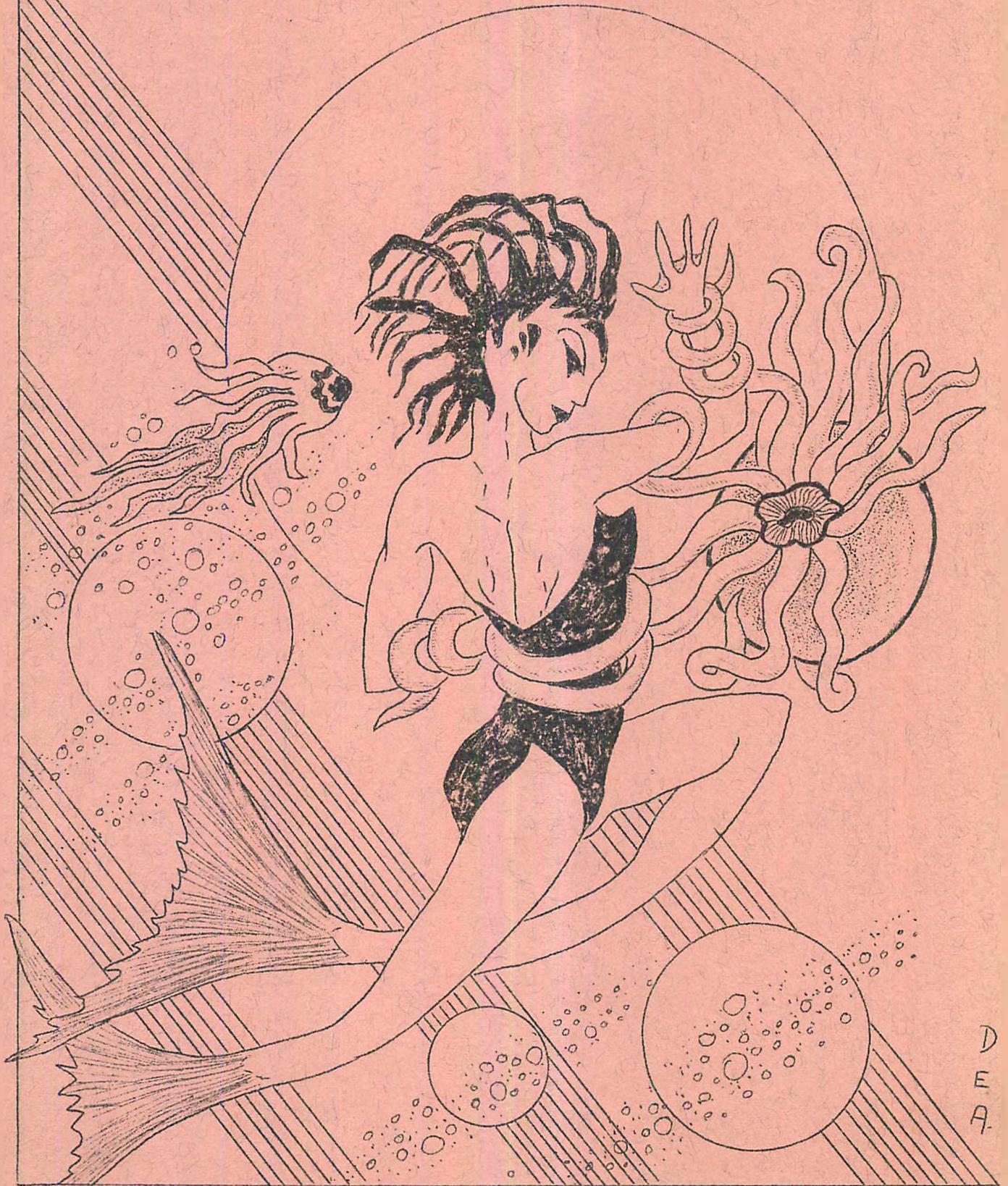


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volume twelve
number three

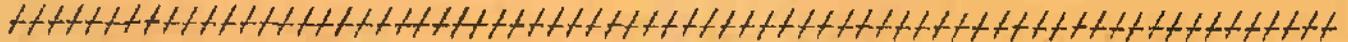
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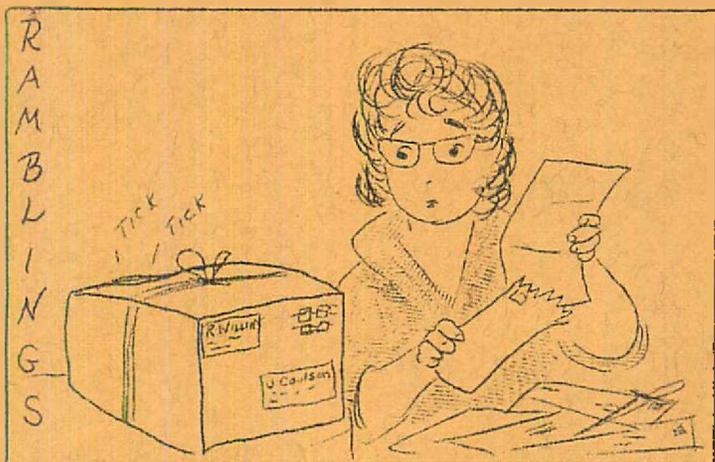
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ART WORK

Cover by DEA - - - - - page 1 by George Barr and Nott
 pages 2 and 4 by JWC
 page 6 and 25 by Jim Cawthorn
 page 7 by George Barr
 page 10 by Dan Adkins
 page 11 by ATOM
 page 14 by Dave Locke
 page 15 by Joe Staton
 page 24 by R.E. Gilbert





First things first: profound apologies to Rob Williams for failing to credit him with last issue's cover logo. This happens now and then; a batch of artwork, lettering and whatnot will come in from several different people at the same time (usually a frantically busy time) and unless it's signed by the artist, it's quite possible it might be mixed up with someone else's work -- precisely what happened to Rob's lettering.

I try to pencil in names on all art and lettering contribs, but as is obvious, I occasionally goof. One way to be sure is to put your name or distinctive initials on your work before I get my grubby paws on your masterpiece. But I'm a very poor one to be lecturing other people about signing their work, since I'm woefully lax in this department myself.

Anyway, apologies, to Rob for the slight and to others for the confusion.

Several years ago, this area began to get serious about flood control. (This is probably pretty academic to readers from the great arid southwest, but the Ohio Valley is perpetually involved in a flood-drought cycle.) A series of dams are being built along the rivers feeding the Ohio and Wabash Rivers, and one of these dams is being constructed a scant 5-10 miles southwest of us. The water backed up from this dam will inundate the town where Bruce's school is presently located, and for the past eighteen months the Corps of Engineers and various other government agencies have been involved in moving the town -- houses, businesses, churches, (and it's to be hoped -- if they ever finish arguing the case -- a school), the entire community. The water has not yet started to rise, and although the engineers champ at the bit and try to push, some of the people have been taking their own time moving.

Articles and arguments from neighbors and in the local papers have informed all interested parties of various inequities, and I'm sure some of the displaced will never be satisfied. Nonetheless, they are taxpayers and voters, and to a disinterested renter on safe high ground, it seems to me that all things considered, the moves are getting off rather lightly.

Several weeks ago I saw films from a similar project in the east. The contrast is rather sickening. Whereas the local community is perhaps 1/4 to three-fourths moved (houses, churches, buildings being laboriously hauled a mile or two up the hill to the new location -- have you ever come down the highway and round a curve to see a church moving down the road toward you? Startling.), the eastern project showed a few bulldozers halfheartedly pushing down trees. The ground had not been leveled, no streets had been surveyed or laid out to the best of my eyesight, and certainly it was in no condition for the buildings to be moved in or begin building. Yet, according to the report, this eastern project was six to twelve months ahead of Indiana's project -- six to twelve months closer to inundation of the old sites (the water is supposed to start creeping up here in spring of '65).

The difference. The displaced in the eastern project were Indians.

Naturally, they were in no position to raise much of a political ruckus, no position to threaten a representative or senator if someone

didn't get the lead out.

When I read the "Letters to the Editor" section in the local paper, complaining about sloppy handling of the flood control project, I tend to feel bitter.

We contribute to Indian charities, and I wish we could do more, and I would certainly not object to more of my tax money going for the assistance of a people who've already received a pretty raw deal from us.

And some senator from one of the tobacco states is proposing a multi-million dollar laboratory to discover a safe way to make cigarettes -- funds to be supplied from tax money, of course. As a non-smoking tax payer, I seethe. And I suggest that since they acquired tobacco, and its incredible profits, from the Indians, it's about time the tobacco interest started to repay some dividends.

Tolerance is a many-faceted thing. It's interesting that so many fans who are terribly tolerant regarding the relationships of people, suddenly do a turnabout as regards taste. Taste in many different fields. An old example is the field of music, and the tendency to put down "pop" music of all sorts, in favor of serious music, some brand of jazz, folk music, or whathaveyou. I've had my say on that before -- you needn't like it, but you needn't dismiss the fans of such as automatic morons, either.

Then there is the snobbism of the big city slicker. Particularly that of New Yorkers, but others occasionally offend. I differentiate between snobbism -- "You have nothing here: everything is in NY" -- and honest lack of knowledge of the world beyond the big city. Such as Les Gerber exulting that we lived in the wide open spaces with miles and miles of open fields and whatnot. Locally, they call it rurban, and it's overpopulated as far as we're concerned. And such things as Jock Root being astonished at the self-contained quality of the house: pump, bottle gas stove -- and the quite normal size of local eggs.

The snobbism that annoys me is the sort that puts down small-town food, entertainment, housing, etc., as nowhere. We even get a little of this from foreign visitors. We've all been regaled with the abysmal manners of the U.S. citizen abroad, but he seems no more annoying than the Latin American visitor who samples some variety of our native food -- such as fried chicken or broiled beef -- and immediately complains that we don't know how to cook because we use "no spices". Now I'm quite fond of spice in cooking, and I'm further indebted to the Hickey's for opening more new horizons; but I fail to see why a love of spiced foods needs mean I no longer should enjoy unspiced cooking. There are times when I don't feel like a lot of spice. Eggs with rosemary and pepper are delicious, but occasionally I want them plain, with butter and salt.

To me, there is a difference between saying one prefers something -- whether it be a variety of music, food, art, clothing or whatever -- and an arbitrary statement that one's chosen variety is the best. Standards differ (at least in my philosophy, which is obviously not Platonic) and I stand fascinated and horrified by supposed liberals who scramble metaphors so beautifully.

New book department: THE GREAT HUNGER, Cecil Woodham-Smith, Signet, 95¢ -- an account of the Irish famine of 1845-49, with much food for thought on economic and political theory and its misuses (not a book to read while dieting, incidentally). A NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS: THE SINKING OF THE TROOPSHIP LEOPOLDVILLE, MacFadden, 60¢ -- I've barely started this, but it promises to be a thorough, and bitter, book.



I haven't read the book, but I think that Pyramid should get some sort of imaginative titling award for The Cross And The Switchblade.

