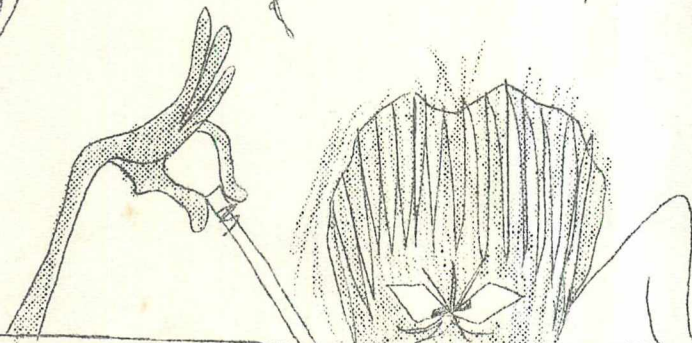
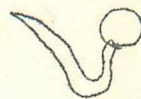
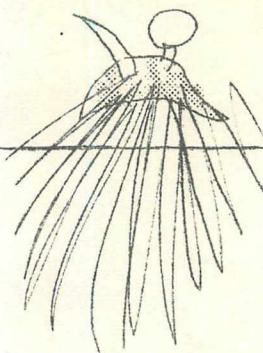
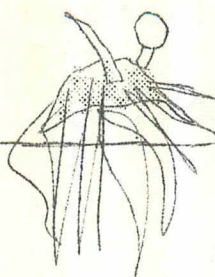
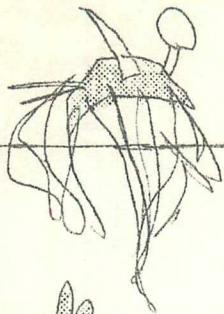
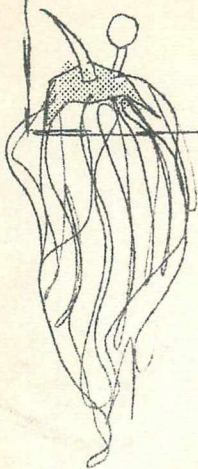


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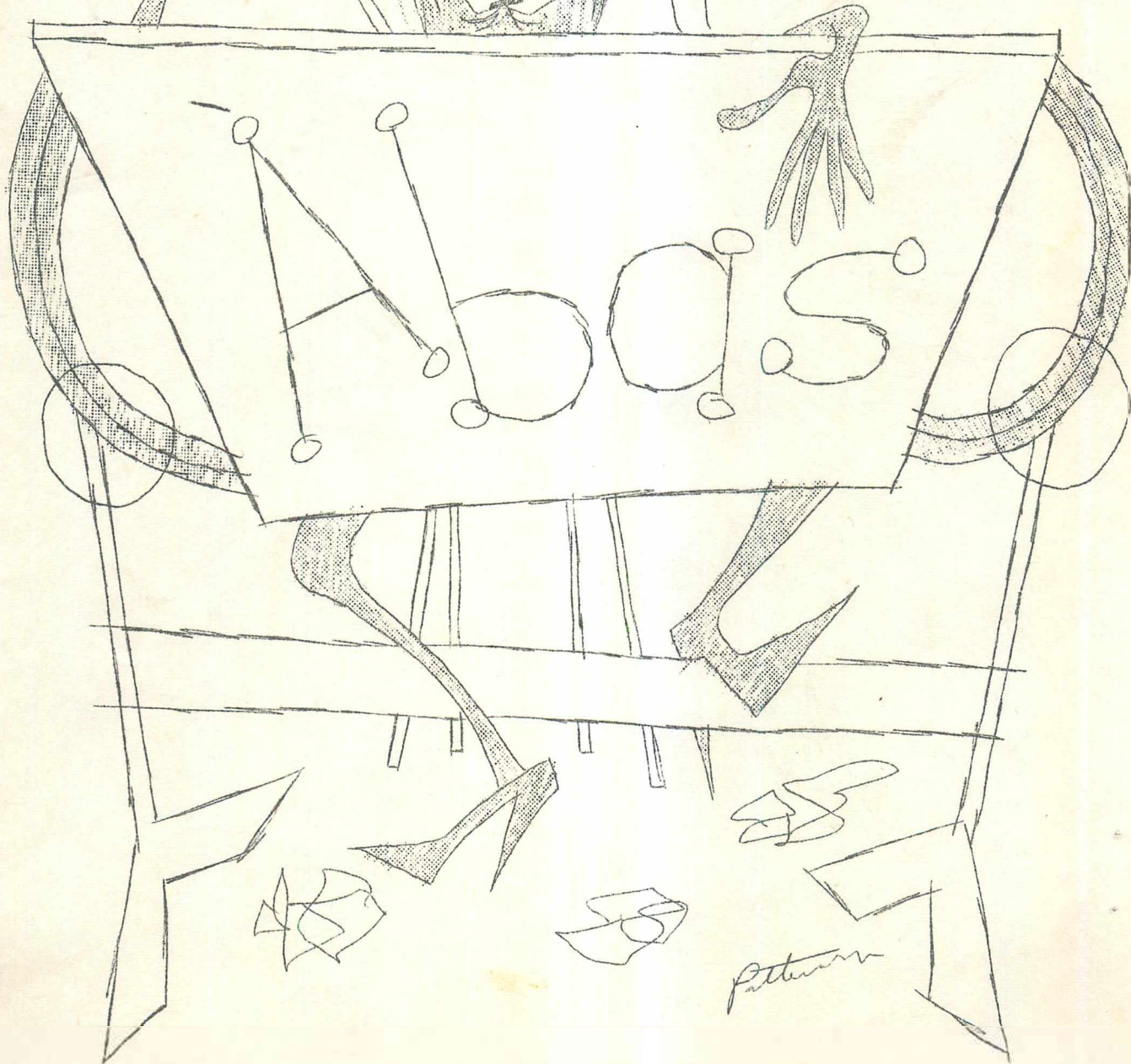
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RAEBURN



Number 9



Edited and published by Boyd Raeburn, 9 Glenvalley Drive, Toronto 9, Canada

Cover by Pat Patterson.

Headings by Gerald Steward

Illo - Jean Young

P R O L O G U E

The cover on this issue could be titled "The Artist & The Fans"

The New York Con is over and past. Some Con reports have appeared here and there, and no doubt there will be more. I am not going to write a con report. However, the New York convention emphasised certain aspects of "Science Fiction" conventions which I don't understand.

The Progress Reports of the New York con were full of happy gurgles over the amount of Publicity the convention was going to get. Gee, we're going to have this big panel on Atomic Energy (or Atomic Fallout or something) and we hope to have Big Name Scientists on the panel and this will get the con all sorts of publicity in the newspapers. Big deal. Why?

The con is going to be covered by radio. Big deal. Why?

The masquerade ball is going to be covered by television. Big deal. Why?

And we're going to have this and that and the other and it will attract lots and lots and lots of people and we'll get all sorts of PUBLICITY. Big deal. WHY?

Whether all the planned hoopla actually took place, I don't know. Nor do I care. As far as I can tell, much that was supposed to come off at the convention didn't. I do know that some strange babe, a model, or night club entertainer, or something, was crowned Miss Science Fiction at the masquerade ball. Oh, big Big Deal. Why do convention organizers seek publicity so avidly? Are they trying to be missionaries, Carrying The Message Of Science Fiction To The Masses? Are they trying to Make Science Fiction Respectable? I can just see the masses respecting science fiction, and rushing out to storm the newsstands for copies of Other Worlds as a result of getting a glimpse of a masquerade ball on a television program. Think of the huge demand there would have been for copies of Imagination IF the panel on atomic whatever had taken place and IF some Big Name Scientist had appeared on it and IF this fact had appeared in a corner in some newspaper. And just dig that Miss Science Fiction gimmick. Boy, I bet it's caused sf sales to really climb.

But, the nasty suspicion arises, maybe some of this publicity seeking was with the intention of getting people to come to the con. Not just science fiction fans, or fandom-type fans, but just people. Anybody with two bucks. Of course, this convention, every two bucks was needed, for, through sheer fuggheadedness, (and there is no other word for it) the con wound up with a deficit. But ignoring this unusual circumstance, why is there so often the seeking after a large convention attendance? Most certainly it is not axiomatic that the bigger the attendance the better the convention, and there have been enough conventions held by now for convention promoters to have learned some sense.

It would seem that in some respects the convention was rather a fiasco, but as far as I (you know, selfish cynical I) am concerned it was a great success. I spent much time with many old friends, and some new ones, and had myself a ball.

But such apparently was not the case with Wm. Deeck. Wm. Deeck is not what one would term a well known fan. His activities in fandom appear to be confined to dull, rambling articles which appear occasionally in the lesser fanzines, the editors of which are either desperate for material, or else have a strange predilection for Wm.'s prolix prose.

Wm. wrote a letter to George Spencer, and George printed an extract from it in his editorial in OUTRE #3.

Wm. said: "'Cliquish' is quite an understatement when applied to cons. I was not dismayed by it, but I, with the ever-discerning eye, noticed many who were estranged by that puerile manifestation of esoterica. Or if the many young ones who wandered around the packed rooms -- and over-flowing bar -- were not estranged, they were certainly disillusioned. The famed extroversion of the fans was not evident. Some day some courageous fan, bereft of his senses or tired of fandom, will attend a con in its entirety, and then will proceed to publish a very erudite dissertation (in God knows what journal) on the puerility of both the psychological and sociological manifestations at the con. It should be a paper worth reading, and it might even dissuade certain of the 'intellectuals' in fandom from attendance of the cons and thus force a revision of policies in regard to 'cliquishness.' But I fear that fans, so progressive in their outlooks, are as so many backwoods Tennesseans exhorting William Jennings Bryan to further efforts when he produced the sterling idea that men were not mammals. The fans want their cherished traditions, as Bryan wanted Genesis, to remain unchanged and unquestioned."

