

TITLE

Editor, Donn Brazier, 1455 Fawnvalley, St.Louis
Missouri 63131 The Barbecue where the Beer Yeast meets the Bar Best #7 October 72

Sheryl Birkhead, a real doll, not only sent me some headings (maybe not used in this issue because I'm about done) but a stamped envelope to return those I might not like! The "title" I screwed up at the head of this page was not hers..... Norman Hochberg says #6 was looking sleazier than before. I know it. Oh, how I talked to that mimeo machine, and listen, no more, no more positively, will I cut stencils on the IBM Selectric. From now on it'll be this Royal manual which cost me only \$15 used. And Norman, please...I dread the word you'll use to describe this issue's production. Does high humidity have anything to do with ink slop, spots on the stencil, and paper flying? That weather factor is one of little bits about St.Louis which has so endeared it to fandom. So, just wonderin'

P.Schuyler Miller has a letter in THE SCIENCES taking the editor to task for spelling the element phosphorus with an "-ous" ending. July-Aug, 72 issue.

Mike Shoemaker (and some other concerned souls) warn me against "burning myself

out". Thank you. When the barbecue coals get hot, they turn gray and stay hot until there's nothing left. I, weighin' in at 175 pounds, have a ways to go.....

Purposely left out of Mike Glycer's essay in #6 was his designation of some "periods" in the history of science fiction. Are there periods? And if so, how should they be named?

Norm Hochberg mentions talking to Mark Mumper at the LAcon, and both agreeing that I was chuck-full of ideas - for a skinny zine. Now that ego-boo is not why I bring this up. This is why. Mark Mumper wrote: "I met a lot of TITLE people at the LAcon, among them the Coulsons, Mike Glycer, Norman Hochberg, Irvin Koch and Don Fitch." This is the point: "T people" Your editor feels that way, but when a reader demonstrates a sort of loyalty to a skimmy little zine... speechless..love.

Staples: My office postage scale made me over cautious. But one staple and six pages is all I want to risk. And so ends the second staple war!

Let's not have any *
more talk of how *
you should LoC.... *
And thank you for *
the many kind re- *
marks that how you *
LoCed was, after *
all, your business.. *
So be it. I was just *
trying to relieve *
some of the burden *
and get rid of the *
groans of despair *
that followed the *
"ripe cantaloup" *
of issue #4. Remem- *
ber that #8 is on *
the heels of this! *

From:
Donn Brazier
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TO:

FIRST CLASS MAIL

WONTAGE WONE

QUANTUM CAMEL

----- Don Ayres: "To all appearances, H. sap. is more intelligent than any other animal except the dolphin, and I'll hold out for the octopus. The intelligence of most animals has NOT been tested and will not be until we understand more about how they perceive/interpret symbols/stimuli. It is not beyond the realm of possibility that the subject animal is acting in accordance with how it wants the experiment to turn out - playing the role to falsify data. Maybe H. sap. is actually low man on the totem pole, surrounded by all manner of incredibly intelligent creatures which do not want him to know and, hence, their competitiveness."

Cy Chauvin: "I hope you don't take a purely materialistic view of life. I often wonder why we admire sunsets. Are we taught? But who taught the first man a sunset was beautiful? Certainly it isn't a survival characteristic, and I've never seen a dog or other animal admiring one! Matters like this make me unable to accept that people are solely collections of memories, flesh & blood computers, etc."

THREE FOR DINNER

----- Michael T. Shoemaker: "Charles Fort, a fascinating wit; Sergei Prokofiev, my favorite composer; and Eric Hoffer, a truly deep thinker."

Harry Morris: "...most interesting. I would choose Poe, Lovecraft, and C.A. Smith - or Van Gogh, Dali, and Andre Breton."

Buzz Dixon: "...three for dinner? The Marx Brothers, who else?"

Doug Leingang: "If the restaurant isn't closed yet, I'd like to bring Francis Bacon, Benjamin Franklin, and Leonardo Da Vinci. Not that there would be a sensible conversation, but you'd hear a lot of 'All's well that ends well.' I'd just sit and eat. Francis would have bacon, Ben would have franks, and Leonardo something in Italian."

THE QUESTION OF LONG OR SHORT SF WORKS

----- Sheryl Birkhead: "I like short stories rather than 90% of the novels coming out right now. Aside from the question of quality, there is the matter of reading time involved versus the amount of time I have to read. ..a novel, by sheer length, is much more difficult to handle well."

Michael T. Shoemaker: "In general I prefer the longer stories and novels. My favorite kind of short story is the concise, one idea story, with a punch at the end, as typified by Robert Sheckley, William Tenn, and Henry Kuttner. Bob Coulson's point about certain authors excelling at certain lengths is a good one. I think Ray Bradbury is the best example of an author who could never write a good novel."

