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SELF TRENDS



Issue #10

Jan. 1953

STF TRENDS...

Across the Editor's Desk

The Little Monsters of America is no more!

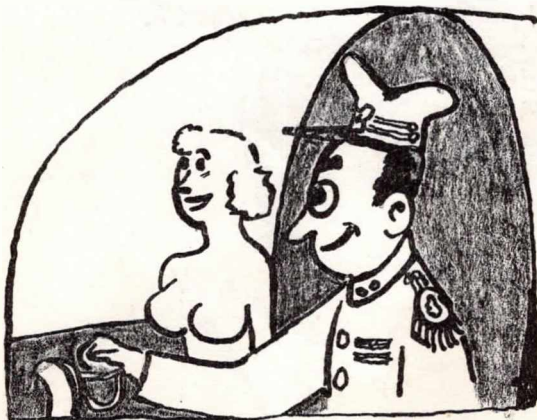
No, you are not reading a new magazine. Rather you are reading the combination of two magazines, (6 issues of TLMA, 3 issues of THE LITTLE CORPUSCLE, combined now, to bring you STF TRENDS #10). I hope, I really do, that TLMA and TLC were your favorites and that STF TRENDS will be from now on.

This combination has taken place for two reasons. First, and biggest, is the fact that I have resigned my present position to act as Zone Manager for a battery company. I will have the management of 5 states, so you can see that my time for club activities will be cut considerably. Secondly, I have received letters from an official in another club stating that TLMA was doing no good, in fact was a "joke" organization. It said rather than duplicate what this other club was doing, I should drop it and devote my time and work to this other club. Now, honestly, I don't think or feel of TLMA as a "joke" organization, I doubt if any of the members do. I think we need MORE GOOD clubs. I hope TLMA has been one. Yes, I am folding TLMA, I just won't have time for all club matters and planning since taking on this new job. However, I am NOT quitting in my publishing of a fanzine. All Tlma members will receive STF TRENDS for the remainder of their memberships. Anytime I have left over from working on STF TRENDS will then be devoted to club work for NSF and the ISFCC. This, however, will be practically non-existent.

I will do my best to make STF TRENDS a better magazine than either TLMA or THE LITTLE CORPUSCLE was. It will be published on an irregular schedule from now on but will be published at least 3 times a year and possibly 6.

We are sorry to say goodbye from TLMA and The Little Corpuscule, but again happy to say hello from STF TRENDS. We'll try to make it the best in the country.

THE EDITORS



- PLATO
JONES -

"I NEVER REALIZED A
FEW OUNCES OF CLOTHING
COULD KEEP A ROCKET SHIP
FROM TAKING OFF!"

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Published by Lynn A. Hickman 239 East Broad,
Statesville, North Carolina

Subscription rate: \$1.00 per year



KONNER'S KORNER

CANDIED CATFISH EYES - 1.00



By Wilkie Conner

This Korner nominates the anniversary issue of CosMag, SF Digest as one of the best fanzines to reach 1514 Postan Circle this year. Too bad this fine magazine has been suspended.

This Christmas, I want my reader(s) to give me a present..... an electric typewriter with built-in spelling. It must be built on the principle of a tape-recorder; that is, all I'll have to do is talk into it and a neatly typed, perfectly punctuated, correctly spelled script will come out. It isn't at all impossible. I've read such things in science fiction stories....and who says science fiction stories are impossible. After all, look at the atom bomb!

Speaking of the atom bomb, I wish something else would happen that would give the proponets of science fiction something on which to base an argument when extolling the virtues of sf when trying to convert a new fan. (Quick, Lucille, my Roget---I'm running out of big words.) Always when someone argues in favor of stf, they say, "And remember, the A-bomb was invented in science-fiction." Which is a damn lie. The A-bomb was invented in Russia. Joe Stalin said so. In fact, the only thing the Russians didn't invent was the fanzine. They haven't advanced that far intellectually. I wish the Russians or somebody would invent a way to smoke while typing and not get smoke in the i. This corner will donate an old, second-hand Shaver mystery for the first fan who comes up with a solution to this problem.

I have just made an earth-shaking discovery: A science fiction fan who drinks....milk! Yes, I did. Actually and literally. The cad shall be nameless here forever more, but I walked into a newsstand and cafe combined and there on a stool sat a certain well-known fan drinking, of all things, chocolate milk.

I recently made a tour of a county fair and was surprized at the many science fictions exhibits and rides. One was "Moon-Rocket," another, a sort of gambling device was "Rocker-ship race", a sort of electronic light device whereby minature rocket ships skim across boards controlled by operators who pay or bet from 25¢ to \$1.00 against house odds on the ship of their choice. It was highly exiting. The operator shot a steel ball thru a maze of contact points in pinball fasion that caused the "ships" to race across the board. My ship always lost.

There was a kiddy swing that had the swings designed as rocket ships. They had real "blaster-guns" on the noses that whistled and shot a beam of light. My little girl Elaine, rode one.

Thru the courtesy of a new crop of fanzines---post con crop---I have just learned that a group of very famous BNF's, including Tucker and Walt Willis, made a trip through the south and never stopped in at 1514 Postan Circle to say hello to me. Nor did they stoop so low as to give 7056 a ring to see if I were home! However, once being in the south, they shall return and when they do, perhaps they will look once toward this Korner, anyway.

Next year's con will be in Philly, so I've been told. I shall live in hopes of going. With a con that close, I don't see how I can miss!

This Korner is now the only column written by me. The other one, Konner's Kolumn, has been dropped. The magazine that carried it, however, has NOT been discontinued.

Fanzine publishing has long been the number one hobby of active stf fans. Judging from the number of fanzines it must be one of the most interesting hobbies in existance. I have often wondered if it were worth it...pubbing a fanzine, that is. None of the magazines could possibly make there way....let alone profit. There's a tremendous amount of work involved, even in getting out a quarterly. Yet some fans are hardy enough to get out a monthly. And they do it month after month! Just getting enough material together to fill a fair-sized magazine is something of a task. Then there's the job of editing the material, putting it in some reproducible form, running off the pages and, finally collating and mailing. Then there is the task of addressing and mailing. If the magazine has a circulation of a couple hundred or so, that job alone is very tiresome.

The hardest job of all, though, is the collecting of money for subs. No matter how well the receiptient of a mag likes it, it is the devil's own task to pry him loose from the necessary coin for a sub. I think this condition is mostly the fault of irresponsible publishers that have infested the amateur publishing field since it began. They come out with a promising first issue, then either don't come out again or the quality of the material goes down, down, down, instead of up, up, up. Personally, I don't like the idea of subbing for a zine and then get a lot of worthless crap for my money. But more than that, I don't like the idea of subbing for a mag, then never receive it nor hear from the publisher again. In the professional fields, the consumer is protected from financial loss by Better Business Bureaus and Merchany's Associations. If someone calls at your door and sells you a sub to SatEvPost and you don't get the magazine, any number of agencies will go to bat for you and either get you the magazine or your money. If LIFE sends you

an invitation to subscribe through the mails, you can bet your bottom dollar you'll get your life, or the post office department will find out why! Not so with amateur publications. There are no organizations to protect the consumer...and though the publishers in question are using the mails to defraud, it is doubtless if enough money would be involved in any single instance to get the ire of the post office aroused. So Mr. Phan generally acts to protect himself by simply no subscribing---until he is reasonably sure that he won't be gypped.

I know of no remedy to alter this situation. Perhaps some fan club or group could suggest a workable solution. Or individual fen for that matter. This korner will welcome any suggestions and will print the best. Fandom will be well served if some way were worked out to get the gyps out of fandom...don't you think so?

Well, time has now come for:

LONGHAMMER'S HAMMERINGS: According to the cigarette ads, more and more people are "tearing and comparing". Shucks, here I've been **SMOKING** the darn things for years. Why didn't someone tell me you were supposed to tear 'em up?