Isn't that something? Doesn't that make the "arguments" and "explanations" of George the puling paranoiac appear as limpid logic? But let us have a close look at what Wm. is trying to say.

"...but I, with the ever-discerning eye..." Say, that's good, you know. Our Wm. shows in three words not only that he can use Classy, almost Poetic phrases, but that he went about, not in a bemused dither, but Noting Things.

".....noticed many who were estranged by that puerile manifestation of esoterica." To what is this phrase meant to refer? Apparently to "cliquish." Why does Wm. consider cliquishness a puerile manifestation of esoterica? He doesn't tell us. Probably at this stage we are expected to be so overwhelmed by his Big Words that we shouldn't expect him to justify his contentions.

"....if the many young ones who wandered about the packed rooms...were not estranged...." I presume this cliquish con that Wm. attended was the New York con. Were you at the New York con? Did you notice some of these young ones who were wandering round the packed rooms? More estrangement is what we need.

"...some courageous fan ...will attend a con in its entirety." Oh, do most fans only attend part of a convention?

"...to publish a very erudite dissertation...on the puerility of both the psychological and sociological manifestations at the con." Wm. doesn't quote any examples of what he considers puerile psychological and sociological manifestations. Those words look so pretty all by themselves, it might be awkward to try to back them up with examples.

"...might even dissuade certain of the "intellectuals" in fandom from attendance of the cons..." Presumably these "intellectuals" are too stupid to notice the puerile psychological and sociological manifestations until they are pointed out in the erudite dissertation by the courageous fan.

"...and thus force a revision of policies in regard to 'cliquishness'" What policies in regard to cliquishness? Imagine the happy scene. One day the "intellectual" fan looks up and says to himself, "Oh joy. There has been forced

a revision of policies in regard to cliquishness. Now I can go to a con and extrovert happily with Wm. Deeck and loud-mouthed children. Oh frabjous day." Oh balls.

And this is as far as the guided tour of Wm.'s outburst goes. Make what you like of the last two sentences of his letter. To me they are meaningless. I doubt that even Wm. knows what he means by them. But they are impressive, aren't they? Indirect references to the Scopes trial and all that. Gee.

You know what I think? I think Wm. is peeved. Perhaps nobody rushed up to him at the con and said, "Geegoshwow you're Wm. Deeck geewhiz I mean gosh I mean why don't you come and join this circle of close friends for although you don't know us and we don't know you and we have nothing in common your personality must be fascinating in inverse proportion to your articles and wow I mean you know?"

And at this stage I am sure some kind-hearted and woolly-minded readers will be aghast at the way I'm being so downright mean to poor Wm. Deeck. To these I would point out that I am not attacking Wm. Deeck personally. Wm. appears, by my interpretation of his babblings, to be trying to voice in a superior manner a complaint which is occasionally heard regarding conventions. To this complaint and his manner of presentation I take exception. There seems to be a belief held by some people that the mere fact of their attendance at a convention automatically entitles them to go to any party, to crash any group, no matter how private the gathering may be; and on being denied admission to a private circle they are hurt and bitter. A person may go to a convention knowing few if any of the people there, and make many friends and attend many gatherings. But he should not feel hurt if he is rebuffed. The fact that you are at a convention and I am there also gives no reason to assume that we shall automatically delight in each other's company. It is often claimed that fans are friendly. Even if so, there is no basis for considering that this friendliness should be indiscriminate and all-embracing.

On reading over the foregoing, I have a suspicion that somebody may be so obtuse as to completely misinterpret what I said - in view of the weird interpretations of the printed word some fans have aired in the past, it is not inconceivable. If you are of the opinion that I am espousing unfriendliness if not downright hostility as normal convention demeanor, go read MUZZY. You belong there.

Half way through stencilling this Wm. Deeck stuff, it occured to me that Wm.'s letter would make excellent Derogation ^{material}. Really spectacular fuggheadedness has been in very short supply, and this gem would serve to fill two or three pages. However, I felt that I could say what I wanted to say on the matter much better in this section. Moreover, the Derogation this issue, as far as it stands at the time of writing, is a quiet little romp, with neither malice nor hard words marring the happy chattering. To throw the dark confusion of Wm. Deeck into such innocence would only jar.

They're not particularly drunken parties, but they're sickening enough - Andy Young

While on the subject of the NY convention - more or less - a word of appreciation to the toilers in the background who spent so much time before as well as during the convention on the drudgery of the mechanics of such an affair. Such work has no glamor, and brings no egoboo, and too often goes unappreciated.

A few readers seem to think that Alex Kirs is a Canadian. In his columns there have been several references to the Bronx. The Bronx is a borough of New York City. New York City is in the United States. Clear now?

Fuggheadism: The Hallmark of stupidity that Clods men's minds. - Geis

If you looked at the masthead, you will have noted that this issue is dated November. So you are getting it sometime in December. No, I haven't been slow in mailing your copy. When I started cutting the editorial, I fully intended that the zine would be out about the end of November. However, the Raeburn features got chiselled a trifle, and one of the results was that both eyes were not only very black and puffed, but were also partially obscured by adhesive tape and stuff. Some of you may think that the zine looks as though I stencilled it with my eyes shut, but I really do need full vision to work on stencils. So, as there was still quite some work to be done on the zine, it just had to wait until I could see properly again.

I'm getting lazier. Not only have I not done any dummyming this issue, I'm composing this on stencil as I go along. I can't quite figure why, but in A BAS editorials I find it difficult to relax and chatter informally as do so many faneds. In my FAPA zine I ramble on uninhibitedly, but not in A BAS. Curious. Many letters were squeezed out of the letter column, and many that do appear have been cut. Only so much space, you know. However, even though your letter of comment hasn't been printed, don't think it wasn't appreciated. I received a typical letter from Clod Hall, but he asked that it not be printed, so it isn't. Aren't you lucky? I have printed a few representative comments on the Vorzimer Supplement, but the subject is now closed, unless, of course, Little Pete should come roaring forth again from his SoCal hideout.

"The Top Of The Turnip" by Bob Shaw in this issue is probably the first of a regular column by him under this title. Like Calkins' "Dans un verre d'eau" the title has a Hidden Meaning, but there are no prizes for figuring it out. I was going to say more about the contents, but you can go ahead and read it. My apologies to all those who want to be in the Derogation, but didn't make it this time. I can only work in certain people in the various twists and turns. Maybe next time, huh?

To all the eager beavers who like to send me money (dear dear people) I would prefer you didn't send more than 50¢ at a time. I'm not keen on carrying longer subs.

He's so twisted that on the surface he appears normal - Tod White

While I think of it, Steward and Kidder are the ones to connect with cracks about MGs now. Last May I traded mine in on a new Healey. Italian Red. Wow.

Overheard at the convention: "But my toenails aren't cut."

"That's all right. I'll bite them off."

From a Socony Mobil advertisement, yacking all about The World's First Diamond Making Machine: "A carbonaceous compound is placed in a small round metal chamber and subjected to pressures up to 1,500,000 pounds per square inch - temperatures up to 5,000 degrees F! Under these conditions - believed to exist 240 miles beneath the earth's surface - tiny diamonds are formed in minutes! And these are genuine diamonds - not synthetic in any respect!"

From the Bedfordshire Times and Standard: "At the Pleasant Afternoon meeting held in the Congregational Church schoolroom Miss E. Boucher recited her poem of 208 verses entitled Mother's Last Words. Mrs. J. H. Thomas presided."

Almost the only pics I have of me are street photos - Georgina Ellis

Derelict* Derogation* #7

Place: The usual meeting of the Derelict-Insurgents-Plus-Two Elvis Presley Fan Club

Kirs: Who is this Presley that all the chatter is about?

Steward: Oh, a folk singer who's rather popular at the moment.

Trina: You consider him a folk singer?

Kidder: Certainly. Haven't you heard his record, "Black is the color of my blue suede shoes"?

Lyons: Say, Boyd, this is the spot where you should have G.M. Carr repeat the remarks she made in FAPA about Presley.

Raeburn: I thought of doing it, but then I considered that the post office might take a pretty dim view of it.

Kidder: Yeah, that stuff is a bit too raw for such a staid family magazine as A BAS.

Steward: And by all means we must preserve the legend that G.M. Carr is a Most Respectable Person.

Raeburn: True. True. Can't have any of that crude sex stuff in this zine.

Lyons: Exactly. You've been a bit careless in that respect in the past. You should spend a little time determining the sort of words you can't use in the zine.

Kirs: What you might call Learning The Blues.

Raeburn: You mean the zine should be all moral and full of uplift?

Lyons: There you go again. Don't talk about uplift.

Steward: You should try to make A BAS stand out as an island of decency in a sea of desire.

Raeburn: I don't know about a sea, but I think you're all rather a shower.

Kidder: Haw, Grennell will get that one, even if nobody else does.

Gould: Say, what's Grennell doing these days?

Raeburn: He's keeping pretty busy, building some sort of rude shelter.

Kirs: Yes, his wife builds the walls, and he writes on them.

Lyons: All right, Boyd, what do you plan to put in the zine this time?

Raeburn: I'm not sure yet. I've been trying to think of some features I can shove in.

Kidder: How about Paul Enever's?

Raeburn: Say, if I go to the London convention next year, I may meet Enever.

Merrill: Well gee with the World Convention in London next year lots of fans from this continent won't be able to go to it and if we don't have some convention for these fans to go to next year Fandom Will Collapse so we just gotta hold a rump convention.