SF CLUBS DON'T TALK SF

----- Buzz Dixon: "As long as local ((Raleigh, NC)) fen can keep me and Scott Whiteside separated, they can discuss SF. Let us get together and we lapse into Peter Lorre accents (you oughta hear Scott as Lorre trying to get into a pay toilet). We then start swapping Army stories. Then we start telling 'simple mountain humor..so earthy it makes most people sick. In our loud voices we drive everyone out of the room."

THE BEST OF APA L, No. 3; edited by Lee Gold, 2471 Oak St., Santa Monica, Calif 90405
Two dollars; 117 pages; mimeod in both red and black

Apa L is bound to be, if not already, the most prolific apa of all. It has only been around for 8 years, but in three weeks it can produce pages equivalent to an entire FAPA bundle. On the other hand I concede, as a regular participant, that 9/10 of the material can be understood completely only by other Ellers. The apa has been put down as "that bunch of people who have been talking to themselves for 380 weeks now." All this discussion is to bring out such comments before you think of them, and to say that THE BEST OF APA L, using mailings between 1966-68, is 95% understandable without a translator from LA. Since the art includes some from Bjo Trimble, Jack Harness, Dian Pelz/Girard, and Freff, all accomplished on-stencil artists, and that the writing is from several of the best fanzine writers or apaziners in the last decade, this volume can in other contexts be considered as among the most excellent genzines ever published. Twice Hugo-nominated Tom Digby appears for a dozen essays and comments. Len Bailes, Bruce Pelz both take excursions into fannish writing in an LA vein. Fred Hollander, one of the sfans most successful at analyzing stories from a technical/scientific standpoint, leads a "technical" discussion of EE Smith's inertialess drive. Other principal items are "A Journey for Tom Digby" by Ruth Berman, and Bill Glass' ~~with the~~ cross between Tolkien and UNCLE, "The Tenth Nazgul Affair". It is a beautiful production. With admitted bias, I highly recommend it.

OUIJA 2 Brad Balfour (1104 Fuhrman, Cinn. OH, 45215) and Mike McInerney
Available for trade (both editors), locs, 25¢

OUIJA is a prime example of the Thoroughly Modern Fanzine, the fanzine of today and the immediate future, according to Charlie Brown. It adds up only to 19 pages, counting covers. It is well laid out and finely reproduced; it is filled almost exclusively with sharply written personal material. Most of the art is good -- like Balfour's own cartoon with the balloon "Hi, God speaking. I'm hip too. Wanna toke?" It even has a lettercol (four pages) including over a page from the Galactic Observer, Don Fitch. There is in it all the equipment of a genzine, yet it has the size and flavor of a small personalzine.

If there is any special reason to get OUIJA, it is Gary Deindorfer's "Some Instructions for Neodruggies from an Old Time Highly Developed Head." It's a running commentary on drug experiences with adept stabs at journalist reported trips such as might be seen in POPULAR SCIENCE etc. Very down on the reporter as doper, Deindorfer exercises such a power on words that they stand up and dance around in your imagination, all without revealing to you until afterwards that not only is Deindorfer incapable of straight argument, but that he is less interested in solving than in outlining problems. Excellent if you like seeing magic worked with the language.

"Naked in Long Beach" comes from Ken Beale. A Westercon report, it is unique among conreports that I have read. He has somehow conquered the tendency to invent fannish legends out of personal anecdote, and come out with something that simultaneously entertains while accurately reporting and opining on the convention. I don't understand why more people can't do this. Perhaps the actual writing of truths puts too much strain on fanwriters of today oriented to exaggerating mundane events, so as to qualify either for Hugos or canonization by Arnie Katz.

The lettercolumn is dull, and seems unedited but for the possibility that it was edited to remove the interesting parts. Perhaps the next OUIJA lettercol will be better. ((Editorial note... The next two sentences are exactly as Mike wrote them to end his column, and, frankly, I don't understand.)) This being the last OUIJA, certainly that zine has hit its ultimate heights. Lettercol out in December.

"For a thing to cause awe it has to have two qualities. It must be well-produced. A flower is. Then it has to be unique, a rarity, like a snowflake. But beefsteaks cannot produce awe, since you can't have a steak both well-done and rare!"

Buzz Dixon: My definition of SF is: Science Fiction is the branch of fiction in which the author expresses his views on science. If one is afraid of technology, as Ray Bradbury is, one will write stories about man's dominion by machine. If one is afraid of medicine and doctors, as I suspect Mary Shelley was, one will write FRANKENSTEIN. If one is afraid of his fellow man's weaknesses, as was George Orwell, one will write novels like 1984 or ANIMAL FARM. On the other hand, if one is fascinated by technology, one will produce James Bond movies. Or write THE ANDROMEDA STRAIN. Or do Gordy Dickinsonian stories for ANALOG.

In the thirties technology seemed the salvation of the future. Just build a better machine and everything would be all right. So the stories of the 30's, 40's, and part of the 50's were pro-technology. But in the latter part of the 50's we realized that people were more important than machines. So the New Wavists rejected stories of rocketeers, moon maidens and lost planets et al, and concentrated on the people. (As I told a local fan, I'm glad Kubrick made A CLOCKWORK ORANGE because it took SF out of the laboratory and put it back in the gutter where it belongs.)