More in the science fictional line, I notice that there is a new mainstream novel, titled The Missile Lords, by one Jefferson Sutton. I assume this is our old Ace novelist, Jeff Sutton, in a literary coat and tea. (I haven't read it, either; I didn't like his stf novels well enough to buy his non-stf, especially at 60¢ or

whatever inflated price they were asking for it.)

An advertisement head in an industrial magazine says "Rubbermakers Shoot For Railroad Crossing Market". I know they're doing it everywhere nowadays, but railroad crossings? This younger generation.....

I took several of the fanzines to work so I could read (or at least skim) them all in time for inclusion in "Strange Fruit". (No, I didn't read them during working hours; just during coffee breaks and the noon hour.) One noon I was wandering back from the cafeteria -- located, with typical Honeywell ingenuity, in the middle of the factory area -- reading WARHOON 19. For those who haven't seen it, this is a large fanzine sporting bright lavender covers adorned with a huge Freudian ink-blot. I only wish that I'd had someone with a camera following me, to record some of the expressions of my fellow-workers as I wandered by.

An interesting sidelight on "the poor Americans" was printed in U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT. According to statistics, only 75% of the homes in Harlan County, Kentucky, have running water. But ~~88%~~ have washing machines. Only 50% have bathrooms, but 67% have television. Personally, I think that most of this jazz about poor Americans is propaganda to try to persuade other nations that we aren't really the rich, snotty, crass materialists that they think we are. (And as propaganda, it's backfiring; now we can't even fall back on our standard of living in defense of capitalism.) And note that I said "most". There are destitute Americans -- a good share of them are Indians, who are not only starving but legally prevented from doing anything about the fact. This sort of thing should be stopped. But altogether too many people are being lumped together as "poor" -- the next step is to declare that half the people have below average incomes. My complete lack of sympathy with all this furor stems from the fact that throughout most of my life I have been one of those "poor Americans". I know what it's like; I've lived over half my life in a house with an outdoor toilet, no telephone, no tv (of course, it hadn't been invented yet, but we wouldn't have had one if it had been invented because we didn't have the money.) I know what it's like, and it's not all as bad as some people are trying to make out. In fact, until this recent hullabaloo, I didn't even realize that I'd been underprivileged; I thought I had a pretty fair childhood. (Of course, we generally had enough to eat, and fuel to burn; we grew most of our food, and Dad was out every winter cutting firewood. I was out with him on weekends, tho I was probably more of a hindrance than a help; I never did master the art of operating a crosscut saw very well. If someone is actually starving, I'll sympathize; otherwise I say he's getting along perfectly well.)

If by any chance you receive an ad in the mail for "Legendary Masters Of The Piano", don't throw it away unread. Open it up and read the one-page

"History of a Remarkable Sound Process" on the inside. This thing is pure science fiction; I'd love to reprint the whole thing. Science-fiction with a large dollop of James Bond thrown in. Anyway, it's one of those mass mailing things, so you probably will -- or have already -- received one. If you threw it out, you missed a very funny 5 minutes or so.

One item I am going to quote is from Steinbeck's The Moon Is Down. I recently bought the Bantam edition, and on re-reading it discovered one passage which seems appropriate to a discussion we had here an issue or two back.

"He spoke angrily. 'This is no honorable war. This is a war of treachery and murder. Let us use the methods that have been used on us! Let the British bombers drop their big bombs on the works, but let them also drop us little bombs to use, to hide, to slip under the rails, water tanks. Then we will be armed, secretly armed. Then the invaders will never know which of us is armed. Let the bombers bring us simple weapons. We will know how to use them!'

Winter broke in. 'They'll never know where it will strike. The soldiers, the patrol, will never know which of us is armed.'

Tom wiped his forehead. 'If we get through, we'll tell them, sir, but -- well, I've heard it said that in England there are still men in power who do not dare to put weapons in the hands of common people.'

Orden stared at him. 'Oh! I hadn't thought of that. Well, we can only see. If such people still govern England and America, the world is lost, anyway.' "

Honeywell is not alone. Gene DeWeese brought down part of an instruction sheet produced by AC Spark Plug. One sentence reads: "The sequence of testing and inspection procedures is suggested and may be performed in any order which will permit the most economical use of manpower and equipment." Sound perfectly normal? Yes -- but the "sequence of testing" consists of precisely one test (complete with a diagram showing the product being moved from Assembly to Test -- it doesn't tell how to move it, understand; it's a "flow-gram" which shows routing. The routing is from (1) Assembly to (2) Test. This is why businesses complain about the costs of paperwork.)

I'm beginning to believe that magazine distributors use Webash as a dumping ground for magazines they can't sell anywhere else. Since I subscribe to all the stf mags that I'm really interested in getting I hadn't noticed this, but the past few months I've been picking up magazines for Hector Pessina (I wonder if the little old lady who runs the news stand would believe me if I told her that some of her products were being shipped to Argentina?) and the delays in arrival of issues are being noticed. I waited almost a month for the March ANALOG (I had a shipment ready and I wanted to include it) without success. Day after day, there were the same two copies of the Feb. issue. Finally, I happened to be in Warsaw, and noticed that they already had the April issue on the news stand there. So I gave up and mailed Hector's mags. Five days later, the March ANALOG showed up here. I don't mind a few days delay -- but I do think that five weeks is a bit too much.

Anybody want a couple of hundred pounds of old SATURDAY EVENING POSTs? We finally sorted thru the batch we got from Dad, picked out a few to keep, a larger batch to read at least once (mostly Clarence Buddington Kelland serials), and this huge box to dispose of. I hate to throw them away..... Incidentally, has anyone else noticed that the heroes and heroines of Bob Heinlein's novels bear a remarkable similarity to the heroes and heroines of Clarence Buddington Kelland's novels? They both go for the fast-talking but intelligent heroine and the tall awkward superman-type hero.

The lack of envelopes is temporary; we had some difficulty with our supplier.

With Jaundiced Eye

COLUMN BY

TED WHITE

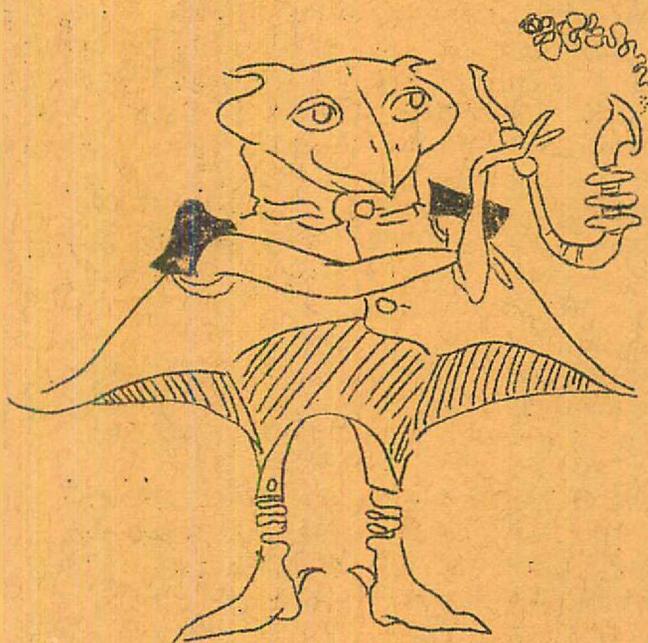
HORNBOOK FOR WOULD-BE PROS: This column has been absent from these pages for more than a year now, and the reasons for its absence are also in part the foundations for this installment.

As I recall, my last column appeared in the late fall of 1962, or perhaps just into 1963. I wrote it in 1962, in any case. That year was one of many changes for me, not the least of which was the initiation of my slowly budding career in professional science fiction. Four stories were written (several others begun), and two sold. It was a small beginning -- all my efforts were in collaboration with Terry Carr or Marion Bradley -- but the fact that the first two stories completed were sold in short order was encouraging to me, and -- I admit it -- by the time of the Chicon I was strutting about in my new garb: Budding SF Pro. Unfortunately, since few had heard of my sales, this posture soon wilted.

In January of 1963, I followed Terry Carr into the confines of the Scott Meredith Literary Agency, where I took over the Foreign Department. Effectively, this made me responsible for handling all foreign rights and negotiations for the agency. An ad in PUBLISHERS WEEKLY which Avram Davidson clipped for me boasted of Meredith's "large and expertly staffed foreign department," but while the top level stuff was handled by Scott himself or Henry Morrison, I was responsible for all the run-of-the-mill stuff.

There was a lot of this. Meredith has an expanding agency -- one of the liveliest and most go-getting in this country. And his foreign business is probably the largest of any US agency. Not only are all Meredith clients represented overseas, but the agency has taken on foreign representation for Pocket Books, Inc., Monarch Books, Inc., and several university presses (whom I queried about our services as part of my job). On top of this, the agency acts as a US scout for several foreign publishers eagerly searching out best-sellers as yet up for grabs.

One of Meredith's best clients once told me, "Scott always has less space than he needs, and less men than he needs." This was true during my stay there. The offices, occupied by Scott only a few years earlier in an expansion move, were



already so cramped that some men in the fee-reading section did most of their work at home; there weren't enough desks to go around. And everybody I knew there was overworked -- and still are. We were expected to do a full day's work in the office, take home mss to read at night, and -- if work was piled up -- work Saturdays.

I resented this. Meredith does not pay well -- his employees start around \$70 or \$80 a week and work up to \$100 or a little over for editorial positions which should be paying from \$150 to \$200 -- and I felt the demands on my "spare" time were excessive. In truth, I had little spare time -- one reason my fanac ceased almost entirely about then -- and if you want to know the reason for the abrupt cutback in both Terry Carr's fan and pro writing, you can trace the change almost directly to the day he joined Meredith. I might add that he spends most of his day in the agency at the typewriter.

I lasted a month or so with Meredith. I had begun looking for excuses for quitting before then, but I needed the money, and there were enough rewards in the job to overcome my occasional depressions. But when I came down with a bad case of flu, and pressure was put on me to work half the week with a fever of around 103, and I then collapsed in bed for the next two weeks, my employment was, as they euphemistically put it, terminated.

That taught me a valuable lesson. It reaffirmed my desire to stay outside the clutches of dependency upon such an employer. I was mightily grotched at the Meredith Agency for some months after that, despite assurances from friends that such treatment was "only normal". Sandi was shocked. "They paid you less than a short-order cook or a truck-driver gets," she said. Well, that's how a business makes money, I guess.

A recommendation from Avram Davidson brought me in touch with Ed and Joe Ferman, my present part-time employers. Our relationship has not made me rich overnight, but the working conditions are immeasurably better. In fact, the only drawback lies in the nature of my work.

I have to read the most godawful tripe you can imagine.

The real purpose of this column is to pass on to any of you who have aspirations to Turning Pro a few tips on what to avoid and just how the whole schmear works.

I read an average of 70 to 90 manuscripts a week. I reject better than 90% of these. The remaining 3-to-5% which I judge acceptable, I grade from A to B (with pluses and minuses) (I used to include C's, before Avram moved to Mexico, but the postal costs are too great for that now), and pass on to Avram for reading. He, in turn, will pick out one or less a month which he feels we should purchase.