DON'T MISS AN ISSUE OF STF TRENDS...oo

CLICHES AND COMICS

Guest Editorial by Dr. L. W. Carpenter

It seems to us that many people are shackled to various systems of thought and philosophy based upon countless time-worn cliches. "A stitch in time saves nine," "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush", are obviously to the logical thinker, bits of triteness that are true in a very limited set of circumstances.

Members of that self-avowed logical sect known as science-fictionists, (of which we are one) display astonishing inconsistency. To brand a stf fan, writer, or editor, as illogical or inconsistent: is to incur his eternal enmity; yet, scores of these people are shackled to "self evident truths" and scores of individual cliches. We never cease to marvel at the manner in which a logical argument can be laid low with a handy cliché that has achieved the status of a proverb.

We have our own classification of contemporary science-fiction. We are aware that it is far from the ONLY classification possible--but it is one that, to us at least, is very realistic and descriptive. We divide our science-fiction into several classes according to quality:

1. COMIC BOOK SCIENCE-FICTION, not necessarily limited to comic-books per-se, but also comprising the bulk of several magazines best known to us by their lurid covers, sexy contents, ragged edges, poor paper, poor printing, and worse stories. These books are the organs of the "crawl before you walk" school of thought in science-fiction publication. According to the editors that slap these things together, the neophyte stf reader desperately needs their particular publication to effect the transition from Superman and Captain Marvel to bona-fide science-fiction. We do not adhere to this theory. We cannot believe that inferiority will ever serve any ends except those of poor craftsmanship and lowered standards of science-fiction writing. We cannot subscribe to the belief that the neophyte reader requires a diet of specially prepared "pap" to accustom his literary digestive system to the science-fiction equivalent of "steak and potatoes". On the contrary: we submit that a person intelligent and mature enough to enjoy stf AT ALL---deserves the BEST to be had. We are sincere in the belief that low-grade stuff is the greatest single force retarding the advancement of science-fiction and allied imaginative literature. We fail to see any worthy ends that can be obtained by perpetuating the comic-book-space opera cycle. Indeed, it is evident that the champions and

and grasping proponets of this science-fiction "cancer" must be eliminated from the field, if it is ever to enjoy its proper place in contemporary American letters. We feel that they WILL be eliminated--SOON---and we shall entertain no regrets at their passing.

2. THE "MIDDLE OF THE ROAD" SCHOOL This is the group that one can really feel sorry for. Not sorry in a despairing manner---but extending sympathy in an appreciation of the difficulties under which they are operating. Often handicapped by limited funds and an omnipresent circulation difficulty, the editors that purvey this portion of science-fiction are usually sincere and well-meaning men. Faced with the ever present necessity of making ends meet, they must compromise between quality and quantity. They will skimp for months to buy a really good yarn, hoping to satisfy the more exacting reader with an occasional shred of red meat, but in the meanwhile buying reams of hack-fiction that will not entirely empty their impoverished coffers. These editors are a harried lot. They are only too eager to defend a policy or story that is completely untenable, while, at the same time holding forth on their meager successes--hoping that this will add vigor to their protestations. Our sympathies are with these frustrated men. We appreciate their unenviable situation---but we cannot believe that all their energetically written rationalizations are consciously honest. Of course regardless of what an editor prints, he can rest assured that SOMEONE will receive it enthusiastically. It is easy for the editor to convince himself (as did the clumsy infantry rookie) that EVERYONE is out-of-step but HE. It is even easier when such belief brings a sense of comfort and an apparent vindication of something which he knows (in his heart) is a complete and utter fiasco.

Still, we do not abandon hope for the middle of the road editor. We charitably believe that he can distinguish good literature from bad: and that eventually his improving finances, combined with a sincere desire to see stf advance, will result in production of a better book to purvey to his patient readers. We are bolstered in this conviction by the realization that at least one of the leading magazines of today passed through this trying period. Editors, like writers, if the inherent ability is present will continue to develop, improve, and elevate the standards of the unique brand of literature which they represent.

3. THE TOP NOTCH GROUP. These publications are a distinct credit to the field. The bulk of material carried is done by the top men in stf-dom. This is the type of magazine we don't mind leaving lying around for people to see,

and to know that we read it. As a matter of fact we are inordinately proud of the fact that science-fiction can lay claim to the talents of the gifted men whose compositions lie between its covers. We can, without shame or embarrassment, place it in our office for others to read, secure in the knowledge that we are recommending the BEST to be had in science-fiction. It would be superfluous to point out that science-fiction must depend upon these fine publications for the eventual and inevitable placing of our beloved literature in its proper and respected place in contemporary American literature.

We cannot help being a purist and a perfectionist in these matters. Science-fiction is our hobby, chief source of entertainment, and the miraculous pitcher of intellectual satisfaction. We are serious in our efforts to elevate, even by so much as a micron, the literature that we love so well. We earnestly submit that the destiny of stf reposes in the hand of those who read it and love it; especially fandom. Stasis and decadence are two facets of the same stone. In progress only will stf find immortality. In quality and craftsmanship it will find the instruments of true progress. Let us no longer look to the champions of the trite and hackneyed for leadership.

The question logically arises as to what stand, if any, should be taken by organized fandom upon the issues extant in the field. Should the status quo be maintained until the inexorable process of literary evolution (or regression) settles, once and for all, the relationship of science-fiction to the universal literary picture? Or should an effort be made to guide the literature into a progressive and rewarding orbit? Will science-fiction suffer self-induced euthanasia due to bungling and apathy? Will the entire concept of imaginative literature degenerate into an instrument to succeed the fairy-tale for children?

We think the answers to these questions lies in the attitude that fandom will adopt, or has adopted, towards present day trends in the field.

We recognize that stf fans, although bound together by ties of mutual interest in a unique brand of entertainment, are probably the world's most pronounced individualists. We have learned by long observation and experience that it is almost impossible to organize a group of fans who will agree upon several issues, or a definite course of action. The reasons are legion. Many fans are budding writers, artists, etc. As such, there are a great many personal axes in the process of being busily ground. Ax-grinding is the greatest single deterrent to the organization of fan-blocs

which could render such vital service in elevating the standards of science-fiction. As a result, most fan efforts to achieve desirable results are rendered weak and impotent by the maddening apathy of fans who are afraid to get their feet wet. Consequently, editors, despite loud yells from readers, can execute nearly any policy; secure in the knowledge that they are safe from retaliation from the fan. Some of the editors have said as much, smugly certain of their power to print anything with impunity.

It is true that participating fans comprise only a relatively small percentage of the paying readers of ANY stf magazine---a fact that the editor is quick to remind one of, should any of his policies come under fire. However, fandom is organized---not organized to the point that unified action is possible, but none the less organized. Were fandom organized in fact as well as name, it would become a force that could influence the course and contents of ANY magazine printed.

We intend no offense when we state that most stf fan organizations are loose amalgamations of highly individualistic persons having in common a love for the unique brand of literature represented by stf and fantasy. The members are all too prone to attach more importance to the attainment of personal laurels, than to the important and vital question of the place of science-fiction in American Literature. Magazine collecting, art procurement, etc. are all very fine, but we submit that fandom has a more serious duty---to superintend the development of stf in progressive and prolific channels. The present enviable position enjoyed by the better grade of stf has been cultured and nourished by organized fandom but we submit that the puerile and trashy corners of the field should not be ignored---especially in view of the enormous volume of material on the market at present.

We do not presume to outline the standards for evaluation. We realize this would be an enormously complex undertaking, but it can be done. We are CERTAIN that the average stf fan has definite ideas of what he does and does not like; and we are certain that the putrescent stf yarn rankles in the nostrils of the discerning reader. If stf fandom is to have reason for continued existence, it will absorb itself in weeding the stf garden; putting aside all the personal axes until the job is done. We do not attempt to prescribe the exact therapeutic remedy---but---we do have some concrete suggestions: 1. The utter condemnation of "comic-book-stf" 2. Boycotting the writers and editors who persist in policies calculated to retard the development of literary craftsmanship and the literary value of the stf story. 3. an award(similar to the movie "oscar") to be presented to the writers and editors contributing most to the advancement of science-fiction.