Tucker: Did you know there are more rumps in fandom than fans?

Jean Young: I would have thought it would be the other way round, considering all the half-assed fans there are.

Steward: Oh, a goodly response. Truly you are a witty woman.

Jean: Oh no, not me, I am but a humble euphonium in the orchestra of life.

Kirs: Really? I mean, can euphoniums have offspring?

Steward: My good man, have you never seen a bugle?

Lyons: Parenthood presents many complications nowadays, and most of them are not fit for public discussion.

Alan Dodd: Huh? What? Who's a bugle?

Raeburn: Somebody who's always trumpeting.

Kidder: Such as Squirrel Ellik.

Gould: Squirrel Ellik is LOUD. Alla time he makes loud noises. This is o.k. by me for a little while because he laughs all loud and hawhaw when I make funny type remarks, but after a while the novelty of on the spot egoboo wears off, and a slight twitch of the lip - hint of a smile type - would be more appreciated.

S. Ellik:so Harlan told me that Larry was paying him so much a word so I went and asked Larry if this was true and he didn't seem to want to answer me at first but after a while he said that was right and gee I don't see why he pays Harlan like that because Harlan's stories are rotten and.....

Lyons: Which of his stories have you read?

S. Ellik: Oh, I haven't read any for a long time.

Raeburn: So there you have it, direct from Squawk Ellik's mewling maw.

Kidder: His voice is as the murmur of turtle doves.

Gould: Ellik is the only true squirrel. Pickle his nuts for posterity.

Dodd: I don't see why you pick on Ellik this way. I mean Ellik and Gould are about the same age and you all seem to like Gould and.....

S. Ellik: You're kind, and friendly, and sort of saintly....you're not Wilfred Pickles, are you?

Dodd: Alas, in my little village of Hoddesdon, there is scant opportunity to have a go.

Lyons: Where is Hoddesdon? Isn't it in Middlesex?

Kirs: No, it's in Hertfordshire. Middlesex is a curious affliction necessitating the address "Dear Sir or Madam."

Raeburn: All right, Alex, have some of Paul Enever's "vintage sherry".

Kirs: Hmmm. A little on the nutty side.

Steward: Perhaps, but he puts out a good fanzine.

Trina: I don't know what to call you. One simply can't say Gerald; that's like calling someone Charles or Robert or Penelope.....

Raeburn: Would you like us to call you Robert or Penelope, Gerald?

Steward: No.

Lyons: Why?

Steward: I'd rather you didn't press me for my reasons - I haven't thought of any yet.

Trina: Then again Steward may be all right for some people, but I can't stand calling people by their last names...it sounds so cigar-and-slap-on-the-backish. Some people have suggested GAS because that's your initials but really....I even called "Sam" Southworth Mary, much as I hated to call anyone Mary....still, when you wrote letters to her you could start them "Hail Mary full of Grace" and that was fun. She really should have named her daughter Grace, don't you think?

Steward: The advent of this woman cannot be too gradual. I am not a nervous man, but I like to be predisposed to an order of events.

Lyons: Come now, Gerald, you're behaving like an absolute cad.

Kidder: I don't see why he can't behave like a cad if he wants to. That's about the only way you can enjoy yourself these days.

Steward: Thank you Ronald. Truly you are a leaning tower of strength.

Trina: Oh, you are so cynical and bitter; you must have had a dreadfully unhappy childhood.

Lyons: Did you have an unhappy childhood, Gerald?

Trina: Oh, but he must have. I mean, living in the suburbs and having to be a Wolf Cub when he couldn't believe in it and all that. It must have been dreadful.

Kirs: Now, Trina, I think you misjudge him. Why, his sterling character shines forth like a beacon in a naughty world.

Raeburn: A regular little lighthouse, aren't you, Gerald?

Lyons: So what can you do with a lighthouse?

Kidder: Put a shade on it, and make a really ostentatious floor lamp.

Benford: Gee, isn't this just all full of pathos and romance and human interest?

Steward: Well my interest is waning.

Raeburn: It's what?

Steward: It's WANING.

Trina: Oh, I'm so glad I brought my umbrella.

Kidder: I laughed earlier this evening, and where am I now?

- BR

G.M. Carr in GEMZINE 4:12. "I doubt the boy realizes what he is actually doing is portraying a parody of a man experiencing an orgasm -- even to the notorious pelvic movement which earned him the nickname 'Pelvis' Presley.

Dan Adkins in INNUENDO #3. "But I go all out for Elvis, and do his motions when I listen to him unless it's where I shouldn't.

Whose love is given and over well
 Shall look on Helen's face in hell
 Whilst those whose love is thin and wise
 Shall view John Knox in Paradise

- Anon.

After dinner I took the book into the family sitting-room, and resumed it while my father searched the Evening News hopefully for reports of the arrest, clubbing and hanging of labor leaders.

- H.L. Mencken "Happy Days"

F A A A A A A A A N M A I L

Once upon a time I wrote a book, and that book drew fan mail.

I don't mean just any of the books I've written, nor do I mean just ordinary fan mail from ordinary fans -- like you mangy critturs out there. No sir, this one particular novel pulled real faaaaaaan mail from gibbering little monsters lurking on the lunatic fringe. The mail gave me a better opinion of the true fandom I know and love.

In my long and honorable (hah) career I've produced (hacked out) fifteen epic novels (thrillers, penny dreadfuls); three of them have been rejected. The twelve that did see print met with varying success, financially and critically. The poorest of them earned me only a few hundred dollars and was quickly forgotten by critic and reader alike; the best has passed the five thousand dollar mark and is still flying. Six of them were mystery stories, five were science fiction novels, and one was a collection of short stories. My true favorite never got off the ground; the one that was knocked out to meet a contract deadline is selling like inflated real estate. I'm told it always happens this way.

In one of the mystery novels I misplaced the Illinois River, and a bright-eyed reader wrote me about the matter, tactfully suggesting that I stop changing the respective courses of the Illinois and the Mississippi. In another book, I inadvertantly left an unidentified and unexplained corpse at the bottom of a well, but nobody seemed to notice that. In a series of five related mysteries, revolving about the same two people, I kept changing the girl's eyes from blue to brown, but nobody seemed to give a faint damn. In a story dealing with archeology, I goofed by describing stone tablets instead of clay tablets; only Miz Hoffman-Shaw caught that one. And finally, in a grim after-the-bomb novel, I ended the story with the finest piece of logical plotting I could conceive ... but my editor cut it out because she considered cannibalism too gruesome for the gentle readers.

What's the matter with you critturs, you got weak stomachs?

And then one day, in a Ray Palmerish mood, I turned out a book I called "Wild Talent" Bantam changed the title to "The Man From Tomorrow" for their edition.

Gee whiz. Things began to happen.

Basically, this is the "man-with-the-x-ray-eyes" plot, only the hero had x-ray mental powers. Hi-psi stuff. I never in my life dreamed America was psi crazy. "Wild Talent" didn't make much of a dent upon the reading public; I don't recall getting any response from the hardcover or book club editions, except that Dutch Ellis published an amusing spoof of it. But the following year, Bantam published "Man From Tomorrow" and the deluge began. Do you remember the cover? It was an inspired, compelling thing. A man's face was spread all over that cover; sinister things were visibly happening behind his forehead, and two streaks of blue lightning were shooting from his powerful eyes. Goshwowboyohboy!

That's when the lunatic fringe discovered me. I started getting faaaaaaan mail.

Two or three readers, seemingly decent chaps, wanted to know where they could obtain copies of Dr. Roy's definitive volume, "Studies in Psychokinesis." One man said that even his librarian had been unable to track it down. I had to tell these disappointed readers that the book did not exist -- I had invented it, to give the hero something to study. They probably committed suicide upon learning this.

BOB TUCKER

Another reader, an outraged fellow this time, took me to task because the hero killed the villain, to save himself. In unmistakable terms he informed me that telepathic people did not kill; they were a race apart and above us crawling humans and our despicable habits, and would not stoop to our sins. Still another reader objected, not to the killing, but to the fact that it happened in Florida. On one of Florida's nice, clean white beaches. Why were writers always bloodying up Florida's pure, hallowed ground?

A young fellow in Michigan gave me the works. I committed an error here, I was downright stupid there, telepaths weren't like that at all, and why was I giving a black eye to the whole race? Didn't I believe in the future of America? Was I hoping to drive the hidden people further underground, and thus postpone their emergence for another generation or so? Was I not aware of the fact that telepaths walked among us, rubbed shoulders and knocked elbows with us, and that I was signing my own death warrant---practically? And just in case I got any bright ideas, I was being stymied in advance. The young man warned me not to attempt to trace him.

Many readers, perhaps as many as a dozen, wrote encouraging letters. They realized that I was trapped among sodden humanity, that I could not reveal myself for fear of death, and so I had presented my story as fiction. They urged me to buck up, to be of stout heart, for better times were coming. And meanwhile, for their enjoyment, they would welcome a sequel detailing further adventures of my life.

A woman somewhere in the Northwest -- I believe it was Idaho -- adopted a somewhat similar tack, with variations. She sympathized with me, agreed with me that telepaths were having one hell of a time in the world today, but was equally sure that a brighter day was coming for "our" people. And in the meantime, was I lonely?

There was a scattering of letters wanting to know who "Paul Breen" really was; what was his real name, and why was I covering up for him? There were letters equally certain "Paul Breen" was an alias, but who professed to understand why I was using an alias. A few readers asked me, naively, if "Paul Breen" actually existed. Was he a flesh-and-blood man of my acquaintance, was he someone I had heard about, or had I really imagined him from whole cloth? Surely he wasn't mere fiction?

