little we can think that someone else hasn't already thought, or will think, without having impinged on our thought. When it's steam engine time...)

The member will not get his two hundred dollars. He will get nothing, because the studios fight these kind of nuisance suits as a matter of course. Because if they once gave in and settled, they would be drowned in a wave of the same. But in the process, the member is jeopardizing markets for all of us. He is making a blatant attempt to extort money on the most specious grounds, using nuisance value and the producer's own untenable position as his weapons. (The producer should never

have asked "amateurs" to submit. Amateurs have the unhappy tendency to act like amateurs.)

What he is doing is helping the word get around in the incredibly small film community that "these s-f writers are a bunch of kooks, they sue if you breathe heavy on them." He is helping close doors to all of us who may come to the interested attention of men with money such as an average s-f writer cannot touch in a decade of writing for GALAXY or F&SF. It is a disservice to all of us.

Now, I hasten to add, had I found out there was even the slightest reason to believe the member's contention that he had been robbed, I would have urged him to press the matter legally, and in fact found him a local attorney to do the job. But this is a clear-cut case (in the member's own words to me) of "the Amateur Grabbies". He feels--as many uninformed amateurs do--that as long as he's fooling around with the big operators, he can go for broke, and what the hell, the worst he can do is make some gravy where none existed before he started to howl.

What it does, in the process, is eliminate markets for all of us. It is an example of shabby ethics.

I've laid all of this out as fully as I can, not because it affects me in the slightest (when producers talk to me, or call me in, it is as a recognized, accredited member of the Writers Guild of America, West, not as a science fiction writer or as a member of SFWA) but because it affects all of us. It is a matter of tone. Are we to play The Game as unethical amateur grabbers, or treasure what we have and what we have built up in the way of honest reputations?

As the years move on for us, SFWA and its members will become more and more valuable to the money-men of the visual media. Already there are a dozen television and an uncounted number of feature markets open to us, and anxious to examine our wares. The pay for this examination is remarkably high. Much closer to what we're worth for our hire than what we get from the magazines or book publishers. These are by no means primary markets, for I still believe we should spend the bulk of our time in the printed page; but as subsidiary, found money markets, they can pay the rent for a year without additional effort. If "the Amateur Grabbies" becomes a philosophy that moves us and fills us with greed and distrust, our value diminishes in proportion.

Let no Hollywood sharpies take us. Let not one word get pilfered. Let nothing go on spec. But please dear God don't let us turn into the same kind of cheap, penny-weaseling John Does who bombard the insurance companies and law courts and movie studios with nickel-and-dime nuisance suits.

We are supposedly artists and craftsmen. We don't have to cadge handouts just to get us off the doorstep.

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SOME CHOICE FILLER

BY....:

Of all the creatures on this earth,  
I wish I was a ghoul:  
They have to eat some awful things,  
But never lose their cool!

---DEAN A. GRENNELL

# SECOND SESSION

where the editor  
continues to ram-  
ble on and on and

I NEED ARTWORK in large doses. Rotsler, kind man, cannot continue to carry PSY on his back forever, and obliging Carol Peters has studying in large quantities to do, so I must go out into the fannish work-a-day world, hat in hand, begging... "Artwork for the love of Ghod..." A piteous cry in the night...

TYPOS---HOW I HAT THEM, yet they somehow manage to slip in...here...there... My attitude toward typos has changed since last I published. I used to be live-and-let-livish; if they didn't bother me, I wouldn't bother them. But I have come around to the old fashioned dictum---if it's worth doing, it's worth doing well. As a result my stencils look measel-ridden, and I feel at peace. Now if I could only bring myself to take a bath more than twice a year....

TECHNICAL STUFF: As I mentioned earlier, most of this issue is on 95¢ Fibretint mimeo paper. Tan. Next issue I'll try green. Then Orange. Trouble is I've got two more issue's worth of tan to use, too. But eventually I'll use blue and yellow, too, and then decide which color I want to go with permanently, as the Coulsons have settled on yellow.

I'm using the new Gestetner 419 ink, which reduces offset to a minimum. And I find film stencils best with the typing plate under the waxy backing sheet.

NEXT ISSUE will contain an article--a major, important, article, I might add--by Ted White entitled...umm...(heh heh)... "Why Does It Sell"; a review of DANGEROUS VISIONS by Earl Evers which will frost Harlan, I imagine, plus a few others; Harlan Ellison's column, "A Voice From The Styx"; an article by Harry Warner, Jr., title unknown to me yet; plus the regular departments.

I'VE RUN OUT of things to say, except have a happy holiday season, everybody. And I have a bit of prime filler here...

One night, just outside of Altoona,  
An old bum ate a can of spoiled tuna;  
He then hopped a train,  
Which was going to Maine,  
But the bum got ptomaine even suna.

---Dean A. Grennell

After that, echoing silence from me....



" YOU'RE CRAZY!  
I'LL BET AT  
LEAST SIX OTHER  
GUYS COULD'VE... "