THE PLEIADES PIMPLES SCIENCE FICTION FAN
ASSOCIATION, INC

3401 6th Ave. Columbus Ga.

Dear Sir,

This year as in the past the Pleiades Pimples Science Fiction Fan Association, Inc. has selected a few deserving individuals to receive the official PPSFFA, Inc.'s Badge of Merit

We know that you will be proud to learn that the board of judges has selected you as one of those whose untiring efforts and selfless devotion to the cause our grim crusade to make science-fiction a household word--makes him eligible for this honor.

CONGRATULATIONS. We salute you for your serious and constructive activities on behalf of Fandom. Keep up the good work.

Enclosed is your Badge of Merit. Note that it is symbolically appropriate to Science-Fiction fandom, a miniature interstellar monster formed of genuine simulated plastic. Everyone will recognize it as an outstanding artistic achievement.

Wear your badge proudly. Display it openly wherever you go to identify you as a fighter in the ranks of the enlightened an unwavering foe of the forces of ignorance, intolerance, superstition, poverty, crime, juvenile delinquency, barbarism, nepotism, the one party system, and sin.

Much good luck and success to you in your righteous endeavor.

Paul D. Cox, treas., PPSFFA, Inc.,
(Attach badge to lapel with small length of string.)

Dear Paul:

Thank you most kindly for this GREAT honor.
Howevr you forgot to send a piece of string.

Yo's,

Lynn

by

A. Charles Catania



HRDEN
CRAY

the

Child

ooo

The little boy stood at the window and stared at the stars for a long, long time. At last he sighed, and reluctantly turned away. There was unrest in his attitude, and an old wise look that did not seem natural.

The mother noticed it, and she rose from her chair and went to the child. Gently she placed her hands on his shoulders, and kissed him on the cheek. He looked at her uncomprehendingly, and twisted away from her when she tried to hug him.

"Davie, what's the matter?" There was a tiny quiver in her voice. "I can tell there's something wrong."

The boy hesitated. He opened his mouth and shut it again, undecided.

"Please, Davie! You can tell me." She looked into his eyes, and he met her gaze. She saw there an aberration, a sparkling, evil glow that seemed to be struggling for release.

At last the boy spoke.

"Mommy, the stars were calling me. I want to go to the stars."

The mother stepped back and laughed once, but the laugh did not stem from humor.

"Mommy, they did call me! they are calling me now. They want me to come and---" He stopped, groping for a word. "---and play with them."

"Oh, Davie!" She smiled in relief and tried to hug him, but once more he would not let her.

"Mommy, please, won't you believe me?" It was as if someone else had said it.

"Davie, it's only a dream, an idea. You only think so."

"No!" he said insistently, shaking his head. "They did call me!"

Just then his father entered the room. He saw the two, child standing, mother kneeling before him, and walked over to them. "What is the matter?" he whispered to his wife.

But before she had time to answer, the child had already turned to him. "You'll believe me, won't you, daddy?"

"Well, tell me all about it," he replied, smiling. The mother had drawn away from them, and was staring anxiously out the window at the sky.

"The stars were calling me, daddy. I was watching them out the window and they wanted me to come away with them."

The father pursed his lips. "How did they say it, Davie? They must have said it somehow."

"They did and they didn't--." The child seemed under a strain, and he fidgeted his fingers nervously. "They said--they said they wanted me to come and roam with them in the infinities. They said that only there could I gain my birthright, to come and play among the stars, beyond the stars. They said that I should heed their call." The child stiffened. "They said they would..."

The child let out a great sigh and shuddered. The mother had turned and together the parents watched in awe as he became a child once more.

"Davie, where did you learn those words?" The father tried to calm the mother as he spoke. He held her in his arms and soothingly stroked her hair, but never did he look away from the child.

The child was confused. "The stars told me," he said.

"Where could he have overheard them?" he whispered to his wife, but she did not answer. "Do you know what they mean?" he asked the child.

"No." His voice sounded surprised. He shook his head. "But I knew when I said them, and when the stars told me."

The father was quiet for a moment. He had never heard of anything like this before, and he was trying to think of someone reliable he could call. "I think you'd better get to bed, Davie. It's getting late."

After the child was sleeping, the mother felt a little better. The two parents relaxed in the living room, calmer now that the incident was over.

"You know," said the father speculatively, "This reminds me of a story I read a long time ago!" As the mother said nothing, he went on

"The story was about a little boy, about the same age as Davie, who was acting strangely one day. It seemed that this boy was actually the child of a god, accidentally born on earth. The god wanted to have the child, and when he at last found him, he carried the child away with him. The child was never heard from again."

The mother laughed. "So our son is the child of a god?"

"I didn't say that. I just told a story."

"I know." The mother rose and placed her hand on his arm. "But I'm worried. I'm very much worried."

Just then there was a sound from Davie's room. There was faint fairy music, tiny pipes, tiny crystalline bells. They heard Davie's voice.

"Stars!" the child called, in welcome.

"Davie!" the father stood up.

"Davie!"

There was no answer.

The father hurried to the boys room, the mother at his heels. He flung open the door, just in time to see a glowing mist dissipating near the window. The boy was gone.

"Oh, Davie!" The father's voice was of someone betrayed. He walked to the window and gazed mutely out. He thought he saw a dwindling speck high above, but it could have been his imagination.

Then he heard his wife gasp. He spun around, and saw her pointing at something on the bed. Then she collapsed to the floor, sobbing hysterically.

The father stood a long time before screaming, for there upon the upset sheets, he saw the imprint of a cloven hoof....

THE END

LETTERS



DEAR LYNN:

WHAT A MONSTER THIS FANDOM IS! I PEEL OFF A DOLLAR FROM A SUBSCRIPTION TO MY NEW MAGAZINE, SF, DROP IT INTO AN ENVELOPE, AND KISS IT GOODBYE.

NOW LET'S TALK ABOUT TLMA ZINE. THE POINT BASIL WELLS MAKES ABOUT FANDOM GETTING OVERCROWDED MAY BE POOR TAKEN...BUT IT BRINGS MANY THINGS TO MIND. THIS IDEA WAS EVER IN EVIDENCE AT THE CONVENTION. OF THE 1050-50 PEOPLE ATTENDING POSSIBLY 25% WERE FEN AND 75% READERS. SOME OF THESE READERS WERE TRULY COMING FANS, BUT ALL TOO MANY WERE JUST SHOW OFF KIDS (THOUGH NOT ALL YOUNG) STRICTLY OUT FOR AN EGOBOOSTING. I HOPE BY ALL THAT IS HOLY THAT I DON'T FALL INTO THE LATTER CLASS. THE HARD CORE OF FANDOM MUST EVER REMAIN. THOSE PUTTING GOOD IDEAS IN THEIR LETTERS AND FANZINES WILL ALWAYS BE WELCOME IN MY ABODE. WHILE I HOPE THAT THOSE...JERKS...THIS BEING THE MOST FITTING TERM THAT COMES TO MIND...AND THOSE WHO PUT OUT 'CRUDZINES' SHALL BE DOOMED TO FANTASY FOREVER. IT IS THESE LATTER THAT BASIL IS CONDEMNING IN HIS COLUMN. I BELIEVE, AND INDEED THEY HAVE NO PLACE IN FANDOM.

BASIL WELLS AGAIN, IS INDEED TIMELY WITH 'DRAFTEE'! MANY, INCLUDING MYSELF, LIKE TO THINK OF THIS AS AN EXPLANATION OF THE FLYING SAUCERS...AND EVEN THOSE NOT BELIEVING FULLY IN FLYING SAUCERS, MYSELF INCLUDED AGAIN, LIKE TO THINK THAT AN ALIEN RACE WILL APPEAR, EITHER BY THEIR OR OUR EXPLORATION, AND SOLVE OUR SOCIOLOGICAL PROBLEMS. THIS IS ONE OF THE PRIME FACTORS IN SCIENCE-FICTION.

BATTELL LDOMIS' POEM IS A BEAUTIFUL POGOISM...OR WILLISISM, OR SOMETHING. ANYWAY I LIKE THAT KIND OF HUMOR.