Now I am, of course, speaking of the "slush pile" -- the "unsolicited manuscripts" sent in by relatively unknown writers and the less reliable agencies (I'm convinced a few writers have had rubber stamps made up for fictitious agencies through which to submit their work, but this dodge gets them nowhere: I still get their work in the slush, and it in no way influences my decision about the pieces) -- in other words, by you, if



you're a would-be pro.

The other day I figured out the average number of manuscripts actually purchased in comparison to those sent in. On the average, F&SF buys one story in 600.

Now those are rough statistics, but they're not quite as hopeless as they sound. Because what this actually means is that out of 600 stories submitted, 599 will be pretty bad. A good story stands out like a shining beacon amidst that slush, let me tell you. And a good story is one hell of a reward after several hours of mediocre or worse.

So if your story is a good one, it will sell. It doesn't matter how many bad stories it's buried with; it will still sell. In fact, it's all the more noticeable for its company.

When I started reading manuscripts for F&SF, I read each and every one, all the way through. It wasn't just that I was conscientious, but also that I was still establishing standards to go by. I also tried to include a brief note on each rejection slip to at least give a hint as to why the story was unacceptable.

I also became backlogged by about a month's accumulation of mss.

These days I can honestly say that I do not read from start to finish more than 20% of the manuscripts that pass through my hands, and that in the case of better than 10% that reading it still wasted time. And I have stopped writing notes except to those whose work was almost worth passing on to Avram. I do not read handwritten or single-spaced mss at all unless the first paragraph is singularly intriguing.

I developed this callousness by sheer necessity. And because over 80% of the mss submitted to F&SF are simply not worth reading.

I am pointing this out now because I am typical of those who edit the slush piles for sf magazines, and I want you to know what you're up against.

After almost a year of reading such mss -- and that abbreviation could as easily stand for "mess" in my case -- I've developed an eye for bad writing. It's not hard: awkward phrasing, stiff wordings, such are immediately spottable, and their presence automatically means a story is unacceptable.

Bad stories almost always open with undramatic situations, too, I've found. A surprising number begin with a man waking up after dying, or some other potentially interesting idea, and a good proportion begin by describing a fairly uninteresting character -- often a henpecked husband (who invents a time machine and pushes his overbearing wife into it). It's surprising how many aspiring writers have never heard of the narrative hook, and begin their stories with slow plods.

I waste most of my time, though, not on such easily rejectable stories (of which I usually read the first and last pages), but those which are written just competently enough that I must read them to the end to find that they don't make it.

"Every time you include a personal note on a rejection slip," Ed Ferman once told me, "you encourage another submission from him." This seems to be true. And while I have received stories from developing writers with some potential, and I can see encouraging such writers, there's no point in encouraging a writer with nothing on the ball to waste my time yet again in the future. If I write a note to such a one today, it will probably say, "Handwritten mss are unacceptable," or, as in one recent case, "I will not waste my eyesight on this. Get a new ribbon." In the latter case, the typing was so light that at first I thought the sheets were blank.

Recently a young woman in Texas whose previous two submissions I had summarily bounced sent in her third. Attached to it was this note:

"I have sent you two stories already, which you failed to print. This third story, -----, is the story of /and we'll skip that too/.

"If you read the story twice, you will see more in it.

"If you do not start printing the stories I send you, I may stop sending stories to you."

I sincerely hope so. In fact, I was greatly tempted to put the story back in its return envelope unread. I didn't, of course. I read the first page, glanced at the next two, and finally scanned the last. It was terrible.

Perhaps she'll get the message when she receives her third story back, but if she does follow through on her threat she'll be a rare one. The woods are full of writers -- or, rather, would-be writers -- who continue to grind out the most incredible slush, year after year, without learning from bitter experience that they haven't Got It.

I have received several novels, of from thirty to sixty thousand words, which were almost unreadable. What possesses a person to do this? A short story (and most of the hopeless writers seem limited to pretty short stories) is understandable. Any fool can do it -- and most have. But a novel! That requires work, patience, and a discipline rare in a never-will-be writer.

Be that as it may, there is a second category of "bad" writer, and one which I should imagine most fan would-be's fall into: the writer who's bad because he hasn't yet developed. And, unlike the little old ladies who eagerly peruse the latest issue of THE WRITER or WRITER'S DIGEST and will never sell a story, this second type of writer stands a far better chance.

From time to time a young fan pops embarrassingly up with a copy of an issue of BREVIZINE or an early ZIP in his hands, and confounds me with it. I was "Staff cartoonist" for BREVI-, and contributed four or five stories and articles to it as well. Most were written when I was thirteen or fourteen. A couple I had the bad taste to include as reprints in my own early ZIP's. I only printed about thirty copies of ZIP #1, but copies of it still pop up -- apparently all thirty are still in circulation -- and it should not be impossible for an enterprising fan to check me out on this by glomming onto a copy for himself. At any rate, I want to go on record as having been one of the Least Promising Fan Writers of 1952. The standard level of my work was far below that of many fans who are today no older, and every time I think about Jeff Wanshel or Paul Williams I shudder at the memory of what I was doing at their age.

The only thing that saved me any real embarrassment at the time was that my own estimate of my work was not entirely unrealistic, and I never attempted to submit it to any of the prozines or better fanzines. But I was at that time writing "science fiction" not unlike some of the poorer examples of that which now comes to me with a covering letter stating that "I am fifteen years old," or "This was originally done for my high school class."

Since then my writing has improved. It pretty much had to -- it couldn't have gotten worse. I cannot hold myself up as a paragon of Great Writing today, but I've sold several short stories, done a novel in collaboration, and in recent months I've been writing again, solo. I have a publisher interested in a new novel, I got a personal note of rejection from John Campbell saying, "I rather like your style of writing and suggest that you try us again" (which isn't as good as a check

and letter of acceptance, but is better than the usual printed sort of rejection slip — although ANALOG's is pretty fancy), and I think that I'll have sold a good deal more before this year reaches its end.

I'm not pointing this out just to brag. I know I've only begun a career as an sf writer, and I'm far from among the best at this juncture. But, bigolly, if I could get this far, from the beginnings I've described, then there's hope for the rest of you, too.

I'm far from the only one. Ten or twelve years ago Terry Carr was a noisy west coast fan. Marion Bradley was a letterhead for STARTLING and THRILLING WONDER. And Bobby Gene Warner was being billed in BREVIZINE as the answer to Ray Bradbury.

Warner has had, I believe, some stories in YANDRO in the last few years, and his fan career must extend back nearly as far as mine if not farther. I've never thought that much of his stories in fanzines — the ones in BREVI- were terrible — but in recent months he too has been maturing as

a writer — maturing to the point of saleability. I've had the pleasure of reading three stories by him recently, and Avram tells me he's buying at least one of them.

I've also read and passed on to Avram recently stories by Tom Perry and Juanita Coulson. These may or may not click with Avram, but if they don't it's only a matter of time until something else by these fans does.

So where does that leave you — the hypothetical "you" who wants to write science fiction but hasn't quite Got It yet?

There are several paths open. One is to simply keep writing, keep submitting stories. As time goes on and you sharpen your awareness of what selling writers have and your stuff lacks, as experience polishes your way with words, sooner or later you'll click, and instead of receiving your thirty-first rejection slip, you'll get a check in the mail.

This is a hard and tortuous process though, and while it's the route many young would-bes follow, I don't recommend it. It adds to my work load, and it wastes a lot of paper and postage for you. I'm a firm believer in putting everything one does to good use.

Instead, write for fanzines. Don't write amateur sf. Write articles, letters, humor, political diatribes, or anything else. Most particularly, try your hand at criticizing published sf stories. Try taking them apart to see how they tick. Become aware of what elements you dig and don't dig in published stories. And while you're getting the feel of what a good story ought to be in this way, develop your facility for writing by doing stuff you can do and which rewards you (if only in egoboo) now — fanstuff. Some day you'll sit up and say, "By ghod, I bet I could write a good story!" And maybe then you will.

Charles Platt, 8 Sollershott West, Letchworth, Herts., England, is working with Seth Johnson on transatlantic correspondence. I don't know what the exact idea is — benefitting Anglo-American relations, or something — but if you're interested in corresponding with British fans, write to Charles and ask about it. A British contact is invaluable for picking up British stf (some of which is very good indeed).



CATNIPPED

fiction by _____ aga yonder

She wasn't a vampire. I seldom invite vampires to my parties. It's difficult to find a real one these days. Too many fakes around now that vampirism has become popular.

Nonetheless, she reminded me vaguely of a Charles Addams cartoon. Her shadow leaned like an arrow against the wall, narrow. Her face was gaunt and a slice of nose knifed forward ready to jab someone in the eye. She would have made an excellent New York fashion model.

I didn't know her, but one must be polite.

"May I say that you're the prettiest party-crasher I've had tonight," I lied. "Let me take your coat."

She hesitated. "I hate parties."

I waved her words away with a gesture of my drinking hand. "We're short of girls. Come on in anyway."

I closed the door behind her and led her into the bedroom.

"Toss your coat on the bed there with the others. What would you like to drink? You've a choice between an exotic punch or, horrors, water."

She hardly smiled.

"Nothing, thanks."

"Oh come now! The punch is sensational. I made it myself with dried toad bitters, snail blood, ugly turnip water, and the best 100-proof embalming fluid I could steal."

"I don't drink."

Ach, one of those! I thought, sighing.

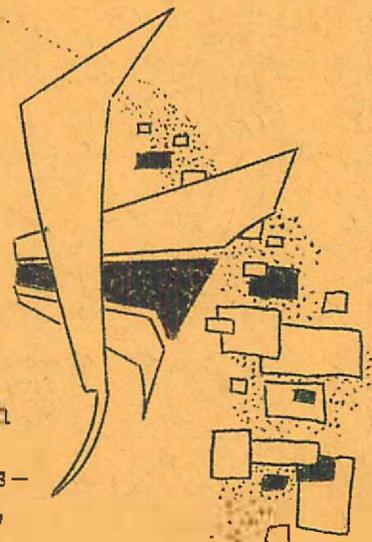
"Well, in that case, come on in the living room and wrap yourself around a guest."

She dumped her coat and I pushed her into the living room, introduced her to somebody from the University, and went about being host again -- filling glasses endlessly and mopping up a drink spilled in the corner and changing the records on the stereo and welcoming more guests. You know how a party is...I didn't see the girl I already thought of as Charlie again until sometime around midnight. She was discussing the sex life of worms with a werewolf by the fireplace.

I know virtually nothing whatsoever of worms. Especially their love life.

Her hands rested lightly in her lap, delicate and slender, but with nails that sprang out of each finger like little cutting tools.

Her tawny yellow hair massed out in uncombed disorder. Some women, tripping in the fad of fashion, comb their hair patiently and then muss it up to give it that proper messy look, but not this girl.



Atom

Charlie probably never combed it, yet it seemed clean.

Of course! Those pretty, slightly-slanted eyes!