In order for any story to be successful, it must get the reader interested in the characters. Even inanimate objects can be characters, but the reader must identify with or against someone/thing. True, most of the New Wave's heroes (?) were sick, but that was just to balance out all the clean cut, super WASP heroes that appeared before. Soon, we should see some rounded characters in SF (there have been some before, most notably in Alfred Bestor's stories). The two most popular characters in LOST IN SPACE were the robot and Dr. Smith. The robot wasn't human so he could be perfect. He wasn't a model for the viewer. Dr. Smith was a bumbling, cowardly, treacherous, mercenary idiot. By gosh, he was the only human character on the show! While the others were drinking their milk, acting polite, and doing their chores, Dr. Smith and the robot were getting into trouble.

Why do you think Archie Bunker is so loved by the very people he lampoons? Because he doesn't make friends with people of all races. He isn't sympathetic. He isn't patient. Like wise with Old Wave. The heroes lectured to you on science and personal behavior. You hated them because they were such goody-goodies. At least with New Wave heroes (?) you hate them because they're such S.O.B.'s. That's healthy, at least.

HARRY WARNER, Jr.: Michahel Moorcock wasn't altogether wrong in statements that Paul Walker objects to. Fans do say nastier things about pros who never go to conventions or write locs to fanzines. Witness the almost unanimous and bitter denunciation of THE ANDROMEDA STRAIN: even if it wasn't a good story, even though it didn't have the complexity of most modern SF, it was hopped on in a way that potboilers by Blish or Farmer never experience.

DON AYRES: One danger about IDEA fascination in SF is that you become so involved in it, extrapolating on your own, that you lose sight of the thing as a literary creation. The result is that you end up with a higher opinion of a book than it merits as a story. I know; it happens to most of my original stories. ((But, Don, which is the greater value to the book: to be ranked as a great story or to be enjoyed and loved as a stimulating vehicle to provide minutes or hours of contemplation?))

RAMPING AROUND IN THE SF PATCH (continued)

NED BROOKS: Regarding your recipe for SF, not all the THINGS, PEOPLE, and IDEAS will make a piece of good writing unless the writer knows how to write. He might have to tell the cook that although the ingredients selected were superb, it just would not do to simply run them all through the meatgrinder and serve raw... I think Coulson is wrong to attach so much value to 'suspense' - note that the really good stories are the ones you re-read. C.S. Lewis even says that you may enjoy a novel more after you have read it once and know how the thing ends.

JOHN LEAVITT: You and Redd Boggs seem to have a block against some of the finest writing ever done. You're confusing a bare-bones style with clear thinking. Tolkien, Henderson, Swann, et al, are the essence of 'clarity and hard thinking', and a prose style that brings a richness to every paragraph. On your RECIPE I agree about the overdoing of the 'people' element in some stories, although I enjoy them. I like the field to be wide open, with each story judged in terms of itself, not with any established yardsticks. All writers and artists and musicians work in the world of private visions. It is only through our private visions that we humans can view the world. What you object to is a sort of private vision you don't share, so it is unintelligible to you.

MARK HUMPER: It can be argued that all fiction is concerned with what modern human reality means, but SF is more blatantly obvious about it and concentrates more on larger events and causes. Isn't this what most people are yearning to understand?

NORMAN HOCHBERG: Arghhhh...more 'definition of SF' articles. I don't believe there is a definition of SF... what most people do is take the type of SF they like and make a definition to include it. Then they say - "see, this isn't SF". Regarding RECIPE - are people really more interested in PEOPLE in mainstream fiction? I don't think so. I think there is an equal emphasis on THINGS. And everybody writes stories with 'ideas' in them...there is very little dividing line between these categories.

ED CONNOR: Cv Chauvin's "Reading & Criticism of SF" contains much food for thought. Too damned much, actually. It gives one a glimpse of the complexity of facets presented the reader, the critic, the creator. Is it all useless, this writing of SF, except for the passing gain? Ah, draw a parallel with existence itself, for the points, really, coincide. A search through the opinions of the 'recognized' philosophers might illuminate the worth or futility of existence and, by analogy, the worth or futility of the creation, perusal and criticism of fiction.

GARY GRADY: Cv Chauvin's remarks on SF are interesting and probably true, but I wonder if he really believes that mystery stories or westerns approximate reality. There was a chap not too far back who offered a few thousand pennies to anyone who could prove that there had been even ONE gun duel in the traditional western style. ('Draw, varmint!')

DARRELL SCHWEITZER: Fans control the awards, but they do not control what sells and continues to be published. THE EINSTEIN INTERSECTION got all sorts of praise and sold terribly. Moorcock is wrong: fans are not swaying anything.