MARIAN COX BELONGS TO THE PULPS AS A FILLER-WRITER. SHE COULD DO IT SO MUCH BETTER THAN SOME OF THE OTHERS.

MET BILL VENABLE IN CHICAGO...HE DOESN'T LOOK FUNNY, BUT I GUESS THAT THIS JUST GOES TO SHOW YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE FUNNY LOOKING TO BE A FAN...OR FUN...OR SOMETHING...

AS I TURN THE PAGE, I SEE THAT HE HAS A SERIOUS PIECE ON THE SAME FAN-GROWTH THEME. SOME GOOD POINTS THE BOY MAKES.

THAT PHOTO (?) OF BLOCK REALLY LOOKS LIKE HIM! I COMPARED THEM AT CHICAGO, AND THE ONLY DIFFERENCE WAS THAT HE WENT AROUND WAVING A TOLIET SEAT INSTEAD OF A RED FLAG.

if you tried to run this —) here(

IF YOU TRIED TO RUN THIS ---) HERE(---) LETTER IN SCREAMIN' DEAMONS. YOU WOULDN'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT HAVING ENOUGH MATERIAL. IDEA... JUST RUN THIS AS THE NEXT ISSUE OF TLMA. SERIOUSLY THOUGH, NOT ALL OF MY LETTERS RUN OVER 10000 WORDS. ONLY TO GOOD EDITORS LIKE YOU.

NEVER DO I EXPRESS A WORD AGAINST SOMEONE ELSE UNLESS THEY HAVE DONE SO FIRST. I LOVE EVERYBODY. BUT I WILL SOON HAVE SOMETHING AGAINST ELSBERRY IF HE CONTINUES PERPETRATING HOAXES... I HAVE YET TO SEE ONE THAT ACCOMPLISHED ITS PURPOSE OF BEING FUNNY. AND MAKING UNFOUNDED REMARKS ABOUT OTHER PERSONS' CHARACTERS. IF HE HAS FACTS ABOUT HUBBARD OR AGAINST DIANETICS. LET HIM SPEAK UP. IF HE IS JUST DRIVELING, HOWEVER, AND SUCH APPEARS OBVIOUS, I VERY RELUCTANTLY AND WITH THE KNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE LOST MY TEMPER USE THE VULGAR TERM OF SHUT UP.

OTHERWISE, ELSBERRY IS A PRETTY GOOD GUY, THOUGH.

WHAT'S THIS? ANOTHER BADDY ON JUST THE NEXT PAGE? IF PEOPLE KEEP DEGRADING MR. GOLD'S CHARACTER, PERSONALITY, AND POLICY. I AM GOING TO START A GOLD-ZINE. PLEASE DON'T DO ANY MORE LIKE THE H. L. GOLD MEMORIAL SECTION. I SHALL BE FORCED TO SAY SOMETHING NICE ABOUT MR. GOLD. (EVERY CAMPAIGN DESERVES A COUNTER-ISSUE) SURELY MR GOLD HAS TREATED THE WHOLE 'FUED'. AND I USE THE TERM QUESTIONINGLY. VERY LIGHTLY. WHERE MR. CAMPBELL HAS NOT TREATED IT AT ALL. HORACE HAS NOT USED ONE (IN MY HUMBLE OPINION) QUESTIONABLE PRACTICE WITH RELATION TO HIS COMPETITOR. CAMPBELL NOT ONLY 'STOLE' GALAXY'S COVER PATTERN, A VIRTUAL TRADEMARK, BUT HAS IGNORED HIS CHIEF COMPETITOR TO A DEGREE ANNOYING TO ME. IF NO ONE ELSE. I PERSONALLY DON'T CONSIDER IGNORING... AGAIN I USE THE TERM RELUCTANTLY... AN ISSUE TO BE AN ACT OF GALLANTRY. UNDERSTAND THAT I AM NOT CRITISIZING MR. CAMPBELL... BUT I WOULD NOT PRAISE HIM FOR THE ACT AS SOME HAVE.

WHILE IT IS ON MY MIND. I BELIEVE THAT ANOTHER EDITOR HAS BEEN SLIGHTED BY FANDOM... RAY PALMER. HE SURELY DOESN'T PRINT THE BEST STORIES, NOR IS HE ABLE TO AT 1¢ A WORD. BUT I ADMIRE HIM TREMENDOUSLY AS THE PERSON HE IS. TO ME HE HAS A STYLE OF WRITING... AND SPEAKING... MAYBE THESE TWO TERMS COULD BE COMBINED INTO THINKING... THAT IS SHEER POETRY.

READING BETWEEN THE LINES OF HIS WRITING I FIND EXTREMELY REWARDING. HE IS TRULY A GREAT MAN. SOMEONE TOLD ME AT THE CONVENTION THAT HE HATED RAY PALMER, AND AT THE SAME TIME A FAN ED ABOUT FIVE FEET AWAY WAS VERBALLY ADVERTISING HIS ZINE WITH THE WORDS 'AN ARTICLE BY PALMER'. SOMEONE COMMENTED 'WHO THE HELL WANTS AN ARTICLE BY PALMER?' WHILE THIS WAS GOING ON. THE GREAT MAN HIMSELF WAS STANDING ABOUT THREE FEET FROM ME. HIS 4'2" RENDERING HIM INCONSPICUOUS TO THE LAMBASTERS I WONDER HOW HE FELT.

WHATEVER FEELINGS HE MAY HAVE HAD BROKEN AT THAT TIME MUST CERTAINLY HAVE BEEN REPAIRED THREE HOURS AFTERWARDS. WHEN MELVIN KORCHAK HELD HIS INTRODUCTION OF NOTABLES. OF ALL THE TRULY FAMOUS AND THE TRULY GREAT. WALT WILLIS, JWC, DOC SMITH, AND EVERYONE ELSE ATTENDING THE CONVENTION, IT WAS RAYMOND A. PALMER, THE BELEAGUERED, WHO RECEIVED THE ONLY STANDING OVATION OF THE ENTIRE AFFAIR. HUGO GERNSBACK'S SPEECH AND JUDY MAY'S APPRECIATION APPLAUSE WERE THE ONLY ONES THAT HALF EQUALLED IT. IT WAS TRULY ONE OF MY GLADDEST MOMENTS. AS I APPLAUDED THE LOUDEST AND REALISED THAT ONLY THOSE AGAINST PALMER HAVE THUS FAR APPEARED IN PRINT. WELL. LET IT BE KNOWN.

(OF ALL THERE, INCLUDING THE GENIAL DOC SMITH, RAY WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO 'WOULD LOVE TO' SIGN A FIRST ISSUE OF SF, AND WHO WAS WILLING TO SMILE WHEN I ASKED FOR PERMISSION TO TAKE HIS PHOTO)

REBATE: YOUR LIGHTY TAKEN HOAX ABOUT (I GUESS IT'S A HOAX) THE LEADING BALLARINAS (JUDY, PAT AND BEA) WAS FUNNY.

MAX IS EVER LOVIN FUNNY. AND AS USUAL, MAKES A POINT WITH POINTLESS HUMOR.

WHAT'S THIS. A TREND? A DEBATEABLE ARTICLE AND A GREAT STORY BY THE SAME PERSON? TWICE IN THIS ISSUE... ELSBERRY BUILT ME UP PERFECTLY FOR THAT ENDING. WORTHY FAN FICTION.

OH HELL, HERE'S ANOTHER BUCK FOR SONS OF THRANE. TWO SUBSCRIPTIONS!

ONE MORE WORD. IS IT TRUE THAT YOU WEREN'T IN CHICAGO? I HEARD IT FROM SEVERAL PEOPLE AND DIDN'T SEE YOU MYSELF. ALL NOT IN ATTENDANCE PLEASE STAND!

VERBOSELY YOURS.

JOHN L. MAGNUS, JR.
SILVER SPRING, MD.

DEAR LYNN:

AUGUST TLMA RECEIVED, READ AND RELISHED. TOPS THROUGHOUT.