Charlie was a wereocelot.

Not a very well-fed one, though.

I decided to steer her away from the werewolf, who naturally would end the evening, if he might, by chasing her up a tree.

"Come. I want to introduce you to a special friend of mine."

She came. I led her into the bedroom.

"Stay away from that guy. He's a wolf."

"I thought as much," she replied, "but I wasn't sure."

"God, are you naive!"

"Why should you care?"

"You're the first...absolutely the first...feline I've ever seen, though I understand there is a werelion I'd like to get hold of that circulates among the society crowd."

She only purred.

"I love cats, and I'm especially interested in you," I explained.

"Where are you from?"

Reluctantly, but because I already knew her secret, she spilled, "Patagonia."

"How interesting! How long have you been?"

"Since a baby."

"Wonderful!" I whipped out a pad and began taking notes.

"I heard about your party from a friend down in Greenwich Village. I'm an artist," she explained.

"No matter. I'm glad you came. Extremely pleased. Yes. Could I have your name?"

"Zacarina Chadwick."

"Born in Patagonia?"

"Yes. My father was an American archaeologist."

"Fascinating!" I snapped my notebook shut.

Just then, the werewolf entered the bedroom, silver his hide!

"Zacarina, I've missed you," the wolf said.

But Charlie, bless her claws, turned tail on wolfie and padded off into the living room on her own.

Wolfie shrugged his shoulders. "Can't catch them all," he grinned at me."

"Tough."

I went along after her, but got sidetracked with an anthropology major from the University.

"Interesting group of people you've got at your party."

"Yes. Yes, indeed. Simply intriguing people."

"Many of them seem vaguely familiar, but I can't tell in what way."

"Is that so?"

I offered to get him another glass of punch and wandered off. Let him get his own punch!

A young couple in love asked me if they could stroll on the terrace.

"I'm deeply sorry, but I've lost the key to the terrace door," I said.

They were disappointed and walked away.

"Try the den," I told them.

I had the key to the terrace in my pocket, but I didn't dare let anyone out there. My pets were sleeping.

Mable Saunders latched onto my arm.

"What happened to that nice advertising executive I met at your last party?"

"I can't keep up with everybody, but if I hear from him, I'll let

you know, Mable."

She thanked me profusely. Mable was a werefox--I knew several just like her--and the ad executive had been, I consulted my notebook, a werechicken. Mable wanted, obviously, to take a bite out of Mr. Werechicken. Greedy. Wasteful...eating up each other like that, but that's life. Some forms.

"Wonderful party, Joel."

"Glad you like it, Bill," I said. I slapped him on the back jovially. Poor guy. Ordinary. Nothing but human. And here he was, talking to a female werewolf. Werewolves are a dime a dozen, but I've never seen one who wasn't hungry.

I looked out the window.

Especially on an autumn night like tonight. Full moon.

I went and got Bill another glass of punch, his seventh or eighth. As my guinea pig, he deserved it. But, thank Dracula, at least he wasn't a werepig. I dislike cannibalism intensely.

I made a note in my little leather notebook not to invite Mable anymore.

"Hi."

"How are you doing in avoiding all the wolves?"

"Okay," Charlie the ocelot said. "Just how many of them are there here?"

"Oh, several."

"I heard that you threw rather different parties in this penthouse of yours, but I never realized that they would be this different."

"My dear, even a millionaire must get his kicks someway."

"And you get yours from parties?"

"Well, in a way. But parties are really only a means of gaining an end. Everybody has to have some kind of hobby, you know."

"Pardon?"

"Don't fret your cute little feline head about it, honey." I couldn't resist touching her hair. So soft and fine. Excellent. It was too bad she was so skinny, but one couldn't have everything. She could be fattened sleek.

Food, ah, yes.

"Look. I'm about to chase everyone out in a few moments. How would you like to stay for a trout dinner?"

"Trout?" She licked her lips.

"Yes. There's a small corner grocery still open that makes deliveries."

"Really, it's much too late."

"Nonsense. Food is food, and I'm hungry." I wasn't.

"Well..."

"Superb! I'll order now."

I telephoned for everything I needed from the kitchen and that was settled.

Ending the party was another matter--and much more difficult. But finally they all left. Bill, stone drunk, was being seen home by the hip-swing werewolf.

Poor Bill. But I had to have some attraction to lure creatures to my parties. Weres such as that advertising executive, for example.

The fish and trimmings arrived from the store. I marinated it heavily in wine, cooked it slow, and served it with catnip salad.

Charlie ate heavily. Artists are always hungry. She would, however, grow sleek and fat in my private little zoo out on the terrace.

I would put her in a cage right next to the one occupied by the werechicken.

A DORIC COLUMN

from

bob tucker

THE GLORY ROAD TO LAS VEGAS (chapter two)

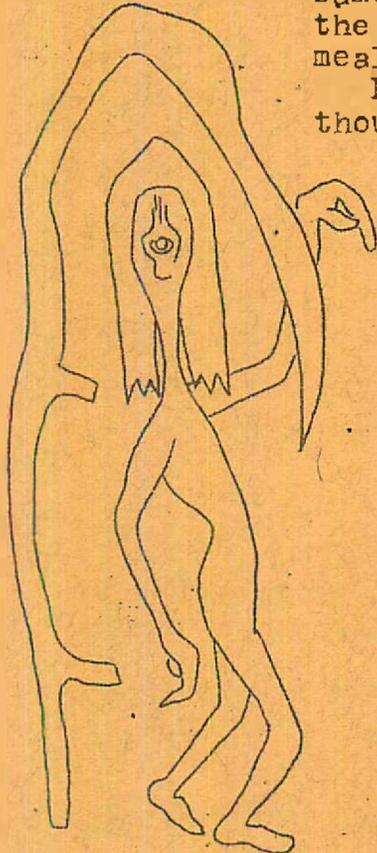
(What has happened before: I was walking down the yellow brick road when Lo! I found myself in Vegas for a week, as a delegate to a labor convention, with basic expenses paid. Now get on with it.)

Probably the most fascinating things in Vegas are its theaters, rather than the hundreds of sexy girls and thousands of slot machines. (Fascinating to me, you understand, although I admit to ogling a girl and pulling a handle now and then.) The movie houses are merely movie houses and not worth a second glance, but those other superstructures called "legits" or "flesh houses" in the trade are things of joy and beauty. From the commercial point of view in Vegas, someone builds a hotel and then adds a large stage to one side of the main dining room; but from the stage-hands' point of view someone builds a magnificent stage and then throws a hotel around it, placing tables instead of seats in the auditorium. All the theaters I visited were in hotels; I doubt that Vegas has a legit house standing alone. The pattern of operation appeared to be the same in all: the huge cost of the show is borne by the gambling in adjoining rooms, and by the prices of meals.

Parentetically, someone has pointed out that he thought the prices were reasonable, and that I was judging them by small town costs. Upon reflection, this is correct. Heyworth restaurants charge about two dollars for their best steak dinner, while Bloomington will up the cost to four. The Heyworth steaks are risky propositions but those four dollar cuts in Bloomington are equal to any I've found anywhere. (I once took Mark Reinsberg to a \$1.25 steak house. He went mad, ordered two, and ate them as amazed waitresses watched. But alas inflation has now hit that place; steaks now cost \$1.75.)

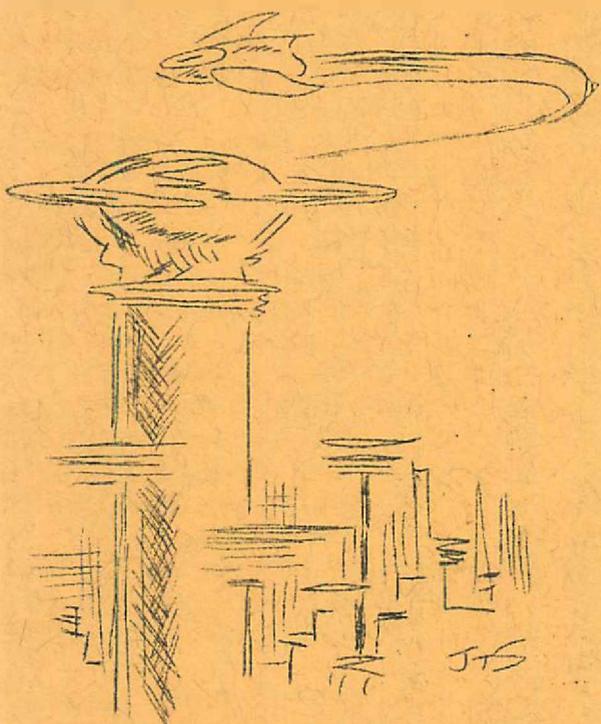
Now, be my guest in a trip through wonderland.

Pick a show you want to see. Le Lido de Paris at the Stardust Hotel is a good revue, and the Stardust is typical. You have a choice of the dinner show at about 8pm, when you must buy a meal, or the booze show around midnight, when you pay a cover charge and get a few drinks. Bring your wallet. There are two ways of gaining admission to the dinner show: by making a reservation several days in advance, or by slipping five dollars into the proper hand at the door. About an hour before dinner time a line



begins forming in the slot-filled casino; the line is formed there because the management thinks you'll want something to do while killing that hour. Listen to the mesmeric music of the whirring slots. Look at the lucky winners raking in all those nickels. The line inches forward and eventually you find yourself at the magic door where (surprise!) you discover that your reservation merely gets you through the door (ahahahah!) and a place at the table is something else again. Laugh it off like the good sport that you are and slip the doorman or the waiter a couple of bucks. Presto! A table is found for you. And the bigger the tip, the nearer the stage you will be. (I suppose all this is old hat to a Raeburn or a Silverberg, but it is croggling to a small town boy.)

The theater is a monstrous room built stadium style, having an equally monstrous stage at the far end. It is an illusion, of course, but there appear to be a thousand tables and two thousand people in the theater, all demanding service instantly so they may eat and get the dishes out of the way before the show starts. At the Stardust, the menu prices begin at about eight dollars, with coffee and dessert not included in the price. Gulp down your dinner, pay and tip the waiter or waitress and get them out of your hair; push your chair away from the table and squirm around so that you have an unobstructed view of the stage. The show is good. It begins with six nubile French nudes dropping down out of the ceiling on tiny platforms like flying saucers -- wow, dad, they don't have anything like this in West Cupcake. (But not more than thirty seconds after those girls dropped, I spoiled the show for myself. I ceased watching the show as a spectator and became a stagehand, searching to find the mechanics of the thing. Instead of looking at the nude I looked at the disc she was standing on, at the post to which she was braced, and at the cables supporting the disc; estimating the size and speed of the concealed winch, the number of men operating each one, and the built-in safety devices for the girls. A few minutes later when the saucer went back into the ceiling, I remembered to stare again at the flesh dangling there. And so it went.)