One reader demanded to know where "Paul" was hiding.

And finally, my favorite faaaaaan letter of all, was that one which was so perfect it will be unbelievable. It was a mysterious thing which arrived via airmail from some foreign country; I don't know which country because there was no return address, and the postage was missing. Either the stamp had fallen off or some postoffice clerk had picked it off for his collection. To compound the perfect gag, and to make it all the more unbelievable, the postmark was unreadable. To me, it was an airmail letter from somewhere, no more, no less.

It contained a very brief letter from "Paul Breen". He taunted me in one or two lines, and signed his name. That was all. It was enough.

I later discovered the practical joker who perpetrated that gag, and my admiration of him has grown by leaps and et cetera. But I fail to understand how fate so perfectly played into his hand. How did he arrange for the postmark to be unreadable, and the stamp to be missing?

But as for the other mail, the real letters from real faaaaaans -- hell, I'll take tru-fandom any day. Tru-fandom hasn't done me dirt any worse than stealing the ten of clubs and burying me. Just good, clean, normal fun.

— — — — —

When Bennett discovered that Crowley was not only shooting game but later going back to admire the rotting carcasses and writing odes to the maggots, Bennett refused to have anything more to do with him.

- Daniel P. Mannix "The Great Beast"

I WALKED BESIDE THEE

HARRY WARNER JR

This happened a dozen years ago. Up to now, I haven't written in a generally circulated fanzine about my encounter with Claude Degler. Finally, I think that enough time has passed to recall the Cosmic Circle days with tolerance, and even a gentle sense of regret at the realization that we once succeeded in growing so excited over a fundamentally unimportant fellow and his ideas. Our enthusiasm was inverted and misplaced, but in those days we weren't as blasé about Claude Deglers as in these elder days.

The recent epidemic of articles about Claude and the Cosmic Circle may cause this item to seem like a jarring note. I have no startling revelations to make about Claude's personal habits or private affairs. I simply want to tell about the night that he came to Hagerstown.

"I'm Don Rogers," the fellow said, walking up to my desk in the newspaper office and sticking out his right hand. I blinked. This meant that it was Claude Degler; "Don Rogers" was as transparent a disguise as anyone could possibly adopt, and nobody ever figured out why Claude continued to refer to himself under that name from time to time. He told me that he had gone to my home, on his hitchhiking arrival in Hagerstown, and had been sent to the office by my mother.

Now, right here is where some of the oldsters in fandom will throw down this magazine in disgust. Everyone knows that Claude always got into the house, when he decided to visit a fan. There are no known exceptions to this ability of Degler's, except for that strange night in Hagerstown. He never elaborated on what happened at the house. Other fans would have done much to learn the secret method by which he was kept on the safe side of the doorsill.

It was 11 p.m., on a date which I no longer remember by year, month and day. However, it was just at the time when the Cosmic Circle was gaining notoriety. The Cosmic Circle's excesses had not yet flashed into their full, dazzling eruption, but Degler was the big news in fandom. His personality and habits were the topic of articles in almost every contemporary fanzine. And Degler himself was publishing about half of the nation's fanzines just then.. I feared the worst.

But the worst didn't come. Here is my second bombshell: I did not find Degler to be a stinker, either figuratively or literally. He was travel-stained from his hitchhiking, but not as badly as several other fans who have used the same method of reaching Hagerstown. Later, when he opened his suitcase in my presence, I neither saw nor scented any of the semi-corruption which Los Angeles historians have described so vividly. And, most unbelievable of all, he told me immediately that he had already registered to spend the night at a local hostelry. This last announcement was approximately as surprising as if a minister had told his congregation that he intended to abandon the custom of taking up a collection each Sunday. In his travels, Degler had sometimes been known to move out of a fan's house into which he had penetrated, after only three or four days. But such cases were rare, and a hotel key was simply not associated with the hands of Don Rogers.

We talked for an hour or more. "We" means about 80 per cent Degler, 20 per cent me, because Claude was very intent on converting me to the Cosmic Circle philosophy. I heard again the things that he had repeated so frequently in his fanzines: his belief that fans were a sub-species of humanity which deserved a better fate than impartial mixing with the coarser remainder of homo sapiens; his projected fan resort on some land which his family allegedly owned in the Ozarks; the present condition of the intricate web of feuds and sub-feuds between various persons in

fandom and prominent figures in the Cosmic Circle. Most of these CC figures were other aliases for Degler; it seems at this late date to be fairly certain that only Degler and the girl known as Helen Bradleigh really existed.

Degler was a bit tired from hitchhiking, and I told him frankly that it had been a long day for me, so we set a time and place to meet again in the morning. The only decent thing for me to do was to walk him to his hotel and go home. When I asked him where he was staying, he replied, "The Mayflower." Then began an incident which symbolizes as well as anything in Degleriana the entire course of his fannish career.

I gulped, having offered to walk him to the hotel, took a deep breath, put on my hat, and we started out. The Mayflower was a tourist home about four miles from the centre of Hagerstown, not too far from the banks of the Potomac. I didn't care for the thought of walking along the highway shoulder during the two hour round trip in the dead of night, with drunken drivers whizzing past on U.S. 11, but I feared that Claude would never find the place in the dark. I didn't own a car in those days, the last bus had gone, and I felt no desire to waste two or three bucks in cab fare on a total stranger.

We set out at a brisk pace. When he got under the stars, Claude expanded and began to confide in me the things that he hoped for the Cosmic Circle which he thought were a bit too daring to go into his fanzines. I don't remember any longer what they were, but they were astonishing, something like the almost-forgotten fragments of memories that remain of a night's dreams as you awake in the morning. We passed the last streetlight, stepped off the last piece of sidewalk, and slowed a little in the loose gravel of the highway shoulder. This was about the halfway point on the journey. Claude began to look back over a shoulder occasionally, and he began to talk disjointedly. We might have gone another mile, before he said doubtfully: "You know, it didn't seem this far, when I came from the hotel to your office."

I stopped in my tracks. "Are you sure you're staying at the Mayflower?" "Well, come to think of it, that doesn't sound like the right name. Is there a Hotel Maryland?" I turned around and pointed. "The Maryland is one half-block from the office -- in the other direction. I know a short cut to my home. Good night." I turned into a pasture and cut across the fields. It is surprising that I didn't get chased by a bull or shot at as a potential henhouse thief, as I carefully put as much distance as possible between myself and U.S. 11, and went home and went to bed.

The morning was an anti-climax. Here again, Claude showed quite uncharacteristic tendencies. In the library, our point of rendezvous, he was much more worried about disturbing other people, as we talked in low tones, than I was. He had already bought his own breakfast, before the time of our appointment. He made no further request to see anything in my house. The odd things he said and did might have gone ignored, if I hadn't read so much about the person with whom I was conversing. I remember that we went into a restaurant for a cup of coffee, and Claude stared in fascination at the walls. They were painted with landscapes that were probably intended to represent the Hawaiian Islands; Claude instantly decided that this was the purest fantasy in art, and I feel quite sure that he would have asked the proprietor for those walls, if he had possessed any way of taking them along. In his hotel room, where he wanted to show me some of his collection, I probably saw representative samples of many collections, if reports about Claude's varied means of building his collection are true.

He left before noon, in order to get an early start to the next point on his cosmic circling of the nation. I was surprised repeatedly, in the months that followed, to find by Claude's fanzines that I had accepted one important post after another in the administration and execution of the Cosmic Circle program. Since I never formally resigned any of those offices, I am probably still one of its key figures.

I never received another visit from Claude. Nor was there any further correspondence between us. I stayed on the mailing list for his fan publications, up to the time that silence suddenly swallowed him up. Years ago, when I was secretary-treasurer of the FAPA, I received a postal card from Claude. He had dropped out of fandom for a while, he explained, but he wanted me to put him back onto the waiting list of the FAPA. I didn't put him there, an illegal act on the part of an FAPA officer which has gone unpunished and unappreciated to this very day.

That's about all that I can tell about Claude Degler, except to say that I have never yet decided if there was any reason for the tiny voice that kept trying to get attention in my right ear, all during the Cosmic Circle fuss, whispering that maybe Claude Degler was just a poor man's Socrates, a gadfly who wasn't nearly as crazy as he seemed, a gentleman who simply liked to see the frantic way fandom goes into a convulsion fit when someone needles it vigorously.

When Captain William Scoresby, D.D., who a century ago combined theology and whaling, became agitated over the billions of jellyfish that he observed in the Greenland seas, his problem was to fit them into an anthropocentric pattern. Superficially they seemed a waste of protoplasm, but since his commercial habits of thought did not permit him to conceive of God as being wasteful, he was forced to find some other explanation of His purpose "in furnishing such a profusion of life in a region so remote from the habitations of men." Reflection soon made it clear. The jellyfish were put there, he decided, in order to feed the herring which feed the seal, which feed the polar bears which, if they could not get food, might come south and "incumber regions now affording products useful for the subsistence of man." Furthermore, the medusae feed the whales which supply us with whale oil (wherewith we may read God's word by night as well as by day) and whalebone (whereof are made corsets to prolong our illusions as to the divinity of the human form.) Thus the eye of faith saw the larger whole, and God was exculpated from the charge of being untidy. The universe was "a most beautiful contrivance" ingeniously arranged to keep polar bears out of our back yards and to supply us with pickled herring and sealskin coats.

- Bergen Evans "The Natural History of Nonsense"

Chipeco thermos dioxygen, temco sonora tuxedo
Resinol fiat bacardi, camera ansco wheatena;
Antiskid pebeco calox, oleo tyco barometer
Postum nabisco!
Prestolite arco congoleum, karo aluminum kryptok,
Crisco balopticon lysol, jello bellans, carborundum!
Ampico clysmic swoboda, pantasote necco britannica
Encyclopaedia?