I PARTICULARLY ENJOYED BILL VENABLE'S EDITORIAL AND SCIENCE SHORTS, THE CLEVER ALACALUF, AND THAT SCINTILLATING LETTER BY P. H. ECONOMOU. I HAVE FAR TO GO AND MUCH TO LEARN IN THE FRABJOUS WORLD OF FANDOM BUT NOW I KNOW THE MEANING OF EGOBOO, SUCH POMPOUS, PEAR-SHAPED PHRASES! SUCH OPINIONATED OPININGS! ESPECIALLY THAT RESOUNDING 'EM ~~QNHBB WDHMMHMCMBENHUSRYFEBBZWBSP~~'. YES.

NOW THAT I'VE APPOINTED MYSELF AN AUTHORITY, I MUST CONTINUE MY ANALYSIS OF TLMA FICTION. AS SO --

DRAFTEE, ALTHO COMPETENTLY DONE LEFT ME COLD. FOR PERSONAL, IRRELEVANT AND IMMATERIAL REASONS. MY DECISION IS INVALID.

BUT ELSBERRY'S STORY! AHHA -- EXCITEMENT -- SUSPENSE -- HUMOR -- TREATMENT -- BRAVO! MY CUP LEAKETH OVER.

I TAPPED THE TILL FOR THE ENCLOSED GREENBACK FOR TWO REASONS: 1 -- I LIKE TLMA. 2 -- I FIND MYSELF IN THE INTOLERABLE POSITION OF BEING $\frac{1}{2}$ A MONSTER -- THIS NOT ONLY MAKES ME FEEL APPALLINGLY INNOCUOUS FOR A MONSTER -- PANSALIKE -- BUT DEFINITELY SCHIZOPHRENIC. BETWIXT AND BETWEEN -- NEITHER NOR. I BEG YOU, INTEGRATE MY SHATTERED PERSONALITY AND ALLOW ME A PROPERLY MONSTROUS FULL THROATED ROAR INSTEAD OF THE PATHETIC SEMI-BLEEPS I'VE BEEN SEMI-BLEEPING.

ENROLL ME SIR!

BLEEPINGLY,

$\frac{1}{2}$ P.H. ECONOMOU
MIAMI, FLA.

DEAR LYNN:

JUST WANTED YOU TO KNOW I AM STILL STRONG FOR TLMA.

ITS A GREAT LITTLE MAGAZINE. THE COVERS ARE INTERESTING AND THE ILLOS ARE DARN GOOD. I CANT FIND A DOGGONE THING TO KICK ABOUT. IN FACT I'M SENDING YOU A VERBAL BOUQUET OF ROSES FOR THE ENJOYMENT I'M GETTING FROM OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE.

SINCERELY,

PATSY L. OLDHAM
FLORENCE, OREGON

DEAR LYNN:

YOU HAVE JUST ABOUT BECOME A SEMI-PRO MAGAZINE. THOUGH YOU DO NEED A LARGER EDITORIAL PAGE FOR YOURSELF, I ALSO ENJOYED THE CARTOONS. YOU SHOULD HAVE MORE. I LIKE KEASLERS REPEAT PERFORMANCE.

JAMES LEWIS
TRENTON, TENN.

DEAR LYNN:

I RECEIVED ISSUE THREE AND FOUR OF TLMA SOME TIME AGO, AND ISSUE FIVE JUST RECENTLY. I ENJOYED THEM ALL VERY MUCH..... WITH A FEW EXCEPTIONS.....NAMELY..... BATTELL LOOMIS, BATTELL LOOMIS AND BATTELL LOOMIS!!! THAT STORY (IF YOU COULD CALL IT THAT!) THAT BLIND MAN'S MONEY AGAIN. ABSOLUTELY STUNK!

SERIOUSLY.

IT WAS HORRIBLE. LEFT ME ENTIRELY FLAT. BAD TASTE IN MY MOUTH.

AS FOR BASIL WELLS, HE HAS SOME GOOD PLOTS FOR STORIES. I WONDER WHY HE DOES NOT TAKE ONE OF THOSE PLOTS AND WRITE A STORY AROUND IT? GIVE HIS CHARACTERS A FEW HUMAN TRAITS SUCH AS EMOTION, INDIVIDUALITIES, ETC.

ENOUGH GRIPES.

THE COVER ON THE APRIL ISSUE WAS TOPS! THE JUNE COVER EXCELLANT. THE AUGUST COVER WASN'T UP TO PAR WITH THE OTHERS.

BY THE WAY, JUST TO SHOW YOU THAT MY HEART IS IN THE RIGHT PLACE. I'M ENCLOSING \$3.00 FOR 2 YEARS SUB AND A COPY OF SONS OF THRANE WHEN IT COMES OFF THE PRESSES.

SINCERELY,

W.B. UNDERWOOD
HONOLULU, T.H.

P.S. THE LETTER FROM P.H. ECONOMOU IN THE AUGUST ISSUE EXPRESSES MY SENTIMENTS EXACTLY. ONLY WISH I COULD EXPRESS IT IN THE MANNER HE DID. THE THINGS YOU PUBLISH AREN'T STORIES... THEY'RE IDEAS. DEVOID OF HUMAN FEELING.

DEAR LYNN;

WHEN I RECEIVED TLMA #4, I DID A DOUBLE TAKE, THOUGHT A MOMENT, LOOKED AGAIN, AND, DEEP IN THE DUMPS, ABOUT CAME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT I HAD TAKEN A WRONG TACK IN TYING IN WITH SUCH GOOD LOOKING MONSTERS. HOW IN THE NAME OF BEMS IN GENERAL COULD YOU EXPECT ONE TO THINK YOUR FAMILY IS SO GOOD LOOKING? IT WAS MY VERY FIRST ITY-WITTY FANZINE, AND I DECIDED TO WITHHOLD JUDGEMENT UNTIL I RECEIVED ANOTHER, ON WHICH I COULD PERHAPS COME TO A MORE DEFINATE CONCLUSION AS TO WHETHER I LIKED OR NOT. WELL, TLMA #5 IS IN, AND OUT; AND I THINK I'VE COME TO YE OLDE CONCLUSION, AS ONE OF THE BE-NIGHTED FEN SAYS, 'I LIKEE, I LIKEE, I LIKEE, ETC. AD NAUSEUM.'

FRANKLY, I THOUGHT A FANZINE WOULD BE MORE OR LESS THE LEAVINGS OF THE PROZINES; STORIES THAT CAME BACK FLAGGED WITH A REJECTION SLIP; I THOUGHT, WOULD MAKE UP THE BIGGEST PART OF THE ZINE. I FIND THIS TRUE IN A VERY SMALL PERCENTAGE; MOST OF THE ZINE SEEMS TO BE MADE FOR, BY, AND OF, THE FANS. THIS I LIKE, SINCE I CAN'T ATTEND CONVENTIONS, DON'T BELONG TO A FAN CLUB, AND DON'T CORRESPOND WITH ANY DYED-IN-THE-WOOL FANS, AND HENCE LOSE OUT ON THE GOSSIP, IDENTIFICATION, AND SUBTLE UNDERCURRENT THAT RUNS THROUGH THE TRADE, YOU FURNISH IT; I LIKE THAT.

I HAVE A BONE TO PICK WITH P.H. ECONOMOUS LETTER IN THE #5 ISH. WHY, I ASK, WOULD 'NO READER...DARE ATTEMPT TO 'IDENTIFY' HIMSELF WITH THE SUPREME BEING'? HAVEN'T YOU EVER HEARD PEOPLE SAY, IN EFFECT, 'HUMPH...IF I WERE DOING IT, I KNOW DARN GOOD AND WELL I COULD DO A BETTER JOB OF CREATING A WORLD THAN THIS ONE.' I HAVE HEARD IT, PLENTY; AND FROM THERE IT IS BUT A STEP TO IMAGINING HOW WOULD CREATE A 'BETTER' WORLD, WITH ITS SELF CONTAINED IMPLICATION OF ABSOLUTE POWER AND ABILITY. PERSONALLY, I HAVE OFTEN THOUGHT HOW BORING IT WOULD BE TO BE ABLE TO DO EVERYTHING; TO HAVE SUPREME POWER AND KNOWLEDGE UNLESS THERE WAS SOMEONE TO SHARE IT, AND EVEN THEN IT WOULD GET DULL. NO COMPETITION; NO DIFFICULTIES EXCEPT THOSE SELF-CREATED. AND THEY GET DULL AFTER A WHILE (EVER SET UP CHESS PROBLEMS FOR YOURSELF? AFTER SO LONG A TIME IT GETS TERRIBLY BORING.) IF YOU WERE IN THAT POSITION, OH ECONOMOU, WOULD YOU NOT CREATE LIFE, INTELLIGENT ULTIMATELY, AND WATCH IT FOR AMUSEMENT PERHAPS, IDENTIFICATION WITH THE SUPREME BEING?