The revue lasts about two hours and includes several entertaining acts, some old, some new. It boasts a water ballet, an ice skating act, a miniature opera, comedy singles and comedy teams, a magician who used the ever-handy trap door in the stage, cornball musicians, an acrobat, a juggler, and a flood. It was a heavy show in that it required 35 men and women to work it -- an unusual number. There were perhaps 20 hanging pieces (scenery hanging overhead in a loft, to be lowered when wanted), and so many deck changes (scenery not hung, but moved on and off stage by hand) that I lost count. For the water ballet, a section of the stage flooring is folded back to reveal a water tank immediately beneath it; a tremendous mirror is uncovered at stage rear to reflect the performance to the audience. For the ice act, the tank is lowered to a sub-basement and an ice rink, normally resting beneath the auditorium, is hauled forward onto the elevator and raised to stage level. For the truncated

opera, the entire stage is filled with a set I took to be the interior of a French palace about the time of Louis XIV, or whatever. Not being an opera fan in the remotest sense, I had no idea what I was watching, but I can tell you this, Mr. Warner: all the ladies (principles and chorus) were nude to the waist and pranced up and down a wide staircase while they sang. What is it?

The flood was the grand finale and had every stagehand in the audience standing up for a better look, knowing or guessing what was happening. (The tourists at the front row tables were ducking and squealing, for fear of being drenched.) The flood is presented "in full", which means that every inch of stage is used from the back wall to the footlights. The setting is a pastoral scene: a pleasant valley perhaps twenty miles long, from the dam at the far end down to a farm at the footlights; in between are a small town, a sawmill, and a few other farms including a patch of woods. The illusion is perfect. A storm comes up, as you might expect, and the peaceful stream meandering thru the valley becomes a raging torrent; finally the dam crumbles and a huge wall of water rushes down the valley, destroying everything in its path: town, mill, farms, the works. As the water comes nearer the roar of its movement increases in pitch, people near the stage leave their chairs and duck for safety, and at the last moment the whole cotton-picking flood smashes into the footlights -- and drops from sight, down into that waiting tank. The footlights remain dry.

After the show I went back stage to join one of the tours they offered visiting firemen, for a closer look at all the above workings. I was most interested in the flying saucers that dropped from the ceiling, and discovered that a motorized winch serves each one, with a girl bound, braced and practically chained to a stake positioned at the center of each disc. (When she drops, her hands must be free and describing graceful swirling motions, indicating something or other---they have a hell of a time teaching the girls not to grab for support.) But no one in the audience is looking at the stakes -- I sat next to an elderly woman (sixty-plus, at least) and she was staring at the same things which occupied my attention.

Fans intending to visit Vegas might note this economy hint: many of the big strip hotels have a smaller, quiet, and seldom-advertised motel adjacent to them, primarily occupied by hotel employees -- and the show-girls mentioned above. At the Stardust, the motel is in the backyard near the stage door; at the Thunderbird, it is next door and even has a convenient, connecting side entrance. After meeting Wild Willie Rotsler on my first morning there, I moved out the side door and took up residence at the Algiers, which has its own pool and restaurant; a week's rent amounted to \$37 for a shared room. (No, Buck, I didn't share it with a French nude. Banish that lascivious leer.)

("French nude" is certainly a loaded phrase.)

Speaking of girls, you surely haven't forgotten them dames from L.A. promised in the first installment a year ago. They hit town all right, just as advertised, and a packed town became a cramped one. It would appear that many Vegas hotels, working with travel agents, offered packaged weekends for cut-rate prices. For some comparative low figure, a citizen of L.A. (and environs) may buy a roundtrip ticket, a shared hotel room, a show, a number of meals and drinks, and perhaps a few gambling chits, all in a package; one checks in Saturday afternoon and checks out Sunday night. Judging from limited observation this package appeals to Chinese males and Caucasian females; they climbed, jumped or fell from every arriving train and plane on the Saturday I watched, some with wedding rings but many with not. More significantly, the sports in Vegas waited for them, those operating the gaming tables and those haunting the streets

and lobbies. In a later conversation with a house dick, I learned that commercial prostitution is a mixed bag in Vegas -- considering who owns the town. Two varieties exist: the independent street girl, and the hotel property.

The street girl is arrested quickly, on sight, and given a rough treatment. The hotel girl, because she is part of the organization, is remarkably expensive. In Chicago, for example, a hotel guest wanting company for an hour or so need only call a bellboy and put twenty dollars in his hand. The quality won't be anything to write home about but he will get the company. In Vegas, the bellboy would spit in your eye for anything less than a hundred. Hundred dollar girls are too rich even for Vegas gaming bloods and so they lay in wait for the L.A. women, with a vengeance, because in a sense these women are free. My friend the house dick posted me in an advantageous spot and told me what to look and listen for. I looked and listened and was educated; and can only conclude that the Los Angeles fans certainly aren't looking after their lonely womenfolk the way they should. Are you reading this, Squirrel?

At the end of my week the convention folded its politicking and noisily stole away, making vague noises about going to Miami next time -- if the union treasury ever recovers, to enable the delegates to go anywhere next time. The Union Pacific had thoughtfully scheduled an afternoon train, although the beds were the same as before: two inches too short for sleeping. A small handful of us concocted a delightful game to while away the two days on the train -- at intervals, we would noisily pop into the club car, or up into one of the observation domes and shake a handful of silver dollars, the meanwhile hollering "Anybody for blackjack?" After the first day this became a dangerous pastime when the sore losers in the crowd took to throwing things at us. A week earlier, I had ridden out to Vegas with two stagehands from Detroit, and a couple of ladies from New York who were going to L.A. to work on some television shows. We never saw the ladies again, and I never saw one of the Detroit men again. His buddy, going back in my car, sadly reported that his partner was stranded in Vegas -- he had in some manner cashed in his return ticket, spent his expense money, lost some borrowed money as well, and the last anyone saw him he was sitting in a hotel lobby wondering how to pay the bill and leave town.

He may be sitting there yet.

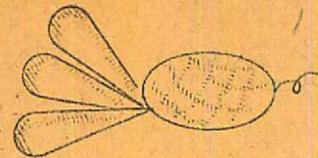
(Postscript: the union convention won't be in Miami this year, we have recently learned. Are there any fans in Louisville, Kentucky?)

OBIT FOR A LOST LUMINARY:

A news item reported that Richard Barthelme died in New York on August 17th. This probably meant absolutely nothing to anyone under forty, except Lee Hoffman. Way back yonder when I was a tad, going to the moving pictures every Saturday afternoon (admission 10¢), Richard Barthelme was one of my heroes, along with Richard Dix and Hoot Gibson. He was never a "great star" as I recall, nor even an unusually famous one, but he knew how to act and how to portray a role as it was written by the author -- something very rare in current movies. Nor do I know how many wives or mistresses he had, what scandals he was or was not involved in, how many fortunes he made or lost. I don't care. I read the brief news item and remembered something I had lost long ago.

Hector Pessina, Casilla 3869, Correo Central, Buenos Aires, Argentina, offers copies of the forthcoming Argentine Kennedy stamp, with first day covers or "maximum cards" (?), in exchange for US items such as prozines or mint stamps. He also is looking for a copy of De Camp's Science Fiction Handbook, for which he will pay in cash, stamps, or Argentine mags (providing you don't demand too much payment). Send offers to Hector, not me.

STRANGE FRUIT



Noted: THE DINKY BIRD #9 (Berman), TYRO #1 (Best), COGNATE #3 (Hickey), DESCANT #11 (Clarkes), ~~HEIN~~ OMPF #2 (Freeman), THE INVADER #1 (Staton), HAVRINGS #13 (Lindsay).

SCIENCE FICTION TIMES #412, 413 (James V. Taurasi, Sr., 119-46 27th. Ave., College Point New York, 11354 - monthly - 15¢) Well, SFT is now closer to monthly than we are, so I can no longer complain about their schedule. They also have some news; IF going monthly, Hugo Gernsback writing a new novel (joy?), Cleve Cartmill dropping dead -- and a good article on French science fiction. #413, especially, is a good buy (that's something I haven't said about SFT for a long time, and I enjoy saying it).
Rating.....7

SKYRACK #63, 64 (Ron Bennett, 17 Newcastle Road, Wavertree, Liverpool 15, England - monthly - 6 for 35¢, or 6 for 70¢ if you want airmail - USAgent, me) That's right; send your money to me, and 3 or 4 months later SKYRACK will start arriving. I told Ron I was honest, but slow - if you think I'm kidding about that delay, send some money and find out. This is the British news mag; latest issue has the big news that SCIENCE FANTASY and NEW WORLDS have been saved by the cavalry at the last minute. A new firm has purchased the magazines and will issue them, with Mike Moorcock as editor of NEW WORLDS and Kyril Bonfiglioli editing SCIENCE FANTASY. (Carnell had already made other commitments before the last-minute reprieve.) SKYRACK doesn't say -- but Carnell mentioned it in a letter to me -- that the revived mags will be pb size. There are other news items, of course, but as a long-time SCIENCE FANTASY fan I can't get interested in the others.
Rating....7

DIFFERENTIAL #18, 19 (Paul Wyzkowski, P.O. Box 3372, Station C, Ottawa 3, Ontario, Canada - monthly - 2¢) Fandom's two-page journal of comment. As a rider with #19 came BLAH #1, 15 pages of comment and lettercolumn, for which Paul asks 10¢ if it's purchased separately. Wyzkowski is an interesting writer -- sometimes even when I am totally uninterested in what he's writing about.
Rating....5

I also received and enjoyed THE MARTIAN TRAVELER, by Raymond Clancy, but it doesn't look like he's set up for mass circulation.

SATURA #1 (John Foyster, P.O. Box 57, Drouin, Victoria, Australia - "maybe twice a month" - for trade or comment) I think the meat of this one was a two-page review of Pangborn's Callista Blake, by John Baxter. If it was, page 1 of my copy was blank. (If he only wrote one page, it was a trifle confusing as a review.) The other page and a half in the mag are devoted to an editorial. The major point of Foyster's thesis is that fans usually tend to shoot off their mouths without waiting to find out what they're talking about. He may get some argument on this, but not from me.

MENACE OF THE LASTS #86, 87, 88 (Bruce Pelz, Box 100, 308 Westwood Plaza, Los Angeles, California, 90024 - bi-weekly - 10¢) Here's that club again. Lee Sapiro seems to think that I tend to hold the club up to ridicule (who's slipping him copies, anyway? He doesn't subscribe.) Nothing could be farther from my mind. The LASTS is a noble organization. It's only the members who are ridiculous. anyway, MENACE is a pleasant mag, if you take it long enough. The first few issues seemed terribly boring, but either it has improved or I've become used to it.
Rating.....4

MINAC #12 (Les Gerber, 201 Linden Blvd., Brooklyn, N.Y., 11226 - irregular but generally monthly or oftener - three 4¢ stamps per issue - co-editor, Ted White) This particular issue is a rebuttal to THE GREAT BREEN BOOMDOGGLE, a one-shot which may or may not be available from Bill Donaho, P.O. Box 1284, Berkeley, Calif., 94701. Both of them are devoted to the morals (or lack of them) of Walter Breen, a subject which I doubt would be

vitaly interesting to a fannish newcomer. It will undoubtedly turn into a very nasty affair with hard feelings and possibly legal action on both sides, and I don't intend to publicly come out in favor of either side until I know more than I do now. (I will probably stay in this state of indecision for some time, as I don't have any first-hand evidence and I don't know any of the participants well enough to accept their word for anything -- indeed, the better I know some of them, the less likely I am to accept their word. Fans are too emotionally oriented to make good factual reporters.)