- Anon.

In 1897.....he brought out a little volume called "What a Young Boy Ought To Know" and thereafter he began rolling up money with such velocity that when he died in 1915 he was probably the richest Lutheran pastor, at least in the earned brackets, that the Republic has ever seen. For that little volume founded the great science of sex hygiene, which eventually developed into a major American industry, with thousands of practitioners and a technic become as complicated as that of bridge or chess.

He wrote all its official texts for male seekers - "What a Young Man Ought To Know", "What a Young Husband Ought To Know", "What a Man of Forty-five Ought To Know" and so on -- and he inspired, copy-read and published all its texts for females, beginning with "What a Young Girl Ought To Know" and ending, I suppose, with "What a Decent Grandmother Ought To Forget"

- H.L. Mencken "Happy Days"

THE OLD OAKEN DASHBOARD

High in the hills surrounding the small but independent village of Whistling Chicken, South Carolina, lives the family of the late Ralph Camsclattering, immigrant race driver and enthusiast extraordinary. Surviving him, and living in circumstances modest indeed, are Emma G. Camsclattering, his wife; Porscha, his charming and personable daughter; and Wistful Henry, his talented son who was unfortunately rendered half-witted when he first saw the Model TD MG.

The Camsclattering family lives in a deserted Federal Revenue station, forced to spend much of their income since 1936 in keeping up the payments on their one possession, a PB model MG. The final payment is due at last and Porscha has obtained a job with Edgar Chromium, wealthy used car dealer, in order to earn the last few dollars.

Within the Camsclattering family all is complacent. It is morning, and Porscha is washing the dishes after a delicious Southern breakfast of Brankle, a delicacy composed chiefly of granite chips and brala suet. Mother Camsclattering is seated on an empty Oilzum case reading a copy of the MG Workshop Manual. Outside, Wistful Henry, aided by Enzo the dog, is skilfully tuning the car.

"This is a proud day, Porscha," says Mother Camsclattering, laying down the book. "We have come to the last payment on the car. Your father would certainly be pleased."

"Indeed he would, Mother," says Porscha, "but we have not the money as yet. I fear Edgar Chromium, my employer, is displeased at my resisting his advances. He may fire me if I do not promise to marry him!"

"The lout!" cries Mother C. kicking a spanner into a corner. "If poor Wistful Henry, your half-witted brother, had his senses about him he'd put him in his place! Ah, Henry used to be such a talented lad before his mind snapped."

"Yes, and him about to startle the world with his revolutionary head-nut-tightening sequence!" says Porscha.

Wistful Henry, having achieved a 500 R.P.M. idle on the MG, grins foolishly in the doorway. Enzo, the dog, enters and begins playing with a discarded Champion L 10 S spark plug. Wistful Henry sits down at the table and pours REDeX on his shredded wheat.

"You'd better hurry to work, Porscha," says Mother C. "You don't want to be late and displease Edgar Chromium. Put this Whitworth combination wrench in your handbag in case he gets fresh though."

"Here he comes now!" cries Porscha peering through a hole in the wall made by a moonshiner's cannon in a battle with the Federal Agents during prohibition. "He's driving his big new convertible with power steering, power brakes, power windows, four-way power seat and 200 snarling horses under its gleaming expanse of hood!"

Edgar Chromium parks his giant car (with a feather-touch of one finger) and enters the house.

"Ah there you are, my sweet," he says to Porscha, kicking over the kitchen table. "You're going to come away with me today to Miami Beach where we'll be married!" He swats Wistful Henry in the face with a sheaf of overdue-payment notices.

"Never!" cries Porscha. "I wouldn't ride in that monster for all your money, and marry you I'll not!"

"Mark my word, Porscha, and you too, Mrs. Camsclattering," says E.C. "If you don't do as I wish you'll never own that car!"

Wistful Henry, sensing the gravity of the situation, grabs a shotgun and rushes outside to protect the MG.

"And I'll have that idiot locked up!"

Suddenly a mighty roar is heard, and a gleaming Mondial Ferrari pulls up outside. A handsome young man wearing goggles and a black watch crash helmet rushes into the house. "I say, my name is Harry Swiftshift and I was just passing through laying out a rally for the Whistling Chicken Sports Car Club, when I saw that magnificent MG outside.....Hullo, is anything wrong?" He notices Edgar Chromium is binding Mother Camsclattering to a chair with a length of ignition cable. "Hold on there sir! Unhand that lady!"

"Shut up kid." says Edgar Chromium. "Get in your toy car and drive away!"

Harry Swiftshift strikes him senseless with a right cross and Porscha rushes into his arms. "You've saved me!" she cries. "Now we can meet the payment on our car!" She explains the grim situation as they untie Mother Camsclattering.

"A bit of bother," says Harry, cleaning his goggles, "but that rascal will trouble you no more. Would you like to go for a ride in my Ferrari? I may even let you shift gears." It is obvious by this remark that Harry has been smitten with love.

"Good show!" says Porscha, and they rush out the front door.

During all this, Wistful Henry noticed Edgar Chromium's car and opened the long hood. Peering beneath it he caught his head in the power steering mechanism - the experience rendering him sane again.

"I'm sane again!" cries Wistful Henry. "Now I can go to Long Island and open a sports car shop!" He runs in the house to work out his head-nut-tightening sequence, throwing a block at Edgar Chromium who is rushing out. Enzo, the dog, barks wildly and runs in circles.

"Wait, Porscha." screams Edgar jumping in his car to give chase. "Ride in MY car!" But the power steering mechanism has come off second best in the bout with Wistful Henry's head and Edgar Chromium is unable to steer the car out of its parking space. "Stop!" he shouts after the disappearing Ferrari. "See my four-way power seat go up and down!"

But all that can be heard in reply is the rap of the Ferrari's exhaust as it downshifts for a corner.

reprinted from Sports Car Pictorial

No argument against public housing has been used more consistently and, one suspects, more effectively than the assertion that even if you give bathtubs to the poor they will only dump coal in them. To point out that most housing projects are centrally heated and supplied with gas and electricity, so that their occupants have no need of coal, is to earn the reproach of being frivolous. It is absolutely "known" that all occupants of housing projects put coal in their bathtubs. And their so doing indicates such depravity that to build houses for them is practically contributing to moral delinquency. The poor have been weighed in the bathtub and found wanting.

- Bergen Evans "The Natural History of Nonsense"

For Czerny I never developed any affection, and neither did any other male piano student of my generation. He was admired only by vinegary little girls who wore tight pigtails tied with pink ribbons, and played his infernal scales and arpeggios in a pretentious and offensive manner. So late as 1950, being in Vienna, I visited and desecrated his grave.

- H.L. Mencken "Happy Days"

BLANKT HOT

I'm in a strange world. Pays inconnu
Pays terrible. Pays emu
A roubidoux world
Full of Polar Bears

I want to go home
I want to go home

Pays inconnu. Comme Baudelaire
A man so sick with a head full of air
Rich Alex Kirs I'm as good as you
Couldn't you go for some Polar Bear Stew?

I want to go home
I want to go home

Let's leave this hole
And flit like fleas
Let's fly by night
Comme Vols de Nuits

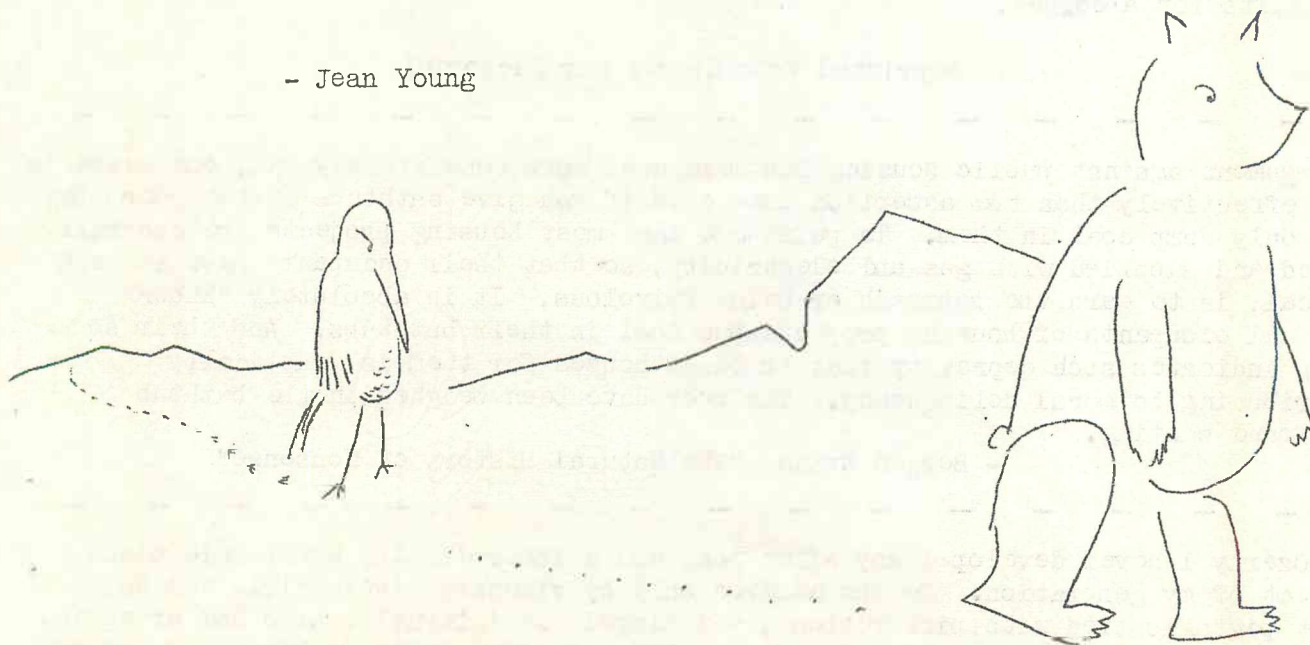
I want to go home
I want to go home

While the world sees

Pays inconnu
Pays inconnu

I want to go home

- Jean Young



OUVRANT UNE BOITE DE SARDINES SANS L'AIDE D'UN
OUVRE-BOITE DANS UN TERRIBLE BESOIN.