HASTA LA VISTA,

JIM LEAKE
BRISTOL, VA.

DEAR LYNN;

GOT TLMA #5; THISH IS A VAST IMPROVEMENT OVER THE LAST; THE MULTILITHING IS MUCH BETTER, AND I SEE A LARGE PART OF THE BAD MULTILITHING LASTISH WAS DUE TO THE PAPER, SO, I LIKE THE PURPLE, TOO.

THUD AND BLUNDER: HE'S GOT A GOOD POINT THERE.

DRAFTEE: A VERY GOOD STORY-- SOME OF THE PREDICTIONS ARE AMAZING, AND I'M NOT REFERRING TO THE ATOMIC BOMB, FOR INSTANCE, THE VERY FACT THAT THERE WAS ANOTHER WORLD WAR, AND THE UNITED NATIONS--I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW IT EXISTED TIL 1945, ONE LINE GOT ME: 'DENA'S EYES WARMED HOTLY.' AND I ASK YOU, HOW ELSE COULD THEY WARM?

MARIAN COX'S MOON: WHAT IS SOMETHING LIKE THIS DOING IN A FANZINE?

SCIENCE SHORTS: HAH, I'M STILL PUZZLING OVER THE TULERIN-GUNKAMINE-ILLITERINE THING.

GUEST EDITORIAL: HE SAID EXACTLY THE SAME THING WELLS SAID.

THE SCREAMIN' DEAMONS; LARRY SHANNON: NC DICK RYAN; WOW-- IF YOU CAN'T UNDERSTAND LOOMIS-- WHY, ANYONE WITH AN IQ OF OVER 200 CAN--AND IF YOUR IQ IS LESS THAN 200, THEN YOU ARE NOT A REAL FAN--RICHARD DOBRIN: I THINK YOU LIKE TLMA, DAVID PAPAYANOPULOS; HUH? ECONOMOU; AH--A PHILOSOPHER, HAL SHAPIRO; NC.

THE VOICE OF FANDOM: ENJOYABLE, TELL ELSBERRY THAT AVON IS REVIVING ITS TWO STFANTASY BOOKS AS ONE--THE AVON READER OF FANTASY AND STF.

REPEAT PERFORMANCE: I LOVE THIS GUY.

ASSUMPTION UNJUSTIFIED: HIM HEAP GOOD STORY.

I RATE THIS ISH AS FOLLOWS (10 BEING PERFECT);

FIRSTISH	LASTISH:
CONTENTS: 9	CONTENTS: 7
TECHNICAL:6	TECHNICAL:5
RATING: 15	RATING: 12

YOU'VE IMPROVED BOY.

SEEYA--

CHARLES WELLS
SAVANNAH, GA.

DEAR LYNN;

DOUBLE THANKS TO YOU FOR THE DOUBLE MAILING, WITH ITS DOUBLE ENTENDRES. I WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN THE TWIN REPORTS ON THE MIDWESCON AND THE CHICON, AND REGRET THAT I WAS UNABLE TO ATTEND EITHER THIS PAST YEAR. THE GUY I SENT IN MY PLACE SEEMS TO HAVE ENJOYED IT -- AND THE AMPLIFIED ACCOUNTS PRINTED IN YOUR PAGES HELPS TO BEAR HIM OUT: A FUNCTION USUALLY PERFORMED BY TWO OR THREE DETERMINED FANS, AROUND 2 AM OR THEREABOUTS.

SPECIFICALLY, TLMA PLEASED ME ON TWO COUNTS -- THE FRONT COVER (IT'S ABOUT TIME SOME BODY GOT AROUND TO HONORING KEASLER IN THIS WAY, AND IT'S A VERY GOOD LIKENESS) AND MR. GOETZ'S NOTION ABOUT AN EXCHANGE OF TAPE OR WIRE RECORDINGS. I AM EAGERLY AWAITING THE FIRST DELUGE OF FAN COMPLAINTS ABOUT OBSCENE TAPE-RECORDINGS.

MINISCULE CORPUSCLE'S TOP CONTRIBUTION, TO ME, WAS THE NEWS OF THE TLMA AND BSAW AFFILIATION -- WITH THE ADDED PROMISE OF REPRINTING SOME OF THE BANISTER NEKROMANTIKON STUFF, AND THE ARTWORK THROUGHOUT IS BETTER THAN MOST OF THE CHICON PHOTOGRAPHS I'VE SEEN SO FAR.

SPEAKING OF WHICH, IF YOU HAPPEN TO KNOW OF ANY SOURCES FOR SAME, I'D APPRECIATE INFORMATION, AGAIN MY BEST TO YOU AND TO YOUR CO-EDITOR.

ROBERT BLOCH
MILWAUKEE, WISC.

PS: IN TLMA, I RESPECTFULLY CALL YOUR ATTENTION TO A LONG TYPOGRAPHICAL ERROR ON PAGE 16. IT'S SIGNED 'BILL MORSE.'

.....
Remember fans, this is your magazine. I'm trying to print what you want -- however I can't do this if you do not let me know your desires. Do you enjoy a letter column this long? Do you want more fiction? Less fiction? More articles? Less articles? Are you satisfied with the format? Would you rather have it printed in booklet form? Do you like the covers? The interior art work? Who would you like to see appear in these pages that is not therein? Who would you not like to see that is therein? Do you like it mailed in envelopes?

Lets have your comments on this.

Lynn & Carole

THUD & BLUNDER

by Basil Wells

Years and flying saucers pass, and my hair grows grayer, but a few things irritate me. Chief of these is superfluous sex in fiction, followed by taxes and TV comedians. These are on the increase everywhere throughout this network of improved, and being improved, highways that we call the USA... But chiefly it is sex in fiction, supposedly serious fiction, that sets me to weeding my thinning scalp lock... And now, with sex seeping insidiously, and needlessly, into sf---I blow my top!

By sex I mean titillating, purple-prose patches of lechery mathematically interlarded through a fairly decent story to turn it into a 'best seller' or 'mature fiction'. A bared thigh, a thrusting breast, rosy naked flesh, half revealed and enticing --- interesting, sure, but patently tacked on to attract the bedroom trade. About one fairly recent book a friend said, referring to the heroine's nocturnal activities; 'didn't know there were that many men in England.' Excessive sex also serves to snap the thread of the narrative, leaving gaps.

Stories lacking this sexual shot-in-the-arm are termed juvenile by many reviewers and editors. The author is bludgeoned into including some panting breath and rumpled bedding every few chapters if he wishes to sell. To me sexual play is definately juvenile sport---along with swimming skiing, dancing and what-have-you --- PLEASURE that keeps you young. With maturity sex should take its proper place in our scheme of life, important, yes, but not our sole purpose of living. I would suggest that we have a new rating of fiction: juvenile for children, juvenile for adults, and mature fiction for adults.

Sf, in the past, has managed to present some rather interesting sexual angles without resorting to the drooling fantasies of a Spillane tale. Fritz Lieber tackled the multiple marriage question (invented by del Rey?) in an interesting straightforward fashion. This is mature fiction, freed of the lewd sniggers and jests of the adolescent haunter of latrines. Sf has presented dozens of such thought-provoking possibilities, without offense, in its better magazines---and the crop of readers has multiplied. Will readers continue to increase if sf becomes a pale imitation of SPICED FLESH TALES? Why not leave the female tramps and goatish heroes out of at least one type of fiction

Not but that I like an exceptionally well-done yarn about a shapely babe and her play mates. But it must be good, and NOT sf! Let the detective field, and the semi-slicks, print it....