TNFF, Vol. 23, #1 (National Fantasy Fan Federation - membership \$2 a year to Janie Lamb, Route 1, Box 364, Heiskell, Tennessee, 37754) Membership supposedly entitles one to all sorts of benefits; I've just joined, so I will be cynically reporting on the benefits when and if they show up. I'm afraid the presidency is getting to Franson. His editorial "Tour Thru The N3F" is the sort of self-consciously cute thing that one would expect from Marijane Johnson but not from Franson. The rest of the magazine is full of information of interest to members -- and occasionally, as in Franson's excellent "Information Bureau" column, of interest to anybody in fandom.

ALGOL #4 (Andrew Porter, 24 E. 82 St., New York, N.Y., 10028 - irregular - 15¢) He needs material; in a little note he threatens to cut pages next issue if fans don't show more interest. (And he only has 10 pages now.) Unfortunately, he doesn't publish a single thing that evokes any interest from me -- as far as I'm concerned, cutting the number of pages would probably be an improvement. Rating...1

STRANGER THAN FACT #4 (Jim Harkness, 112 West Harding, Greenwood, Mississippi - bi-monthly, or thereabouts - 25¢) Interesting. Dr. Rhine writes on parapsychology -- nothing that I hadn't encountered before, but it isn't often one finds Dr. J.B. Rhine's name in a fanzine. It isn't often that one sees verse by Martin Gardner, either; he does a slick moon-June sort of thing that is professional even if not moving. Best part of the mag, oddly enough, is the fiction; Charles Morris writes well. The title -- "The Dreamer" -- gave me a shock, since we published "The Dreamer", by Charles Morris, back in January 1957. But the stories have nothing in common aside from title and author. STRANGER has been improving steadily. Rating...4

GALAXY REPORTER #6 (Dwain Kaiser, 5321 Mountain View Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada, for trade copies, Eric Nelson, 5131 29th St., Long Beach, Calif., for subscriptions - bi-monthly - 10¢) A general interest sort of thing. Articles on various aspects of fandom which could be helpful to a newcomer, plus some rather poor fiction. Possibly the chief interest to publishers is that it's put out on a Bruning Copyfax. (This sort of reproduction should be excellent for artwork -- unfortunately, most of the original art in here is the sort of stuff that I used to draw before I learned better.) Rating...3½

COM'L #2 (Fred Haskell, 3450 Zarthan Ave., St. Louis Park, Minnesota, 55416 - bi-monthly - 20¢) This one could do with a page-cut, too. Clay Hamlin's fiction is the best item in the issue, but the treatment is over-obvious. Gil Lamont's story is the old time-travelling-to-change-the-past idea, with a new gimmick. New, because it's impossible, and other writers have had better sense. The rest of the issue is nothing. God knows all fans are addicted to trivial chitter-chatter, but the writers in COM'L have reached the ultimate in this form. Rating...2

SATA #15 (Bill Pearson, 4516 East Glenrosa Ave., Phoenix, Arizona, 85018 - highly irregular - 36¢, or 3 for \$1) The multilithed reproduction gives Bill a chance to show off his artistic abilities. Three main items; "Return of the Captive Bride of the Apemen", a comic strip notable mostly for its title; "Gunch Ho!", a saga of the New England garbage industry by Jim Moran, and an article on the life and works of Harvey Kurtzman. Not being a Kurtzman or comics fan, I thought Moran's article was the best thing in the issue (does this make me a garbage fan, I wonder?) After a slow start in which he tries too hard to be funny, he finally gets rolling and the last half of the article is excellent. Rating...6

BARBLINGER #4 (Don & Maggie Thompson, 29 College Place, Oberlin, Ohio, 44074 - irregular - free for comment, but send 20¢ or so for your first issue) Another general-purpose type. Charles Wells writes a good story...hmm. Charles Wells and Charles Morris...I wonder if the name has anything to do with it? Anyway, it's much better than the usual abominable fan fiction. Don gives FLAYBOY and ROGUE the once-over, and I have an article on some of the promags of the 1950s. Rating.....7

DOUBLE BILL #8 (Bill Bowers, 3271 Shelhart Rd., Barberton, Ohio, 44203, for subscriptions - Bill Mallardi, 214 Mackinaw Ave., Akron, Ohio, 44313, for trades - quarterly - 25¢) This is the magazine of the month; grab it quick, because if they keep publishing these 60 to 100 page issues, they aren't going to last much longer. Over half the issue is devoted to Section 2 of their symposium of professional writers -- the best single item in a fanzine this year (if you're willing to call a 3-part series a "single item"). Remainder of the issue is more or less average. I have a fanzine review column, if you aren't sick of my reviews by now (I'm getting pretty damned sick of them by now, I can tell you) Someone called Si Stricklen has a fine short story. Rating.....9

THRU THE HAZE #27 (Art Hayes, 512 College St., Bathurst, N.B., Canada - monthly - no price listed) Generally, a small news-and-opinion journal. There is also Alma Hill's column, MARK, which purports to assist would-be writers. Maybe it does -- I've seen very little in it that I hadn't read previously in easily accessible professional publications, but a lot of would-be writers seem to be remarkably uninformed about writing; any sort of help is appreciated by them. Rating.....4

FRAP #3 (Bob Lichtman, 6137 So. Croft Ave., Los Angeles, Calif., 90056 - bi-monthly - 25¢) This is the first issue that I've seen. In the meantime, I've seen comments by all of the more "fannish" reviewers that this is the greatest thing to hit fandom in years. After all this, the actual magazine is pretty much of a disappointment. It's good enough, I guess, but it isn't nearly as good as everybody says it is. Ray Nelson has one extremely funny short item, and rather dull ones on "Zen Cooking", a poem, and a cover. It is possible to write humor so subtle that it isn't even there, and Nelson manages it. On the other hand, Elmer Perdue produces one of the few things I've ever read by him that I enjoyed. If you haven't read all the raves about FRAP, you'll probably like it. Rating.....5

GALACTIC OUTPOST #2 (Richard S. Benyo, 118 South St., Jim Thorpe, Pennsylvania, 18229 - quarterly - 25¢) This is their "Philip K. Dick issue", highlighted by an original story by Dick. Rather oddly, it's typically fan fiction in style, though naturally somewhat better written. (It's not the professional reject that I expected, but a rather enjoyable lightweight yarn. Most of the better fan writers could do as well, tho few of them could do much better.) Dick also has a few words for would-be writers, there is the usual editorial, book reviews, fanzine reviews, lettercolumn, etc. All of them more or less average. Rating.....4

PHOENIX #7, or possibly 8 (Dave Locke, who doesn't put his address anywhere in the mag, so I have to go look it up - P.O. Box 335, Indian Lake, New York, 12842 - no price or schedule listed, either) Quite a variety here; Alan Dodd and I on vacations, Bill Plott reviewing Nine Horrors And A Dream, Dave Hulan writing on a couple of authors for UNKNOWN, and an article on professional artwork by me that should serve to liven up the next few letter columns. Rating.....6

WARHOON #19 (Richard Bergeron, 333 East 69th. St., New York 21, N.Y. - irregular? - 20¢) Walter Breen has a long and erudite column, commenting on stf novels with parallel themes -- Naked To The Stars being an attempted rebuttal to Starship Troopers, etc. The novels he explores in this column are Karek's War With The Newts, Piper's Little Fuzzy? and Vercors' You Shall Know Them. He's a little pedantic in spots, for my taste, but it's a good serious article. Fandom could use more of them (trouble is, we don't have enough people capable of writing them). The usual WARHOON regulars -- Willis, Baxter, and Lowndes -- round out a good issue. Rating.....8

KIPPLE #4, 55 (Ted Pauls, 1448 Meridene Drive, Baltimore, Maryland, 21212 - pretty much monthly - 20¢) This is primarily a journal of philosophy, with side excursions into politics, religion, censorship, and other allied fields. Even science fiction, at times. These two issues have quite a bit of material on the Panama riots, with additional comments on civil disobedience, Catholic theology, the Constitution, perception through drugs, etc. It's quite a literate discussion, in general, but a fan friend who obtained a few copies from me complained that the magazine was awfully dull. I thought that my own lack of interest came from the fact that I'd just seen too many copies, but this fan had never seen one before. So -- it's an intelligent, well-written, philosophical, and slightly dull fanzine. Rating...5½

ISCARIOT #11 (Al Andrews, 1659 Lakewood Drive, Birmingham 16, Alabama - quarterly - 15¢) In the future, says the editor, ISCARIOT will deal primarily with serious articles on science fiction and fantasy. The new look starts out with an article on the old TOPS IN SCIENCE FICTION, written by Bill Flott. It isn't too good an article; Bill names apparently every story in each of the two issues and uses a sentence or two to describe the story and its illustration (if any). This gets tiresome pretty quick; I write abbreviated reviews myself, but I wouldn't use that technique on anything containing more than 5 or 6 stories. Andrews' fanzine reviews are much better, but are restricted to the Southern Fandom Press publications. Dale Walker compares Burroughs and Haggard, which is fair enough, I suppose. They wrote equally bad fiction. Richard Ambrose (who I forgot to list as co-editor up there) writes on mythology, but the myths of Oceania is too large a subject to be adequately treated in a 3-page article. Rating...4½

VOX #4 (Brent Phillips, Welches House, St. Michael, Barbados, The West Indies - 20¢ - quarterly - co-editor, Travers Phillips) One thing about the mag; it's different. Such as Sarge Smith's book reviews, in which he dismisses The Fury From Earth as immoral and full of Communist propaganda (bet you didn't know you were a "lard-headed fellow traveler", did you, Dean?) and bases his objections to Supermind on the fact that it contains psi, and "PSI is not science". I don't know what Smith is doing reading science fiction in the first place. He doesn't sound like he ever had an original thought in his life. There is considerable material on the West Indies, which interests me; the writing isn't especially good, but I've read worse, and I like the subject matter. Travers Phillips contributes two poems; they aren't at all the sort of poetry that I care a nickel about, but they sound professional (or at least competently written). If you're tired of the same old fanzines (and God knows I am) VOX seems very entertaining. (It probably won't seem nearly as refreshing to newcomers.) Rating...6

STOPTHINK #1 (Nate Bucklin, P.O. Box 4, Dockton, Washington, 98018 - 20¢ - irregular?) I notice he gives printing credit to someone else; I hope he didn't have to pay anything for that half-illegible work. Mostly fiction. One story is a genuinely experimental piece of writing; it doesn't succeed, but "Bill Brownell" is getting in some good practice. Nothing worth bothering about in the rest of the issue, except a rather pretty colored cover. Typical first issue, really. Rating...2

STARLING #1 (Timothy John Eklund, P.O. Box 316, Harlem, Georgia, 30814 - quarterly - 2 for 50¢) Another typical first issue. The fiction is strictly average, which makes it considerably better than the articles. Hank Luttrell's book reviews are good enough, but the rest of the non-fiction takes up space without saying anything. (Well, Seth Johnson's explanation of the N3F is okay, too.) There's a lot of it, if quantity is an advantage; in this case I'm not sure that it is. It's a good enough buy if you like amateur fiction, but just skip the articles. Rating...2

ADDRESS CHANGE: Mike Deckinger reports that he is getting married April 11, and after that date his address will be Apt. 10K, 25 Manor Drive, Newark, N.J.