In T 5 two puzzling points were raised: why, if a body acts as a single center of gravity mass, is there this rending tide effect; and, if the sun's gravitational field is stronger than Earth's, why is it the sun has less spacetime curvature. Only four readers commented on that particular piece; yet my personal interest compels me to report.

John Leavitt expresses my same puzzlement (since cleared up by what follows). He adds, "More puzzlings of this nature would be welcome."

Al Jackson, from his vantage point in the physics department of The U. of Texas, writes 3 pages of explanation which will be tough to condense on stencil, but here goes. "From the point particle view of classical mechanics, you can say nothing about the gravitational field you are in! As pointed out by Einstein, the only way to measure the gravitational field is with at least two point particles. The only reality of a gravitational field is its tide producing force. As to curvature, gravitation is expressed by the way two particles move relative to one another...by an equation known as the geodesic deviation. This equation has contained in it the Riemann Curvature Tensor, measuring the curvature of spacetime. The density of the homogenous spherical body is a part of the equation. Since the sun's average density is that of water, and as carzy as it might seem, spacetime is more curved at the surface of the earth than at the surface of the sun. This does not mean that the strength of the gravitational field of the sun is less than the earth's." Al Jackson then quotes from a preprint of a book due in Feb.'73: GRAVITATION by Misner, Thorne, and Wheeler to be pubbed by W.H.Freeman. The quote describes the horrible stretching between the astronaut's feet and head as the radius of the star falls to zero. His body is stretched to infinite length. Meanwhile his body is compressed on all sides to zero volume. Coupled with infinite length.... "It is a lot worse than whiplash, for the above is known as the tooth-paste effect!"

Ned Brooks wrote a paragraph made a lot of sense to my old classical physics' brain: "...the curvature does not depend directly on gravity acceleration, g , but on its gradient, dg/dr . The acceleration due to gravity at the sun's surface is about 27 times that at the Earth's surface, but the gradient is only 1/100 as much as at the Earth's surface. In order to get a reduction of 1% in g at the sun, you would have to go 4000 miles further out, whereas a distance of 40 miles from Earth's surface will reduce g by 1%. Thus the absolute gravity gradient at the sun's surface is only 27/100 as great as at Earth's surface. Write Asimov at F&SF to explain it in his column..."

Jim Kennedy sent a photostat of a David Brand "black hole" article in Wall Street Journal. "Its (black hole) implications for SF writing are endless. Two immediately come to mind: 1) If astral projectionists were able to move their Ids, souls, life forces, or whatever into the black holes, they would travel through not only space, but also time. And into other'dimensions'? Perhaps there are dimensions in which matter is the same consistency as a human soul? 2) Stars of this sort would very likely be the abode of Lovecraft's "gods" (Azathoth in particular) and the millions of imitations in SF."

John Leavitt (and others) called my attention to "Netron Star" which I have since read, as a result of all this. He also mentioned an article in ANALOG and a story by Joe Haldeman, 'Here', which "peripherally involved the possible use of black holes, also in ANALOG."

CAGLE COMMENCE YET

Mack Reynolds, in his SF, and a few other writers, pictured a society with too little work to go around. This, as I recall, resulted in the ultimate welfare state. Or something. I don't recall the exact details. Mack Reynolds had some interesting ideas, but I lacked the capacity for detail that he used to convey his thoughts. It was my fault, not Reynolds'.

L.Ron Hubbard, also an SF writer with ideas, was a crack typist, so I've heard. Maybe he was a speedball on a typer, who am I to argue?

John Sladek once had his picture in PLAYBOY - on the author's page. The most recent of Sladek's works that I have seen is in F&SF. It is a parody of Heinlein. I'm glad the blurb explained that.

Ron Goulart writes humorous SF, and SF needs humor.

A few SF authors have written in fanzines that SF authors do not need fans. I agree with that. There are other things that SF need more than fans..... Write a letter of praise to an author today. Fish around a little. Support your favorite genre.

In a good story in F&SF, Harlan Ellison had mulberries growing on a bush. Meticulous attention to detail makes for a good fantasy.

AGAIN, DANGEROUS VISIONS, in my opinion, has more excellent stories than bad in it. There are no mediocre stories, and that's odd. That is another damned opinion of mine.

One of the three novellas in Gene Wolfe's THE FIFTH HEAD OF CERBERUS almost tore my head off. That's a good reaction. Read the book.

Bruce Gillespie, the editor of SCIENCE FICTION COMMENTARY, is in the throes of discovering a long-forgotten Australian author of memorable stories. Acton Manley Bell is the forgotten author's name, and I hear the stories are quite good.

Richard Delap, critic and reviewer of F&SF, I mean SF & F, also has a practical method for having sexual intercourse with a mountain lion. Unfortunately, for some folks...it only works on a female lion. That's the one I was interested in, but maybe he'll devise something for the male.

Eric Lindsay, the High Priest of Fact-conbridge, New South Wales, Australia, and publisher of the fanzine GEGENSCHWEIN, has a desk drawer that forecasts the weather.