OR - DRAT THAT NEEDHAM ANYWAY

Even Eric; remembering it among the juvenile pretense of the late spring dusk, where the crude brooding of pine and hemlock foiled the flash of kingfisher and tufted titmouse, could not help at all the involuntary appearance of a faint blush. Not even Cyd, he reasoned, could have intended it all to seem so indecent.

However, the carpenter having released Madame M. from the premature coffin (indeed, the emergence had all the look of an expulsion, her constant expostulations having built up, one was sure, an internal pressure beyond the holding capacity of even the best of bronze screws) wherein they had unknowingly entombed her in a fit of malice....ah, it was too much, too much. The very evening reverberated with heartbeats, drowned in engulfments of self-pity.

"I assure your excellencies," said the carpenter, afterwards, "The good madame was entirely clothed when I released her. I have not even the faintest idea how she came to be painted all over with the oil of a very inferior brand of sardines." This constituted an enigma....all had been certain (with the exception, of course, of Eric) that the carpenter had given way to subtle perversions in the heat of the moment.

"Nonsense!" Monsieur l'avocat for the prosecution was adamant. "I insist upon the recognition of the patent impossibility of the plaintiff's having disrobed within the coffin and painted herself with oil. Furthermore, how did she open the can? We have conclusively proved that there was not one single opener within the entire house." He sat down with rather the air of one who has successfully ignited the hydrogen balloon of his opponent.

Eric himself did not dare descend from the mountain top; he was only too well aware of the bear-traps the good Madame M. had thoughtfully bestrewn throughout the woods. However, had he been questioned.....,

Ah! Among all those passings of times of rain when the church bells tolled and chimed, straining for expression of the old and lonesome pain....when damp mornings gave way to brilliant noons and the short shadows of playing children danced among the groves and glens. Ah! Ah! Ah! However, the influence of the day undid the carpenter (that time) to the extent of his reclining amid the maples, declaiming "Stone, bronze, stone, steel, stone, oakleaves, horses heels!" in accents dolorous and strange. Only a small time it took, indeed, but even that was enough for Eric to formulate his plans. Ah, Eric. Ah! No one, of course, thought there might have been others involved -- Cyd, Montmorency and Eloise -- and you certainly would have been the last to tell them, had you even the opportunity.

How simple it was, disregarding momentary qualms of decency, to disrobe the chloroformed Madame M. preparatory to taking the pictures with the miniature camera thoughtfully provided by Eloise! Unfortunately, the cat made too much noise on the telephone, and it was necessary to take some pains..... However, in the interval, Madame M., left alone, came to her senses. Ah, Eric, do you remember? Ah, child, the humiliation of it all. And then, there stood the coffin the dear Madame was having built to her measurements, and of course, Montmorency

bolted -- in a fit of pique -- the lid down with the gleaming screws scattered across the parquet flooring. Ah!

"I do not remember him," snapped Madame M., with an icy slash of dissipated eyes at the cowering carpenter. "However, gentlemen, I do not at all consider that to be exonerating. The fact remains I remember nothing at all." The counsel for the defense made much of her mental lapse, inviting several prominent psychiatrists to give capsule analyses. The general tone resulting was very very humiliating..... or would have been, had anyone been able to understand the learned gentlemen's moutings. Sexual frustration leading to voluntary hallucination and partial amnesia, indeed!

Even Eric, crouching at the dictaphone, could not help shuddering at the remembrance of the hideous flight down the echoing corridors, sardine can in hand. He had not, you see, at all realized the significance of the "BEWARE OF THE CAT" signs Madame had so impassionedly scattered around her property. Fancy it having turned out to be a black panther.

Cyd should have warned them, of course, seeing how Madame M. was her aunt....but then, this is nothing but hindsight, surely.

And Madame? As they led the convicted carpenter away (he wept, poor man, and not without cause) she smiled thinly to herself. Not for her to risk incarceration in a loony-bin by telling the truth; her decision to commit suicide by painting herself with sardine oil and releasing the cat. Helas, so it was a failure; the beast merely wanted to use the telephone again. Oh well, she could try once more. Curious, she pondered, that there should have been no can-opener on the premises, and still more curious that two sardine cans should have figured in the evidence. Oh well.

And Eric wept, wept indeed, for he, poor child, was no relation at all to the Madame M. who was actually the Baronin Hohenzolern. And so he crouched, meditating at the dictaphone -- only one of the hundreds of spy devices the good Madame had planted around town -- and sobbing silently at the vision of the fleshless skeletons of Cyd, Montmorency and Eloise, whom the cat -- because, presumably, of their lesser abilities at distance running -- had devoured. No chance now whatever of blackmailing a few thousands from Madame M. No indeed!

And so he wept, among flights of insects and hummings of gears, in that time of day when the leaves tilt their edges towards the sun, when the mayflies appear at the water's surface and ascend to the warm breeze. Little tingles of circulation failure prodded him to move his right leg, the pants-pocket of which contained the Swiss officer's knife, without which no self-respecting burglar-blackmailer is ever found. Fancy indeed, my dear child, the very thought of opening a sardine can in any other manner at all!

Unfortunately, the largest blade was much too small to dispose of the cat, busily and hungrily gnawing as it was at the worm-eaten and time-patina-ed door.

- Kirs

My grandfather died too soon to have much direct influence on me, but I must have inherited something of his attitude of mind, which was one of large tolerance in theological matters. No male of the Mencken family, within the period that my memory covers, ever took religion seriously enough to be indignant about it. There were no converts from faith among us, and hence no bigots or fanatics. To this day I have a distrust of such fallen-aways, and when one of them writes in to say that some monograph of mine has aided him in throwing off the pox of Genesis, my rejoicing over the news is very mild indeed.

- H.L. Mencken "Happy Days"

THE TOP OF THE TURNIP

BOB SHAW

An English fan named Peter Ridley who attended the same art classes as I when I was working in London once wrote a fannish column on how difficult it was to think of what to write in a fannish column. At the time this greatly impressed me because at that period I was still under the impression that a column in a fanzine should be full of stuff about different magazines, latest films on sf, fannish esoterica and so on. In those days every column I produced was the result of much feverish brain searching and scrounging for pertinent news items. Then I too got tired....

I had noticed that a number of daring writers were turning out articles which never even mentioned science fiction. I decided to become the first columnist who never even mentioned fandom. I began to write stuff about anything that had occurred to me, and in spite of my misgivings, nobody kicked. I felt I was in.

Then I ran up against the next snag, which was that people had begun to expect a certain type of nonfandom nonsense from me. I began to get lots of ideas for sercon articles and fact articles but I couldn't use them because (with the help of people like Willis, Clarke and Berry) the BoSh character had been created. He was running amok in fandom; larger than life, perpetually hungry, industrious in his efforts to avoid work, preoccupied with the trivia of existence that other people didn't even notice, and accompanied by a retinue of rust covered relics which served him in lieu of a typewriter, bicycle etc. Now I am not saying that this character is completely the Jekyll to my Hyde or that I dislike him, but he imposed limitations on me.

People would say "BoSh can't write serious articles - he writes about insects and bicycles and fireworks and others of that ilk. This stuff does not fit in with his personality."

This is not scientifically accurate. I say scientifically because it is as the result of careful observation that I hereby announce my latest theory. It is: No matter what a person does, he does it in a way which fits in with his personality.

Take a simple little act like setting a coal fire and getting it going. Nothing to it, you might say, especially if you are a Canadian or American who might never have done such a thing. Put in paper, sticks and coal and set fire to it - what could be more straightforward? Hah!

An office in Belfast in which I used to work had a large fireplace, and there was a chap next to me named McSweeney who fancied himself as a firelighter. Not content with the normal crisscross pattern of sticks, he tried for several months to convert me to his 'McSweeney conical system', as he called it. He used to put a good sized heap of paper in the centre of the grate and stack the sticks around it, all leaning in towards the top to form a cone shape. On top of the cone he put a large piece of coal and then worked up from the bottom with smaller pieces. The end result was a thing like a miniature volcano. McSweeney argued that this system forced the wood to burn better as the rising flames followed the direction of the wood.

This is quite correct, but I never saw a fire set by the McSweeney conical system ever last more than ten minutes. The snag was that the sticks burned too well and were all reduced to black ash before the coal had begun to warm up. Right up to the time he left for South Africa McSweeney was experimenting with ways to slow down the combustion in his arrangement, but I don't think he ever achieved anything.

Then there was Parker who favored the random pile system. He threw everything into the grate without trying to assist the process of combustion at all, the whole lot jumbled up in a most untidy fashion. He argued that if a house of brick and mortar

can burn to the ground, then you don't need to help timber and coal. This system worked about fifty per cent of the time, and I think Parker only stuck to it because of the gambling streak in him.