Belated congratulations to Bruce and Dian Pelz. I meant to send a wedding present -- a pair of bookends or something -- but of course I never got around to it. I may get around to sending something yet, but don't count on it. I have too much inertia to get moving.

GOLDEN MINUTES



DOCTOR TO THE STARS, by Murray Leinster (Pyramid, 40¢) This offering contains three of Leinster's Ol' Doc Calhoun novelets; apparently their first appearance in pb form. (I thought a previous book had been published, but unless Ace did it -- my Ace collection is buried at the moment -- Pyramid is the first.) They're good stories; Leinster rarely writes unforgettable classics, but he nearly always writes good entertainment. The stories are not very old; first appearances, ASTOUNDING 1957, ANALOG 1963, GALAXY 1963.

REGAN'S PLANET, by Robert Silverberg (Pyramid, 40¢) A couple of years ago, when Bob was just beginning to make it big with his archaeological books, he wrote something to the effect that now he could afford to quit his hack writing of science fiction; that in the future he'd be writing stf only when he really wanted to, when he had an idea that he really liked. This may be the first publication of the new Silverberg, but frankly I can't tell the difference. The story is still fast-paced, slick, filled with stock characters, and eminently forgettable. Bob's writing lacks something. When you stop to analyze him, Delos D. Harriman was a thoroughly unlikely sort of industrial tycoon -- but when Heinlein got through writing about him, he breathed life (and fire and brimstone). Claude Regan is, by logical standards, a much more typical financier -- but he never really comes to life. Neither does the book; Bob has things to say, all right, but he never makes them very interesting.

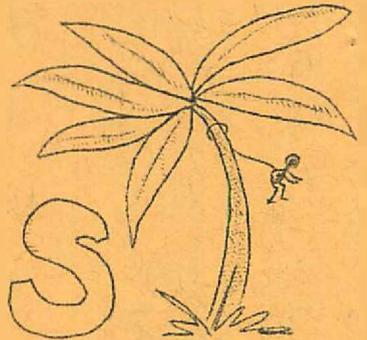
ESCAPE ACROSS THE COSMOS, by Gardner Fox (Paperback Library, 50¢) Twenty years ago, Gardner Fox was writing second-rate adventure novels for PLANET STORIES. (Well, the magazine called them "novels" sometimes; they were generally short novelets.) After PLANET folded, he spent considerable time writing second-rate historical novels for various pb publishers. Now, after 20 years, he's right back where he started. If you feel nostalgic about the dear dead days of the pulps, with their musty smell and busty covers, by all means get this one. It's guaranteed to cure you. Nobody could be nostalgic for this. (Whatever happened to Emmett McDowell? He used to write pretty good adventure stories for PLANET.)

Note to Don Bensen: How about reprinting Ted Tubb's Alien Dust? It's good stf, it isn't "the same old thing", and it wasn't published in an American magazine last year -- tho I believe it did have a US hardcover edition. I have the British hardcover, and I wouldn't part with it for 5 times what I paid for it.

CREQUEST OF THE MOON, by William Hines (Pyramid, 75¢) This is the 17th book in Pyramid's Worlds Of Science Series, and as usual it's a good one. Of course, you can read articles about our space program in every family magazine and Sunday supplement -- but this is the more or less complete story, and better written than the supplements. Hines is the space expert for the Washington Star; he knows his stuff, and does a good job.

I negotiated a trade with Richie Benyo; he got an old PLANET (read that Fox novel up there, Rich; it'll cure your addiction) and I got THE MARCHING SANDS, by Harold Lamb. Considering that it was written in 1919, it's an amazingly good "lost race" novel. If you're browsing thru a used book shop and run across a copy for 19¢ or so, by all means pick it up. It has it's little impossibilities, but all in all it's quite good fun.

GRUMBLINGS



Vic Ryan, Box 406, 2309 Sheridan Road, Evanston, Illinois

Well, frankly, The Grapevine was sent as a joke. I arranged for Jack Johnson to hold a fireside -- on capital punishment and all -- in my dormitory, and later a number of us accepted an invitation to tour Cook County Jail. That's where I picked up the mag. Beats fishing lures.

/I am doomed to existence as a straight man for Ryan jokes. I wonder how the jail inmates liked the copy of YANDRO I sent them in trade? RSC7

Rob Williams, 420 South 4th Street, Elkhart, Indiana, 46514

I was getting ready to grab my sword, leap to Alexei Fanshin's side, and help defend you against the scruffy, scurvy rabble; but then I noticed that I didn't get any egoboo for the cover logo; you gave it to Dave Locke instead. GHAAAA! That was a discourteous, coarse, bold and impolite thing for you to do. I hate you. (Or does it run in the family, and are you the culprit, Juanita?)

I like the illoyou did for Grumblings in #132, Juanita. So that's how Buck looked as he opened those packages... But is he looking at that AMAZING with a jaundiced eye, or is that the Buck Coulson equivalent of rapture?

Hopscotching back to #133, the tear-shaped pendulum dangling from the (my!) cover logo was a clever addition, and goes to balance out the design. Just goes to show, anything can be improved upon, purt near.

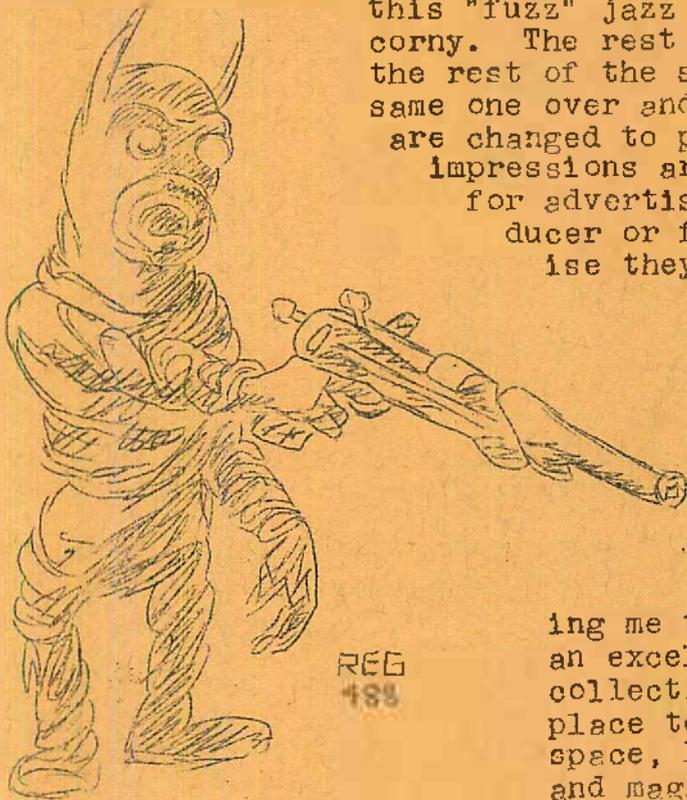
I haven't seen Alvin of the Blondie comic strip for a long time, and here he pops up on the REG cover, though all belipsticked, befurred and naked-bosomed. My, how he's changed. I wouldn't have recognized him at all were it not for his characteristic hair-do.

Didn't somebody jump the gun on Barr's Easter-time, page one illo? Does he hate you too, now? Serve you right. (This is the February issue, isn't it?) Howcum the dinosaurical creature coming outa the egg, and not a Nott-Lady?

/Serrysorrysorry. (Sorry? Well, I guess we're that, too.) I trust that this issue's contents-page illustration clears up the confusion over the last one. RSC7

Alan Dodd, 77 Stanstead Rd., Hoddesdon, Herts., England

MY FAVOURITE MARTIAN is now half of "Comedy Hour", of which PETTICOAT JUNCTION is the second half. I am usually out that evening so I don't see it much. I did, however, see the episode of BURKE'S LAW which was mentioned in YANDRO 131, the latest one I have, and which was written by Harlan Ellison -- "Who Killed Alex Debbs" - and was exactly the sort of story one might expect if the editor of PLAYBOY had been murdered. Except in the episode it was DEBONAIRE, and they had the "Deb" of the month instead of "Playmate". The dialogue was dreadful. Ellison can write stories, but not dialogue. And hearing Diana Dors' talking all



REG
488

this "fuzz" jazz nearly made me retch it was so corny. The rest of the story was on a par with the rest of the series, I suppose. They use the same one over and over again, only the guest stars are changed to protect Aaron Spelling. My own impressions are the stars appearing in it do so for advertising purposes in the hope some producer or film maker will see them and realise they are still alive and can act.

Robert E. Briney, 176 E. Stadium
Avenue, West LaFayette, Indiana,
47906

I hadn't realized that collecting "space" postage stamps was such a big thing. In the window of one of the stamp-and-coin stores on Dearborn St. in Chicago, I saw a huge sign ordering me to "Collect Space". I thought it an excellent idea -- the only trouble with collecting space is that I haven't any place to put it -- but then if I had the space, I could use it to store my books and magazines, and thus have room for space... Oh, well.

Of course, no collection of space stamps is complete without the Mars and Luna postage stamps which Russ Swanson was selling at the Philadelphia Convention in 1953----remember them? I think I've got a sheet of each of them filed away somewhere... but exactly where, I don't know.

/Yes, I have sheets of those Swanson stamps tucked away, too. We have plenty of space here; what we lack are a few walls and roofs to enclose all this space and make storage practical.

George Wells, Box 486, Riverhead, NY

Are there any trade fanzines around anymore, especially ones with free ad space for small ads? (Also, if you feel like giving a free personal column in some Yandro mention that I'm interested in getting certain Sax Rohmer books, especially Gold Medal editions.)

About those MacMillan editions of sf classics; I've run across a couple in the local library and it dawned on me that this was the reason for their existence, so that libraries could buy them (after all, they're classics). Libraries would have the five bucks to pay for the things. The ones at the Riverhead libe are Hopkins Manuscript and Star Rover. The former looks rather strange. There's a map in it showing the plan the countries have of dividing up the extra land in the Atlantic Ocean caused by the fall of the moon into this ocean. Of course such a fall would e destroy the earth, wouldn't it? But you're probably right. The book wouldn't be worth reading all the way through from the looks of it.

Latest hobby here is bookbinding. I took a book from the library called HAND BOOKBINDING, and proceeded to take some of my old useless books apart to get some practise pieces, and found that the copy I had of HAND BOOK-BINDING was itself bound incorrectly with one set of pages left out and another in duplicate. So I now have a bunch of unbound pages wanting some

form of binding until the library gets another copy of the book. I suppose I should have gone to the publishing company and said, "You're trying to tell OTHER people how to bind books?....."