((And I have a system of gathering astrological data for the day from the position of my shoelaces in the morning. Fer G'sakes, Ed, you sure know how to torture a guy. Those last two items will send my readers farkingly bocney!))

Knowing the difference between sercon and farnish should be illegal, and arguing about it in fanzines is.....weird. Genzine and personalzine are two terms that can be written with one space and 19 letters, if you don't spill your gin during the attempt. All other definitions take more letters to write, and may even cause more gin spillage. It is better to drink gin than to read long arguments about types of zines. It is better to drink gin than to pull horse weeds, too.

de gustibus non est disputandum
pax

"It's a bad apple pie," Johann Sebastian Bach Smith said crustily." -JSBS Hochberg.....

"She has a nice fanny," he butted in.
"I'll have a martini," he said dryly.
overheard at a con by Buzz Dixon

Buzz ought to get credit for "fakan" and "faken" - sing.and plural of fake fan...

"I'll be coming shortly," Harlan said."
- Barry Smotroff

"Your short & lousy SF story contains the title: ALL OUR YESTERDAYS. 1st line, al; 2nd line l,our; 3rd, yesterda; etc."
Norman Hochberg. ((Splrfsk!))

Sentics - fingers that show emotion,

Ned Brooks: "I never heard of measuring emotions thru a pressure transducer, tho I use them often enough to measure pressure. We often use lpsi transducers that will pick up changes of 1/100 of a pound per square inch. We do not allow people to put their fingers on the diaphragm. I doubt you could hold your hand steady enough to register anything but screams of anguish from the technician who will have to replace the thing." ((My note in #5 - longer piece yet to come, if ever - was not precise. The transducer (which may come in more rugged models?) measured only pressure but in such of several identifiable ways that the graphs could be correlated with emotion - according to the theory, anyway.))

** PLANTS THAT THINK, FEEL, PRACTISE ESP, GROGGLE, AND GROK **

Tom Digby: "...think of it...plants can be trained to squeal on persons entering a store with intent to shoplift."

Don Fitch: "As one who works with plants (nurseryman in charge of greenhouses at the L.A. County Arboretum) I was interested in Backster's work when Greg Shaw brought it to my attention a year or so ago. But I haven't investigated seriously. I have noticed that one person with an extremely negative charisma (none of us liked him) had almost a 90% mortality rate in seedlings he potted (the usual is more like 5%), even though I watched carefully and am sure he did everything right. On the other hand, most of my plants thrive when "weeds" are destroyed, many plants do well when injured (pruned), and plants in the vicinity of the spot where we usually chopped the heads off chickens grew very vigorously indeed. I do glare at some plants in the greenhouse I don't like at all, and they seem to show no ill effects. It's nothing like a Controlled Experiment of course."

Jackie Franke: "You've read, no doubt, of the effects music is supposed to have on house plants? What I find amusing is the conflicting results various experimenters report. Anti-Rock folk tell of 'marvelous' reactions to Mozart, etc. Others state emphatically that loud rock shakes up their roots - they thrive on it. A caution was given against too much exposure, by a TV gardener. He attributes all benefits via sound waves, not aesthetic principles. If true, do plants get fatigued from too much music?"

Rose Hogue: "I call my starpine "Little One", but it has grown 2 inches since Dec. and seems destined to reach its 30-odd feet sooner than normal. I have also been talking to my Mirandy Rose bush, and it doesn't seem to be responding." ((Do you know or are you related to the fellow in Fitch's greenhouse?))

Norman Hochberg: "...freaky...shivers up my spine...horrors for daydreams...what if grass were sentient at a level we could not detect. God! We step on it all day long." ((Obey the sign, KEEP OFF THE GRASS.))

John Leavitt: "Are you sure your ohmeter was sensitive enough? ((For my half-biffed attempt to get a plant emotional index.)) Can it tell about your own emotional changes like a polygraph? Try hooking it to yourself and thinking real hard about the collected works of J.G. Ballard to see if it registers any change in skin resistance." ((I've applied for an NSF grant and bought the book out-of-pocket; if Ballard doesn't do the trick I have some others to try.))

Mark Mumper: "...frightening...guilt feelings and for the creepy feeling of an entire sentient or perceptive world we're unaware of. Croggles!"

Tom Mullen: "I think there is more to Backster's work with plants than you give him credit for. I saw the article in National Wildlife you mentioned, but you did not mention that the magazine's editor actually sat in with Backster during one of the sessions. I think there could be some relation between this and people who have green thumbs. Some experiments show that different types of music have definite effects on the growth of plants, as reported in the New York Times."

Michael T. Shoemaker: "...brings to mind 'The Bloodless Peril' by Henry Kuttner under the house name of Will Garth. Great fiction!"