One of the most unusual methods of ignition was practised by Albert who was the aged cleaner in the office I mentioned. He used to set a very large fire using one of the most popular systems - loosely rolled paper, a grid of sticks and cinders from the previous fire mixed with the coal. When he had the fire set he would drench it with petrol and retreat to the other side of the office and throw lit matches at it. The fire usually ignited with a thunderous sooty explosion after a dozen or so throws, and Albert, cackling with senile glee, would scuttle round the office gathering up burning pieces of wood and coal and putting them back in the grate. I don't recommend this method.

I know people who wait until the sticks are burning away before they put on coal, some who disdain to use sticks and light with tightly wadded paper, others who don't feel happy unless they make a very weak initial blaze then swell it with a forced draught made by putting newspapers across the fireplace. My own favorite system is to put in the paper in such a way that there is a tiny flue right up the middle of it. Properly done, this method is infallible.

One chap called Kane didn't enjoy lighting a fire unless he was able to deliver a little lecture while doing so. He felt that it gave the whole thing a more professional touch. "Funny thing about fires," he used to say, "but most people seem to think that they use three separate ingredients. Lamentable fallacy. It shows they don't have a feeling for fires. Of course you only use wood. The timber of Earth's ancient jungles compressed into coal, the mighty forest giant from across the world crushed down into flimsy sheets, and...ah...the homely stick. Such delightful fascination burning merrily in our cheery fireplaces...." And so, babbling away about how he would soon release heat that the sun had caressed the world with when man was young, he would set his fire. Pretty good he was too, a bit inclined to skimp on the sticks, but quite reliable and very scornful of those who used sugar or oil on a failing blaze.

These few examples from my files will serve to show that my theory must be true. If a person can't set a fire without expressing his personality, when he puts hundreds of words together his true self must shine through. This article is proof that I too can write stuff which doesn't deal with silly little things like insects and bicycles and fireworks.

Huh? Fireworks! Wait a minute. Don't go away. I want to explain about my sercon talents. Don't run off...Come back. Come back, Shane. Come back....

— — — — —

His uncle was a religious fanatic - no one could mention the word "cab" because cabs were mechanical contrivances and so forbidden by God. When Aleister was discovered reading a book about snakes, his uncle flung the book out the window because it was a snake that tempted Eve. The boy retaliated by holding his uncle up to ridicule.

During a very formal party, Aleister's uncle, with ponderous humor, asked the boy, "Do you know the names of the two bad kings?"

"No, I don't." said Aleister.

"Smo-king and Drin-king." said his uncle coyly.

After the polite laughter had died down Aleister remarked, "But uncle, you've forgotten the third bad king."

"Who is that?" asked his astonished uncle.

Aleister told him - and broke up the party. He was beaten until his uncle could no longer wield the cane.

- Daniel P. Mannix "The Great Beast"

I WANT TO PASS AWAY

IN PASADENA

(Sung
tremulously)

I want to pass away in Pasadena
In the middle of the Rose Parade
I'd just love to pass away in Pasadena
And then my fame and fortune would be made
I want to jump off a platform
Higher than a steeple
I want to do myself in
In front of a million people
That's - why - I
Want to pass away in Pasadena
In the middle of the Rose Parade

(Spoken, to schmaltzy background)

Oh, I can just see it now.
Millions of people straining their eyes
to see the hundreds of gaily festooned floats,
slicing through the early morning smog of New Year's Day.
And of course, my float will be the biggest and
highest of them all. Millions of lapis lazuli orchids
rippling over a rose colored fountain.
Liberace playing the Warsaw Concerto on an organ
fashioned of three million one hundred and sixty nine
bird of paradise plumes. And there am I, standing
on a chrysanthemum tower, 700 feet high, clad in a
long flowing cape of sea green purple forget-me-nots.
I can hear the crowd roaring as I doff my cape with a flourish,
standing there adorned with nothing but a sky blue pink
orchid covering my breathtaking manhood. Suddenly,
with a movement as lithe and soothing as a ripply grey dawn,
I'll plunge a golden dagger in my heart, and as the scarlet
glory of my virgin blood ripples down the glorious muscles
of my washboard stomach, I'll jump and soar down to my
death, through a thousand layers of aspidistras, on to a
damp sponge soaked in ambrosia and fairy dust.

(Sung)

That's how I'll....
Pass away in Pasadena
In the middle of the Rose Parade
What a heavenly way to die
In Pasadena in the middle of the Rose Parade.

- Walt Liebscher

A DAMNED GOOD THING

BY

BOB BLOCH

Charles Fort opens THE BOOK OF THE DAMNED, thusly:

"A procession of the damned.

"By the damned, I mean the excluded.

"We shall have a procession of data that Science has excluded."

Then the parade begins, and it's a colorful spectacle. But it occurs to me that for almost a dozen years, Fort and his work was damned -- that is to say, excluded. Not by Science, but by a general audience. For this process of damnation through exclusion, or just plain neglect and indifference, affects more than mere data. It is a fate suffered by many creative artists and their work: oftentimes for no apparent reason.

I got to thinking about that the other day: how, for a long time after the initial appearance of Fort's books, I carried on a one-man crusade amongst my friends, urging them to read his stuff -- but to no avail. Fort was almost completely ignored and forgotten, until subsequent events (and the efforts of Tiffany Thayer) rescued his work.

But not all of the buried have been resurrected, and I am oftentimes moved to wonder what circumstances, what caprices, govern the popularity and/or survival of a given effort. For example, in the late 1940's there appeared a satirical study of the advertising profession entitled THE HUCKSTERS. You've heard of it, no doubt -- through Book-of-the-Month, pocketbook sales, motion picture version. But have you ever heard of PLEASE SEND ME ABSOLUTELY FREE, by Arkady Lookom? I doubt it -- and after ten years I'm not even sure of the spelling of the author's name.

Yet the facts are these: PLEASE SEND ME ABSOLUTELY FREE was a satirical study of the advertising profession. It appeared almost simultaneously with THE HUCKSTERS. In some respects the story-line was better. THE HUCKSTERS became famous. What happened to the other book?

Damned.

Again, the Book-of-the-Month Club snatched up and elevated to fame Evelyn Waugh's THE LOVED ONE, a satire on the morticians. Coincidentally there appeared Cedric Belfrage's ABIDE WITH ME -- in my humble opinion, a much better satire on the morticians. THE LOVED ONE is still cited by critics and readers. I have never read any references to ABIDE WITH ME, save for the initial reviews.

Excluded.

I do not pretend to understand the whys and the wherefores. All I know is that for upwards of twenty years it has been my fortune, or misfortune, to encounter many similar examples. Inevitably I find myself beating the drums for books, stories, music, motion picture productions, etc., which I have found to be just as entertaining as the "smash hits" but which very few other people seem to have noticed or cared for. Perhaps it is that I am just a sucker for lost causes. (Heaven knows, I'll even come to the defense of people like Bob Tucker!)

Speaking of Tucker (even though it may result in having my mouth washed out with soap) I am reminded that I appeared on a panel discussion with him recently in Chicago. Our topic was THE BEST AND WORST OF SCIENCE FICTION. And what do you suppose Tucker chose as his example of the "best"? No, it wasn't THE LONG LOUD SILENCE. It was THE TWENTY-FIFTH HOUR, by Herbert Read -- a book which, by the way, he admitted had served as a partial inspiration for THE LONG LOUD SILENCE. Few of the people in the audience had read THE TWENTY-FIFTH HOUR or even knew the name of Herbert Read.

The book and its author had suffered damnation by exclusion.

So. I don't think I'll live forever.

I could rest easily in my pauper's grave if, before the end, I didn't set down somewhere -- in a haphazard and sketchy form -- a little memorandum of some of the damned things that I've enjoyed and tried to recommend to people.

Some of them are irretrievably excluded: the books are out of print, the magazines are long-since unavailable, the records have disappeared from the market, the films withdrawn from circulation.

But in certain cases, a renaissance is possible. Five years ago I whooped and hollered for a French comedian named Jacques Tati, in a picture called JOUR DE FETE. Nobody cared. Then he made another, entitled MR. HULOT'S HOLIDAY. It became an overnight hit in the "art houses" and as a result JOUR DE FETE was revived under the title of THE BIG DAY. Similarly, I recall screaming for a book published in the 1930s -- THE CIRCUS OF DOCTOR LAO. It was reissued here and in England in the late 1940s and gained a wider audience: even though, I note, nobody has gone overboard as yet for the wonderful Noel Gordon Fish illustrations in the British edition. I hope Fish isn't one of the damned: nor George Grocz, nor a number of other artists whose work I admire in what is apparently a minority-opinion.

Anyway, there is cause for hope. Old books are being reprinted in paperback (even WAR WITH THE NEWTS has been rescued from its undeserved oblivion) and LP firms are re-pressing records (though not, as yet, Grofe's THREE SHADES OF BLUE) and ancient movies show up on television.

So perhaps it's worth a try. At least I can ease my critical conscience by acknowledging my own obscure appreciation of a few creative efforts which have apparently passed unnoticed through no fault of their own.

Those of you who were expecting something funnier (or at least, dirtier) can turn the page now. The rest of you are invited to suffer along.

First, music: and here I confine myself to recorded music only.

I'm not as much of a jazz buff as some people in the field, but I've always had a soft spot in my heart for several items which should (in my opinion) have attained widespread popularity. Oddly enough, many of them are on the London label, and are performed by English artists. Item: CHICAGO BLUES, by Bill Snyder, on London 1080. To me this is a little gem of a composition, in every respect: the very embodiment of the genre. Ever hear of it, or hear it? The bang-and-thump school has never been my dish, but I do admire CARAVAN on London 853, with both piano and organ -- an unlikely combination, but a sensationally driving arrangement. And despite the anathema jazz buffs undoubtedly accord Stanley Black, you'll find something in the middle of his London album, CARIBBEAN CARNIVAL, which is orientally eery. Just a little squib of a thing called MOROCCO. I think it's exotic. Same goes for Percy Faith doing JUNGLE FANTASY in his CARNIVAL RHYTHMS commercial stint. Along with these two goes Les Baxter's Capitol album, TAMBOO.