I recently picked up a couple of used books with unfamiliar titles. 'Great Mischief' by Josephine Pinckney, all about Satanism, hags and fantasy in the Charleston of 1880. . . . Book of the Month, 1948 copyright. Also, 'The Ilse of Dead Ships' by C. Marriott, about an Island in the heart of the Sargasso Sea. 1908 copyright. 'Rocket to the Morgue' is out again, Dell book 591, and the Galaxy Novel No. 11 'City in the Sea' by Wilson Tucker has probably been read by most of you. Also read half of Groff Conklin's 'In the Grip of Terror' anthology, oldies and new. THE ILLUSTRATED MAN in this isn't like character in the book of same name. Bradbury likes to rework and polish a theme until it's used up. . . .

Couldn't make it to Chicago this year. Instead Margaret and the boys and I made a quick trip to Venus. Must tell you about it sometime. Seven hours round trip. . . .

bw

ADDENDA --- T&B

Timeless Stories, edited by Ray Bradbury. 35c

Bantam Giant No. A944 with an introduction by Bradbury. Issued September 1st.

Bradbury is the foremost exponent of building nonsense, impossibility, and downright stupidity into an eminently readable and memorable yarn. You either dislike him intensely or admire his deft blendings of fancy and fallacy. I admire and envy him. This collection is just about what you'd expect of him.

Whimsy, horror, and above all, satire, are in these tales. Selections from the NEW YORKER, STORY, and book collection form the backbone of the 26 titles making up the book. And of them all only the 25th and 26th stories seem out of step with the rest of the collection. Of course several of the authors got thirsty a page or so before the ending was due and wrote finis. But that's quality writing for you! As far as they go they are really fine yarns --- provocative and amusing after the slick manner of their original publishers.

You'll miss a fine lot of offtrail stories if you don't get TIMELESS STORIES. Especially Hank Kuttner's 'Housing Problem', . . . a strictly UNKNOWNish tale. . . .

DEATH OF AN EDITOR by D.O. CANTIN

The editor settled himself in his large and clumsy swivel chair and frowned at the many manuscripts on his desk awaiting him. Abruptly his scowl faded and he began the nearest story...

* * * * *

The editor leaned back in his chair, blew the last puff of his curtailed cigar towards the ceiling and began his work of editing the stories piled on his desk. The stack of rejected manuscripts rose higher and higher, until he came upon a curiously unusual short short; about an editor who read a story of an editor reading a story. . . . 'Hmmmph,' he grunted. Still he regarded it with amused skepticism, his curiosity got the better of him and he continued reading. But when he came to the paragraph which read: 'There came a triple rap at the window, the editor turned to the source of the noise. It was the last thing he ever did, the police, a few hours later, found his body with a perfect two inch hole in his head. It was a neat hole, commented the inspector, almost as if it had been burned there. . . . enough is enough, thought the editor, it had started off pretty good but now, phew!

He threw the story across his desk. No sooner had he settled his haunches to their best advantage when he heard 'knock-knock-knock' on the window pane, he didn't turn around. He didn't have time to.

The editor wondered. Now who the hell would waste his time writing a stupid story like this? These dream within a dream sequences make me sick. He glanced around the room and sighed, he was about to begin on another story when he heard a rap-rap-rap noise at the window.

(Ed's note: Although this story is rather trite, I printed it to show you what some fen waste their time doing. What's that noise at the window....)

THE END

All Missouri sf fans wishing to join the MISSOURI SCIENCE-FANTASY LEAGUE contact Paul Mittelbuscher, Sweet Springs, Mo. or Larry Tonzinsky, 2911 Minnesota Ave. St. Louis, Mo.

WHAT! - THIS
IS SCIENCE FICTION?



THE VOICE OF FANDOM

by Rich Elsberry

It is somewhat of a rarity these days when everyone will unanimously agree that Walt Gibson's magazine (FANTASTIC SCIENCE FICTION) is the most terrible calamity to befall a mediocre science-fiction field in many a year. It surpasses even Don Wollheim's justly notorious OUT OF THIS WORLD ADVENTURES with its illfated attempt to attract the comic book trade, in its sheer juvenile appeal.

Gibson, if he be more than ten years old, must have suppressed everything he knew in order to rush this trash to the newsstand. His authors, all unknowns, and justifiably so if this is a fair sampling of their work, have managed to grind out some of the most lucid prose tid-bits since AMAZING STORIES was in its pre-war heyday.

H.C. Koenig, FAPA's famous sibilance tracker, would have found his science fiction al Mecca in FANTASTIC SCIENCE FICTION, for the final culmination of every trite phrase and overworked cliché are embodied in this magazine's editorial content.

I realize these are rather harsh statements to make, and so a few samples are in order.

Mr. Gibson underlines the magazine's editorial policy by offering his own 'full length novel', 'The Day New York Ended', as the lead story. The title is rather self explanatory, and Mr. Gibson gives us one of the most finely defined villains I've ever had the displeasure to encounter.

'Vela was looking squarely into the green eyes of Rog. Now, as they caught the glint of the setting sun, they glowed with fire that seared the girl's brain, numbing her soul with their green heat. Vela was more than hypnotized, she was paralyzed. Rog's voice came in a lizard's hiss, his hand, too,

had a reptilian creep as it crawled past Vela's arm, around her waist, and drew her toward him. In Rog's clutch, Vela came to her feet, moved mechanically like an obsolete robot with the green man guiding every step.

Or even better yet. 'Rog himself had planted that suggestion in Vela's receptive mind. Now it obsessed her, but she still managed to cringe from it. With a last burst of willpower, she broke from Rog's grasp. He sprang from the moss-banked couch, caught the girl as she neared a spider-webbed curtain and was about to drag her back with his constrictor's grasp, when a cackly laugh interrupted Rog's harsher mirth.

'The curtains were flung apart, shaking spiders and weevils from their roosts. From behind them stepped Professor Augo Zurow!'

With the standards set, and Zurow's cackly laugh resounding in our ears, we can look a little more kindly upon the other stories.

Something called 'TheyDie on Mars' provided a quaint paragraph. 'From miles outward in space, the city had gleamed in the pale rays of the sun. It hadn't seemed to cover much territory at first, but as they came closer, the area grew, until the men estimated that it must cover many square miles. And over it was a strange sort of transparent dome. Underneath they could see movement, little figures going back and forth in lush green, yellow, and red vegetation.'

Perhaps if Mr. Gibson had Willy Ley for technical advisor these things wouldn't happen. The author must have tremendously sharp perceptiveness when he decided that the men on the spaceship could see 'little figures' from miles out in space. Or should we chalk it up to author's license?

'The Black Planet', another cosmic pool-game story, showed the author's, or perhaps the editor's reluctance to proofread the story. If I'd written it I probably wouldn't have either. On page 42, separated by a meagre sentence or two, we find these two sentences: 'He paused while Cris side-pocketed the twelve-ball with a cushion shot.' 'Bill played a carom off the twelve-ball and sank the fifteen.' This incredible lapse might be accounted for had they been playing fairy pool (Lewis Padgett created a chess game with constantly changing rules for his novel, 'The Fairy Chessmen', which might be adaptable for pool.) but in FANTASTIC one comes to take these things for granted.

This same story also contains a notable bit of logic, that you can use to get your logic professor into a jovial mood. 'Poise that system in any form of space you desire; gaseous, liquid, even solid. Yes'---Dawson nodded, quite convinced of his statement-- 'our own space is unquestionably gaseous, so there could be solid space as well.'

To cap this little diatribe, we'll finish with a short called 'The Secret of the Locked Laboratory', which might have gone over big in FANTASTIC ADVENTURES of about 1939, but is sheer hack today.