Chunterings #5 from Seth McEvoy, July, 1971: In addition to Backster, this fmz calls attention to POPULAR ELECTRONICS, June 71, on how to build a sensitive amplifier, in order to measure the plant's electrical changes in threatening situations. The scoop ends with a lyric apropro by Frank Zappa, ABSOLUTELY FREE. Call any vegetable???

*** ATLANTIS ***

Harry Warner, Jr.: "I wonder if 'Herman Schliemann' who wrote the article about Atlantis ((T4)) was the Schliemann who really did dig up the ruins of Troy and other Greek locations, proving that they were real places instead of myths. Or did the New York newspaper use that name in its hoax in the hope that readers would confuse it with the authentic scientist?" ((Like the dance band, in my youth, that came to visit the small town under the name Guyle Ombardo.)) "Meanwhile, have you considered the possibility that your Cahokia State Park mystery might be Atlantis?" ((Are you the one, Harry, who called me about the mosquitoes?))

John Leavitt: "The Atlantis article was also reprinted in SCIENCE DIGEST." ((I can see why, and I'm sorry. ARAMCO WORLD is not copyrighted and almost begs reprinting. Good policy for a promotional mag, though maybe a dirty deal for the authors.)) "In the first part of THE OUTLINE OF HISTORY (V1,Bk3,Chap13,Sec7), H.G. Wells speculates that Atlantis might actually have been located in Georgia between the Black Sea and the Caspian. A remarkable number of Greek fables and legends concentrate on Georgia. It was the land of the Golden Fleece, the goal of the Argonauts and it was there where Prometheus was chained with the vulture gnawing at his vitals!"

*** INDIANS ***

Roy Tackett: "It is rare that I find myself in disagreement with Buck Coulson but this seems to be one of those times. To say that there are more Indians alive now than there were when the whiteman first settled here is meaningless. Throughout the 19th Century the policy of this country toward the Indians was one of genocide. The Indians survived only because they allowed themselves to be put on the reservations and out of the way. That policy still exists to a certain extent and in a subtly different way. The government would like nothing more than to terminate the reservations and shuffle the Indians off to the cities where they might get lost in the ghettos and never be seen again."

Mike Glycer: "Coulson should be arrested for bullshooting without a license. Where does he get his statistics -- if he has any at all. He strikes out this time. Carribean Islands were full of Indians - wiped out by disease, enslavement and neglect. Hudson's Bay region was thick with them. The San Joaquin Valley in California had a known population of 200,000 in 1850 and dissipated to nothing within years. As for 'we did nothing which they weren't already doing to themselves - we just did it more efficiently' -- is that an observation or a justification? Let's not take this LAST OF THE MOHICANS crap too far. That's like saying, 'Everybody's got to die sometime -- Hitler's extermination camps were just more efficient.'"

Greg Burton: "We did at least one thing to the Indians that they didn't do to each other -- gave them lots and lots of blankets. Of course they had just come from a smallpox hospital.."

*** MODERN ART AND SUCH ***

Ned Brooks: "Today's condemned innovation is tomorrows's classic - sometimes. Part of the reason for the apparent superiority of past masters is that the crud has not come down to us. I would guess that overall, the percentage of good stuff is about the same as it ever was. Styles come and go. If nothing but Wilkie Collins type detective mysteries will do, then you are going to be hard up for something to read. I submit that this indicates ossification of the brain rather than any decline in the quality of literature." ((I submit that to gaze rapturously at an enlarged copy of a Campbell soupcan or walk through dirt and old auto tires brought into a gymnasium as ART is an ossification of the brain's judgement center.))

Greg Burton: "As far as the 'soupcan' art goes, it was a great thing when it started; now it's somewhat boring. ((Cogent point. Shows the difference between 'novelty' and 'art'.)) If Leavitt wants to stay where he is, fine; he'll stagnate and die. If that modern Gainesborough is working in a parking lot, it's his own damned fault for listening to his teachers. Cultures ALWAYS tend to displace their artists. If he gives up because of criticism, how valid was his vision to begin with? By the time a student gets to art school, he should have some idea of what he is doing and what he wants to do as an independent."

"Donn!!! How could you say Mike Scott's 'Dear Snirt' letter ((T/4)) is more polemic than penetrating? ((One reason: I'm not quite sure what 'polemic' means.)) And you wanting to know why people read SF? ((Just so new readers will understand me... it's not that they shouldn't, for they should; but why? That's two questions, both interesting. Why ought people read SF. And why do people read SF. That's the latter question we're working on for this page.)) For me, it's the same reason Mike gives: 'I like it, I LIKE IT!' Period. And don't ask me why I like it. Why do people like anything?" -- BARRY SMOTROFF

((I'm hoping some psychological buff may have an answer to, "Why do people like anything?" and then squeeze it down to, "Why do people like SF?"))