In THE HOPKINS MANUSCRIPT, the moon didn't destroy the earth in the collision because it (the moon) was hollow. It just hit the Atlantic and sort of collapsed--big tidal waves and all, but people still left to fight over the remains. (Except for the United States, which as I recall was never mentioned once in the entire book -- an extreme case of British provincialism.) As I said, I remember it as a lousy book. RSC/

John Boardman, 592 16th Street, Brooklyn, NY, 11218

Am shocked by the bad review you gave to Watch the North Wind Rise -- don't you know that if you blaspheme the White Goddess, something terrible will crawl out of the wood work and mess up your sex life?

Seriously, Graves does sound work in calling to the attention of his fellow anthropologists (for he is a member of an anthropological society) and to the general literate public the power that the White Goddess shows in European myth. While, unlike he and Breen, I don't believe in any such entity, I feel that the historical and literary insights given by his theory have been valuable.

A "John Carter" comic book, reprinted from 1952, has just appeared here. I bought it last night on the way to a CCNY Sci-Fi meeting. The tharks in it look like bullfrogs with fangs. I haven't yet given the book the definitive test -- by turning it over to Karina.

Have you ever read a sequel to Heavenly Discourse entitled Earthly Discourse? It is long out of print and was never paperbacked, and I've never been able to find it but once. This was in a used-book shop in Chicago about 12 or 14 years ago; the same instant I noticed it, Mike Girsdansky did also, and he beat me to the draw.

I don't mind Graves' anthropology, I object to his nit-picking about our present society when there are plenty of real evils that he could have mentioned if he absolutely had to run us down. First I'd heard of Earthly Discourse. RSC/

Andre Norton, Cleveland, Ohio

Re THE WEIRDSTONE interest--the sequel to this book (and to my mind, an even more exciting story) MOON OF GOMRATH was published in England last fall in a hardcover edition. And the Alderley section is in the northwest of England around Manchester--an English friend supplied me with two very interesting local leaflets about the mines, the EDGE and other landmarks. Mr. Garner makes such good use of in his books. There is a hint at the end of MOON that there will be a third book, and I hope that this is true.

The SPACE VIKING--Harald Fairhair



comparison was certainly interesting. But Piper has a hand with transposing history from past to future: his ULLR UPRISING is a masterly handling of the Sepoy rebellion--and I do not share Boardman's protest over such tricks with research.

Ted White, 339 49th St, M Brooklyn, NY, 11220

"Originally this glop was a fanzine devoted to fan news" is quite false. Originally MINAC was devoted to exactly what it is now: fan personality and opinion. In many ways it's an extremely compact VOID, presented in the chatterzine tradition. We started out with eight pages, and kept it up (aside from the half-sized Discon issue) into the fall. Since then it's been both bigger and smaller, but it's never attempted to ape the newszine format.

I've felt an admiration for Alexei Panshin ever since I read a story of his after having read some forty terrible stories in the previous few hours. I liked his story a lot, and I'm only sorry it ended up in some slick women's magazine instead of F&SF.

As to his points: I - a cardinal point is overlooked here, I think, and that is an sf reader's saturation point. A reader new to the field (and I suspect this applies to all specialized fields of writing as well) is wide open. Even the cruddier sf will gas him because he has no standards of comparison and an idea unbearably trite to all us old timers will be freshly sparkling and new. He will read and absorb voraciously. I don't think it's true that he will necessarily "use up" the "backlog" of good sf (and there's an awful lot of it in my library) -- he may never have the opportunity to come in contact with much of it. Even the pb reprints come and go, in cycles approximating five-yearly (after five years if a pb is not kept in print its rights revert to the author for resale, as a rule). But he will use up his available saturation quotient. This (which I just made up) is determined by the depth of his interest and imagination and the median quality of what he reads. If by some chance he encounters only very good sf, it could take him a long time to become saturated. As a teenager fresh to sf, it took me a year to develop a real discrimination in my tastes, and three years to stop reading just about everything. (I'm referring to magazines here; I'd discovered hardcover sf much earlier, and I stuck with pb sf much longer -- largely due to the then-higher quality of pb sf, which was effectively winnowed twice.)

II - That one writes for the love of it will not necessarily determine the quality of one's efforts. I have no doubt Mr. Panshin does -- and I like the results. So do I -- and I sometimes wonder why I bother, when, months later, I can be more objective about my sf writing. (I write from a lofty pinnacle here, since I think I have once more sf story in print than does Mr. Panshin.) And he should only see the utter crap I have to wade through every week. The usual sophomoric abomination is accompanied by a covering letter which says, "Dear Sir: I want more than anything to be a science fiction writer, and enclosed is my first attempt to submit anything to a magazine..." These kids (and spinsters, whose copy of the WRITER'S YEARBOOK is often three or more years old, judging from the mss we still get addressed to Bob Mills or Tony Boucher) have stars in their eyes, and believe me, they could only have written their stories for the love of it. Nonetheless, I wish more of today's competent sf writers would spend a little more love on their work.

III - I wish I could agree -- that most editors wouldn't "turn down a good story if they could find one." It all hinges on "good story". I thought Alexei's story was pretty good; Avram didn't. The fact that it didn't appear in any other sf mag indicates (since it was pure sf) that

the other editors also didn't think it was that good. But the editor of the slick to which it finally sold must've thought so. It's all a matter of opinion, and every editor has and is entitled to his own opinion of what's "good". If you agree with him, you buy his magazine. Otherwise, you don't. The gratuitous slap at Cele Goldsmith -- excepting her from that generalization, and implying that she would turn down a good story if she found it -- is unfair, I think. AMAZING has had its share of fine stories in the last few years, -- and who else would've dared Ward Moore's TRANSIENT?

IV - Maybe it's Mickey Spillane's quote, but I heard it from Marion Bradley, at the Detention. "I write the kind of stories I like to read, because no one else will," she said, and that impressed me. So perhaps we needn't abandon the field in search of a writer to emulate.

Dick Schultz' comment about Avram's "first (and if he still has one) second reader" was amusing to me, since I'm Avram's first reader, and whatever I winnow for him, he reads. I don't believe there's ever been a "second reader", and before Avram F&SF's editors read everything themselves. It's also amusing since Schultz' reference is so oblique: I signed all his rejection slips myself. I might add that Avram reads everything that goes into the magazine, and if he hasn't the odds are heavily against it getting there. I mean, he's the editor.

I recently heard a rumor that on the west coast some people believe that Avram is a figurehead (being in Mexico, I suppose, is why they think that) and I'm the real editor. This is flattering as hell, but utterly false. My own tastes run to a far different sort of magazine, and were I editor, I'd retitlle the zine VENTURE combined with F&SF, and reverse the present emphasis. I'm not likely to become editor either....

George Wells, op. cit.

I feel like a victim. Really. That "it takes all kinds" at the end of my letter in YANDRO is really frightening. At first I figured, hah, quite clever of Coulson to just say that at the end because of what was said in the letter about similar occurrences. Then, half an hour later I suddenly thot to myself, I wonder - he isn't really trying to infer to the other readers that the letter was just printed to show what an idiot I am? After all, he said "It takes all kinds" -- is he inferring that there's something about a person who would write a letter like mine that might cause question to his character or sanity. Oh well, it proves what I was saying.

Dick Eney, 417 Ft. Hunt Rd., Alexandria, Va.

Your comment about the Hugos being an award decided by the votes of a dozen or so fans, and therefore "cheap", is sort of an example of the old dirty joke about a little bull going a long way. I disremember who started the legend that the Hugos drew insignificant participation (though I can guess what had just happened to him in the voting) but let me give you some hard data: the Hugo balloting at DisCon got 228 votes, and the total registration was only 600-something. You decide whether it's fair for you to mention this...

✓Okay; I decided it was fair. I don't think that the total vote should be any deep dark secret, even if the breakdown per nominee is. That ~~wasn't my~~ comment about the vote being decided by a dozen or so fans, though; that was Ed Wood's comment. My comment was that it was "small potatoes". Compared to other national awards which are voted on -- such as the TV GUIDE awards, for example -- the Hugos are insignifi-

cant. That doesn't make them less important to the field; a field in which the leading magazine sells under 30,000 copies is pretty insignificant to begin with

RSC/

Mike Deckinger, 14 Salem Court, Metuchen, New Jersey

Adkins' cover on #132 hardly matches the rigidity in style and subject matter which he's established in his long years as a fan artist. The various segments bear an oddly disjointed relationship that tend to balance the overall dramatic effect of the illo. I liked it, better in fact than most of his prozine output which has been inexcusably sketchy and static. The same can probably be said for ATOM. His illos in NEBULA consistently missed the high level of humor and caricature he rendered so successfully (and continues to do so) for fanzines. Does the concept of exercising one's talents for payment rather than egoboo have a stifling effect on the quality of the produced art? Or is it merely a subconscious desire to discredit any association with mercenary media?

Joe Pilati's story provided a neat and unexpected twist on what I had thought to be a rather conventional, if unacceptable theme. Far more amusing is the ad quoted at the story's beginning. If an individual can sell plots what is to stop a large corporation from basing its existence on the same principle. Two heads are better than one, and infinitely better still are a score of heads, analyzing and creating acceptable fictional plots which can be peddled to beginning writers at commissioned rates. The older established pros would undoubtedly reject this intrusion and unreasonable assistance, but it might conceivably make more writers successes. Thank goodness this nightmare couldn't possibly happen.

Strange Fruit was typically good and I, like most of fandom, enjoy your opinions and viewpoints advanced here. In fact, the only thing I'd object to in the reviews is your persistent ungrammatical printing of Mr. Evers' name as e.e.evers. From what I've read by him he is certainly no e.e.cummings, nor a demon knight, nor even a rich brown. Until Evers begins to offer significant contributions to the field I, at least, will deny him recognition of a lower case name.

While I object in principle to all censorship, and thus am opposed to the blanking out of segments of THE OUTER LIMITS, as reported by Don Thompson, I would feel no sense of loss if forces beyond our control were responsible for the program suddenly and mysteriously being wiped off the air.

[I can't quite see the awarding of lower-case letters, like knighthood, for services to the field. (For that matter, name one service that Rich Brown has rendered fandom.) Evers started out by signing his name in lower case. I always considered this idea a bit silly, but after all, it's his name and I'm certainly not going to argue with him over HOW to capitalize it. Recently he had dropped the lower case affectation (so has Damon Knight, I understand) and I dropped it when he did. I never gave Rich Brown the dubious benefits of lower case because he never wrote it that way in his infrequent letters to me./ Personally, I feel that OUTER LIMITS has very competent special effects men. The March 23rd show, about the alien who makes itself into a house, is a good example. The camera work was very good, the alien was above average for tv and movie stf, and the basic characters were interesting. The show was ruined by the ridiculous dialogue; I haven't encountered anything else that bad since Sascio quit publishing.

RSC/

FIN

R & J Coulson

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