'She walked quickly to the right side of the room where a huge electronic ray apparatus was set up. Seven dials were visible on the control panel. 'I wonder what this is for she said, twirling the largest dial gently with her finger tips. ... 'My God! It's a dis-integrator ray,' Linda gasped as she snatched her hand away just in time.

'My god,' was my cry too, when I read that, but for a much different reason.

The professor, villain of the story, is described as a '...small, wizened, grey-haired man...' Roger Channing, a supremely stupid hero for all his implied brawn, is glowingly described as '...tall, well built.' '...young, and in excellent condition...' The payoff to the story, though, is something I'll never forget.

'Inside the thick white walls she saw Roger Channing tied and gagged securely in a chair.'

Depressing as all the foregoing is to any real fan, the crowning touch to this magazine's debut was provided by Jimmy Taurasi in FANTASY-TIMES. Taurasi, for all his editorial acumen, made a real faux pas when he titled a

review of the Gibson magazine, 'Fantastic S-F Hits N.Y. Stands; Quality Not As High As Expected.' Diplomatic Jimmy, in that brief headline, created the understatement of the year.

COLLECTOR'S ITEM

The NEW YORKER for June 28, 1952, ran a short item that should be of interest to completists and collectors in general.

'EXCALIBUR by L. Ron Hubbard. The unpublished first work of all that followed. Not the thesis. Mr. Hubbard wrote this work in 1938. When four of the first fifteen people who read it went insane, Mr. Hubbard withdrew it and placed it in a vault where it remained until now. Copies to selected readers only and then on signature. Released only on sworn statement not to permit other readers to read it. Contains data not to be otherwise released during Mr. Hubbard's stay on Earth. The complete fast formula of clearing. The secret not even Dianetics disclosed. Facsimile of original individually typed for manuscript buyer. Gold bound and locked. Signed by author. Very limited. Per copy.... \$1,500.00--'News about books,' from L. Ron Hubbard, Phoenix, Ariz., exponent of Dianetics and Scientology.'

I suppose by 'selected readers only' Mr. Hubbard means readers that have \$1,500. to spare, for they would certainly be quite select individuals indeed. The surprising, and incongruous, thing about the ad, though, is that Hubbard purports to give away 'the secret not even Dianetics disclosed'. One wonders he ever expected Dianetics to be a success when he was holding back information on the culmination, and seeming stumbling point of the Dianetics technique. Hubbard and Dianetic institutes across the country worked for several years trying to produce a clear, unsuccessfully. And now he says that all along he knew a complete fast formula for clearing. I don't think much of a man who claims to be a scientist and who holds back the most vital information about auditing needed to make Dianetics a success.

The NEW YORKER's only comment was: 'Greatest little book bargain we ever encountered.' Only \$1,500.00 and you get a 27% chance of going insane. The line forms on the right.

FAREWELL TO THE MASTER

One of the saddest things that can happen to an author is for someone to dig back into the dim forgotten past and reserect a story for an anthology that the author had forgotten, and had hoped would remain in honorable obscurity. Every author, it seems, has managed to have at least one pot-boiler published in his time, and for some unguessable reason these always find their way into anthologists hands.

Robert Bloch, however, may rest secure in the fact that no one will probably ever get around to his 'Black Lotus'. 'Black Lotus' a Lovecraftian horror story of the old, old school of weirds, was published in 1947 in the first issue of FPCI's Fantasy Book. When Bloch wrote it, though, is anybody's guess.

Gibbering, ghastly horror was Lovecraft's specialty, but we'll have to give Bloch some sort of a 'special award' for 'Black Lotus'. Here, then, is one of the least known and little remembered passages by an author whom Mel Korshack described as 'wafer thin and rapier sharp humorist.'

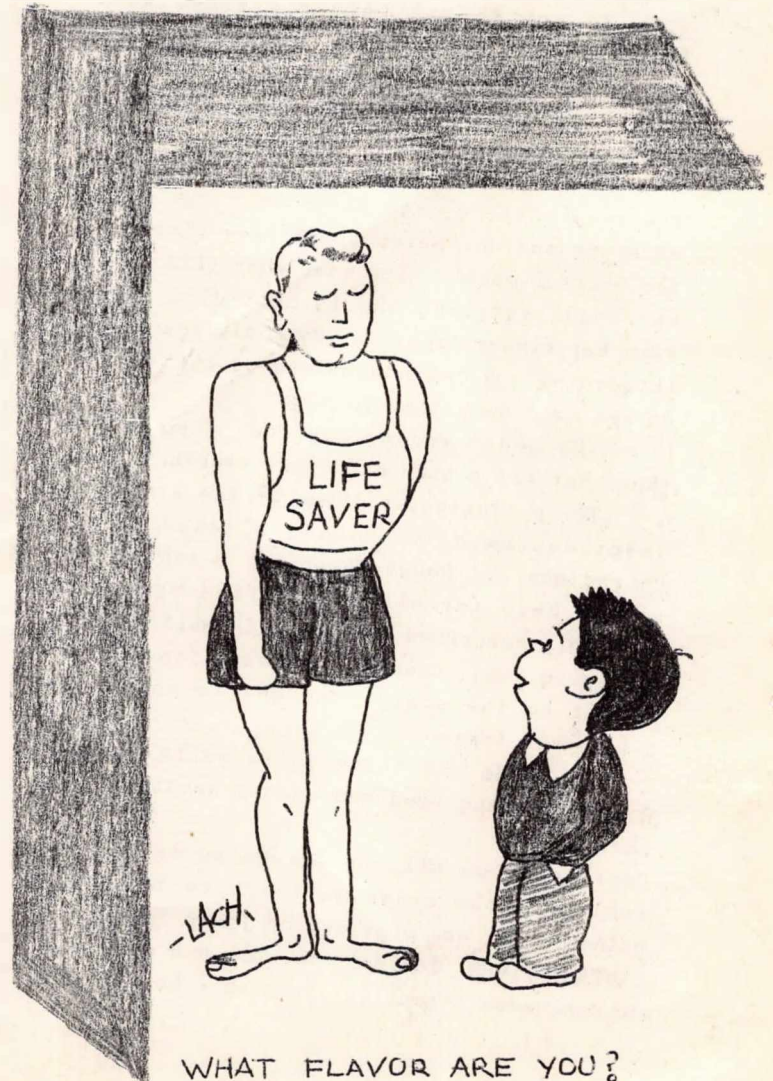
He saw himself awaken and rise from the couch in the light of dawn, to gaze haggardly upon a new day. He saw the wretched agony of his being as the drug wore off its potency and left his body racked with spasms of exquisite pain. His head seemed to swell as if about to burst; his rotting benighted brain seemed to grow inside his skull and split his head asunder. He beheld his frantic gropings about the deserted chamber, the mad capers of grotesque agony that made him tear his hair and foam epileptically at the mouth and gibber terribly as he clawed with twitching fingers at his temples. The white-hot mist of searing anguish sent him reeling to the floor, and then it seemed as though in his dream-consciousness there came to him a horrible longing to be rid of his torment at any cost, and to escape from a living hell to a dead one. In his madness he cursed the book and the warning; cursed the ghastly lotus flower and its essence; cursed himself and his pain. And as the stark biting teeth of his torture bored still closer to the roots of his sanity, he saw himself drag his rigid paralytic body to the outer balcony of his deserted palace, and with a grimace of agony greater than can be sensed by sanity, he raised himself slowly to the rail. Meanwhile as he stood there, his head swelled and

bloated to monstrous, unbelievable proportions, then burst rottenly assunder in a ghastly blob of grey and scarlet putrefaction from which arose the stupefying scent of black lotuses. Then, with a single inarticulate cry of horror and despair, he crumpled and toppled from the balcony, to spatter himself in red madness upon the court below.

Although written over 5 years ago, Bloch has accurately described the feelings of many fans the morning after a Chicon party. I can see Bloch cowering in a corner, gibbering terribly and foaming epileptically at the mouth, but I quote another purple paragraph from this eldritch epic. But Bob need't fear. That one tortuous paragraph was more than enough to prove my point.

Stand aside, Lovecraft! Make way for the new master!

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