And now DAVE LOCKE writes: "To me, 'I know what I like' is an ultimate truth. That is a long ways from Lou Stathis' opinion that it's 'an asshole statement that shows only the speaker's ignorance, stupidity and anti-intellectualism'. ((T #4)) I think we've both got a point, but let's analyze them. I say 'I know what I like' in the literal sense; as opposed to 'I don't know what I like'. I say that because I do know what I like. Why do I like science fiction, or corn-on-the-cob, or sex, or swimming in cool water? Well, because I like it... I can't say that I know what I like before I've tried it (although I have enough experience to make educated guesses), but this isn't implied in the statement 'I know what I like'. If I've done it and I liked it, then I know that I like it. Plain simple. Now, Lou, on to your opinion. 'An asshole statement'. Right off the bat, I know that you don't mean this in a literal sense. Let's take Lou's own example: 'I don't know much about art, but I know what I like.' 'Shows the speaker's ignorance'. Of course; he so states it, and I would view that as a literal expression of ignorance. 'Shows the speaker's stupidity'. No. Lou is confusing stupidity with ignorance, I feel. A person who states his ignorance is not stupid, even when he qualifies that statement by noting that within that area of ignorance he has dabbled enough to find something of merit to him. 'Shows the speaker's anti-intellectualism'. How? It's an honest statement of ignorance and personal preference, which everyone will find in his own daily life. Maybe you don't know much about clothing, but you know what you like to wear. Maybe you don't know much about cars, but you like what you're driving now. Maybe you don't know much about literature, but you like science fiction. How about food, women, the theater, typewriters, stationary, etc. Nobody is an expert on everything but in the course of your life you touch upon many things which you can appreciate without being an expert in that area. It happens daily. Whether or not you consciously say the words, 'I don't know much about...but', this is a part of everyone's life and it's ridiculous to knock someone else when they wander into your expert domain and say those particular words."

Your editor, while tooling along the expressway (or freeway or whatever it's called in your locale), sees and hears things that he cannot explain with the conviction that he's right. Example: going under an overpass, with the radio playing softly, it deadens to silence. That part I understand. However, just after passing under and out, the radio has a burst of sound that seems louder than usual...and recovers its original volume. You electronic experts... is there an electronic explanation? Or is it an auditory illusion, as Railee Bothman is convinced?

Another thing: while forced to drive slowly up a slight hill of the lane that seemed to slant down to the right, I noticed a horizontal stripe cutting across the lane which seemed to move from left to right as if the front of the line were drawing itself. Gad, that was difficult to explain, and maybe I haven't done it very well. Anyway, perhaps some artist or projective geometrist can explain how or why that line seems to spread itself into visibility so strangely.

And this: why do I find it easier to make a fast left turn than one to the right?

BRUCE D. ARTHURS: "I'd like to talk about drugs. (A lot of fans will probably say, 'Uh, oh, here we go again!') When the subject of fans, drugs, and creativity comes up, what I usually hear is: 'What about Philip K. Dick?' Well, Dick is one of my favorite writers. But how much, really, do drugs have to do with how well he writes? Some of his stories, so it is claimed, are directly taken from his trips. I doubt this, however. Read A MAZE OF DEATH. According to Dick himself, a portion of this book is taken directly from an LSD trip. This portion is vague, barely coherent, and forms a vastly disrupting disturbance right in the center of the book, and spoiled my enjoyment of it. Dick might use his hallucinations for inspirations, but certainly not direct inspiration. They have to be filtered through a sober mind to gain coherency. Take R.A. Lafferty; a good deal of his work, I suspect, was inspired by his years as an alcoholic. There's a heavy touch of the DT's in his writing. But would he be as fine a writer as he is if he was still an alcoholic? Going back to Dick -- how long has he used drugs? His entire writing career? Half of it? If he hasn't, it would serve as a basis for seeing whether his work has improved with the use of drugs."

TOM DIGBY: "While reading TITLE I noticed several abbreviations which contain letters not in the whole word, usually because the abbreviation is of an earlier term which has fallen into relative disuse. Examples include 'fmz' for 'fanzine', 'stf' for 'science fiction' -- all the letters are there, but in the wrong order. ((I can't swear to this, but I think I was given credit for 'fmz' when we used to call fanzines 'fan magazines'.)) Then there's 'oz' for 'ounce' and 'lb' for 'pound'. Weird..." ((One of TITLE's readers - and I can't find the letter now - wrote that the profuse use of abbreviations when he (or her) was a neofan nearly proved too much discouragement to continue in fandom. I don't think you can get away from jargon in any specialized field.)) ((And how does one get 'oz' from 'ounce' and 'lb' from 'pound'??))

AL JACKSON: "I quite understand the Armstrong sect ((THE PLAIN TRUTH)) is a fundamentalist group, but hang it all, his long standing protest against biological evolution just does not seem to jibe with his otherwise perceptive views. Especially infuriating are the arguments he makes against evolution. He is forever picking up narrow specifics of animal biology and never but never have I ever heard him express any views about the broad general structure of modern (or old) evolutionary models. Mostly I don't understand the Armstrongs' fanatical insistence on fighting evolution in the face of the fact that almost all established religion in the west has become compatible with modern evolution."

Tom Mullen: "In some recent work to investigate several very distant galaxies (we're not sure that's what they are, I think) they applied the red shift and an interferometer, which measure velocity and distance, respectively, and do you know what they came up with? They found that these objects were traveling at velocities in excess of eight times the speed of light. I don't know what astrophysicists are going to do, since it either means that the methods they have used are inaccurate, and the math says they can't be, or Einstein's theories are wrong, and the math says they can't be. What to do, what to do?"

Seth McEvoy: "Not very surprisingly, most of Philip Wylie's fiction was dictated and transcribed later by a secretary. I didn't like the book version of LA:2017, but enjoyed the TV segment. I rather enjoyed the SPY WHO SPOKE PORPOISE, mostly because of the scenery and the spy spoof. I have enjoyed most of Wylie except his very last works like SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF MOM, which was just a trifle too shrill. Fiction-wise, Wylie seemed best on his collaborations with Balmer -- besides the two COLLIDE novels, they did two excellent mystery novels, FIVE FATAL WORDS and THE GOLDEN HOARD."

Jackie Franke: "I wonder why I've read no comment on Asimov's article 'The Ultimate Speed Limit' in SATURDAY REVIEW? Most distressing to anyone convinced (as I am) that Man will overcome any barriers to FTL space flight." ((Tell us more please....))

1
2nd
3rd
FRANK ANALYSIS

JOE L. HENSLEY: Thanks for TITLE.
Fun to read.

JEFF SCHALLES: "I am fascinated
by TITLE. It is one of the most
effective reader-feedback set-ups
I have ever stumbled across in fan-
dom. I bet someone's already com-
pared you to Johnny Carson and
TITLE to the TONIGHT SHOW. ((Is
that tricky?))

FRANK BALAZS writes: After read-
ing 'Fun N Games', I knew exactly
how you edit the locs you receive.
First you assign each loc a lott-
ery number, then you toss the num-
bers in a big bag and proceed with
the LocLot. The lucky locs are al-
ligned on the street you live on.
Each sentence is then further as-
signed a number and 20% of these
are drawn from the bag. Finally
all the chosen phrases are assign-
ed still another number to deter-
mine in what random order they
will appear in TITLE. Voila!
((You see how easu it is!))

PAILEF BOTHMAN: That's a true
scientist - first weighs the let-
ters, then measures the reading
time. Which gives me the most cred-
it - to write big so the letter
weighs a lot, or very small so it
takes a long time to read? ((Me-
thinks my leg, the other one, is
being pulled this time!))

MICHAEL T. SHOEMAKER doesn't have
a leg to pull: Since you were
born Oct. 4, there's no doubt you
are a science-fictional event. Of
course, Godzilla vs. the Thing is
such an event, too.

IMPORTANT NOTE: All items of news
sent to TITLE will be sent to Valt
Stumper's SON OF GRAPHAN, SOG, be-
cause he has a fine biweekly news-
zine covering all fields. His
address is 9764 New Hampshire St.
Louis, Mo. 63123. Since TITLE is
not a newszine & Stumper's zine
appears twice as often, why com-
pete?

NOTE: Several readers do not ap-
prove of the connectivity study.
An invasion of privacy: a 'Lia
Brother' investigation naming
people who prefer not to be named.
Anyway, not enough replied to get
a good measure, but I will use on-
ly TITLE reader names as a small
report in TITLE 8. Periodical
survey will also be in T 8.

SHEPYL BIRKHEAD, whose column tit-
le idea is hers above, says: Wow!
First look at TITLE felt like walk-
ing out of a nice summer day into
a hail storm with thunder, light-
ning, sleet and a multitude of
other phenomena going on at the
same time. In short, a million
conversations all going on at the
same time. It'll take a bit of
getting used to. ((Tricky me!))

SECOND NOTE: Several of you have
queried me about small breweru beer
cans for my son, and one has al-
ready arrived from Ed Lesko, Jr.:
many thanks, Ed and 36¢ will be on
its way to you...

JIM KENNEDY says: Your little 'news
note' about me ((referring to him
as lord etc.)) took me by surprise
but, luckily, only one person has
written for 'further information'.
Was this diabolic sarcasm, or even
more sinister? ((Tricky me!))

THIRD NOTE: Because of the trouble
I had with the mimeo this issue,
and the fact I'm borrowing it, and
shouldn't, I have just purchased a
second hand direct process Ditto.
T 8 will be mixed media - some mim-
eo from stencils already cut and
pages from the Ditto which I have
not had a chance to try yet because
of this mid-west museum convention
in St. Louis. In fact, that conv.
at which I am one of the hosts has
me doing this one hour before I
greet visitors. Will I make it????

ALMA HILL writes: Your fns re-
freshes my confidence in fandom as
a dimension for reasonable people.
You have quite a good game going
there. ((Tricky me!))