London offered me, on 78RPM, the English composer Donald Phillips' CONCERTO IN JAZZ. But Columbia no longer puts out Reginald Forsythe's DEEP FOREST -- which, as I recall, had a vague vogue in the early 1930s as a theme song for an American negro dance band. It's still good vintage stuff, I think.

England's Eric Coates is certainly not a "neglected" composer. But those who think of him merely as a writer of bravura marches or saccharine variations of SLEEPY LAGOON should hear the witty inner section of THE THREE BEARS, or the driving perfectly-realized rhythms of the TWENTIETH CENTURY movement of his FOUR CENTURIES SUITE. I am indebted to a whole crowd of poppies over there for a special pressing of his FOUR WAYS SUITE which is no longer available on commercial recordings: NORTHWARDS and EASTWARDS are interesting works and do not deserve oblivion.

As long as we're discussing English composers, I've heard all too little of the last movement of Vaughan Williams' massive SIXTH SYMPHONY, which reminds me of the finale of THE PLANETS SUITE. And speaking of THE PLANETS SUITE, you'd think Gustav Holst had never written anything else, whereas his THE PERFECT FOOL contains some truly shattering sounds. I think London has recently re-issued this in a miscellany album by Sir Adrian Boult: I have the 78RPM version and consider myself fortunate.

William Walton's FACADE was long out of print. I finally got the English recording through the kind offices of Sir William's secretary -- and since that time it has enjoyed a widespread and deserved revival. The OLD SIR FAULK finale of the 2nd suite is to me the perfect recreation of 1920-30 music hall "jazz": a delicious burlesque.

An Englishman named Horace Braham wrote LIMEHOUSE BLUES, but it took an American named Morton Gould to rescue and renovate this rather commonplace tune with what I believe to be the most sensational commercial "big band" arrangement ever accorded a piece of "popular" music. Gould's references to LAIDERONETTE, EMPRESS OF THE PAGODAS (from Ravel's MA MERE OYE) are subtly indicated, and he manages to poke fun at every bit of "Chinese" music including TAMBOURIN CHINOIS in the process. Speaking of "Chinese" music by Occidentals, I've always had a special spot reserved for Bartok's THE MIRACULOUS MANDARIN SUITE and for Stravinsky's SONG OF THE NIGHTINGALE. I believe the latter ranks right up there with his three most famous ballet suites: but who ever listens to it or mentions it?

On this Russian kick, I often wonder why it is that certain compositions of contemporary Soviet musicians are extolled while others are ignored. Everybody seems to know Prokofieff, but how many are entranced (as I am) with the second movement of his Fifth Symphony or the finale of his Sixth? Shostakovich is remembered symphonically for his First, Fifth, and Seventh -- I like the last movement of his Sixth. Kabalevsky is popular for THE COMEDIANS -- give me the COLAS BREUGNON overture, and the last movement of his SECOND SYMPHONY. And while everyone played MEADOWLANDS a few years back, how many people know it as THE RED CAVALRY MARCH in the stunning arrangement by Morton Gould?

Gould, by the way, is another "sleeper". Hailed as a "jazz composer" or despised as a "commercial arranger", it seems to me that a few of his productions are little gems. For example, his DESERTED BALLROOM (available in the Columbia album, MUSIC AT MIDNIGHT, in which he also does a fine arrangement of CARAVAN). And his work in another Columbia album, Gershwin's VARIATIONS ON I GOT RHYTHM, is quite impressive.

But one can go on and on. Carmen Cavallaro, of all people, playing brilliant piano improvisations of ENILORO on Decca...the Capitol recording of Villa-Lobos' LITTLE TRAIN OF THE CAIPERAS...Revueltas' wild SENSEMAYA: why are these items neglected and forgotten? Why does everybody play Jerome Kern's Melodies from SHOW BOAT and omit the best song of all -- AH STILL SUITS ME? How come they always pick out Liadov's ENCHANTED LAKE and ignore the haunting KIKIMORA? How often must we sit through Smetana's THE MOLDAU and how seldom do we hear its companion piece from the same cycle, FROM BOHEMIA'S MEADOWS AND FORESTS, with its brooding rhythms? Yes, and who sawed Courtney's boat?

Unanswerables.

And the books, and the magazines!

They reprint science fiction stories by the bushel, but never dredge up S. Fowler Wright's brilliant short story, AUTOMATA, from an issue of W.T. in the late '20s. The "Biblical" novels sell well, but how many of you have read one of the best -- GIANT-KILLER, by Elmer Davis, published about 20 years ago? It's something very special indeed.

The English may have given a better reception to them, but Mervyn Peake's TITUS GROAN and GORMENGHAST never made a dent in America -- the second title didn't even reach print here. Yet both are among the best of modern-day attempts at true "Gothic" writing: author-artist Peake is a craftsman.

Way back in the '30s, Dalton Trumbo (since damned as a communist) wrote JOHNNY GOT HIS GUN. Today Trumbo would be damned as a pacifist for this work -- but I defy anyone to read it without a staggering reaction to its power and impact.

Louis-Ferdinand Celine has fallen into disrepute, too, for his political views: nevertheless he is on display again in soft covers with his bitter JOURNEY TO THE END OF THE NIGHT and DEATH ON THE INSTALLMENT PLAN. Yet critics and general readers ignore him in favor of 18-year-old French girls who write "daring, intimate" prose.

And they ignore Jules Romain and his monumental MEN OF GOOD WILL (27 books of one comédie humaine, published here in 14 volumes of Knopf). I still think this is one of the great works of all time: certainly it belongs up with anything done in the present century, towering alongside Proust, Mann, Joyce. Not easy going, perhaps, but the reader comes away from it with a feeling that he has looked into the hearts -- and guts -- of all humanity. Why hasn't Romain been elevated to eminence?

Old Jack Woodford is notorious for his sex-books and for his cynical treatises on writing. Who remembers his MIRAGE OF MARRIAGE under the pen-name of "Gordon Sayre"? I do, and most fondly. Here is fine "naturalism" -- but nobody cares, apparently.

Some very squishy books on television have appeared with much fanfare: WHO HE? and THE GREAT MAN, and latterly in soft covers, THE GOD OF CHANNEL ONE. But several years ago Gold Medal pocketbooks published an original novel by one Morton Cooper, called COME FEED ON ME. Here is a book about television: here is a psychological study and a social commentary with a vengeance. Again, who knows about it?

Some success has come to the pocket book edition of David Maurer's wonderful study of confidence-men, THE BIG CON. But this book deserves more, much more. Reading it is sheer delight.

One of the most interesting psychological treatises ever penned appeared over 20 years ago in England -- J.C. Flugel's THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CLOTHES. I've seen it mentioned in print only once since then: by Lewis D. Grant, Jr., of Chicago, in a little offtrail magazine article.

And the process of damnation goes on. Just recently, Bob Tucker and I joined forces in acclaiming a first novel in soft covers by Jack Reynolds. It's called A WOMAN OF BANGKOK, and Ballantine prints it. So far I've read not a single review -- and yet I'm sure that if Somerset Maugham or some other "big name" had penned it, there'd be raves. It's well-written and well-realized.

When it comes to movies, where does one begin, and where does one end? What use to extol the individual performances of Buster Keaton, Henry Daniell, Joseph Schildkraut -- there is so little chance of ever resurrecting a given film. Even today, praising Rod Steiger for his spectacular role as a producer in THE BIG KNIFE seems useless. If you see it by any chance, just remember that Jack Lennon won the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor this year -- and Steiger wasn't even mentioned. Then sit down and brood a while.

So why tell you that an unknown vaudeville xylophone player named Fred Sanborn was a riot in SOUP TO NUTS in 1930 -- or even remind you that this film was produced (and was filled with the whacky inventions created) by Rube Goldberg? Nor does it help to mention the remarkable motion picture music created by Roman Vlad for BEAUTY AND THE DEVIL or the art-film on Breughel. But TV may some day revive

for you Nina Foch and George MacReady and Dame May Whitty in a "sleeper" called MY NAME IS JULIA ROSS. It may bring you RKO's obscure effort, THE STRANGER ON THE THIRD FLOOR, in which Peter Lorre plays a minor role in a perfectly-written and perfectly-photographed psychological shocker: an ordinary "mystery" transfigured by fine direction and realistic atmospheric touches throughout.

But enough of beard-muttering. We revert to the problem. Why do some of these things seem to escape their intended audience? Why does one work by a popular composer or writer win acclaim and another, better effort go down to darkness? Why are some things "discovered" and constantly "revived" and others of equal or greater merit perish?

To which one might well parry with another question, "Why bother about it?"

I don't know. Empathy, perhaps. When one engages, in any way, in this business of creating, one comes to realize the tremendous amount of time, energy, and effort devoted to the production of original material. Even a fanzine article represents a certain amount of application -- and a good job deserves some recognition.

What has happened to our critical faculties? Are we all victims of high-pressure publicity campaigns, calculated mass psychological appeals, opinion-influencing propaganda, or follow-the-leader syndromes? Are we too unappreciative of the obscure, or too lazy to seek out something to suit our individual tastes?

I'll be damned if I know.

I recall even less of the teaching in the Sunday School itself, though I apparently picked up from it some knowledge of the dramatis personae of the Old Testament. At all events, I can't remember the time when I didn't know that Moses wrote the Ten Commandments with a chisel and wore a long beard; that Noah built an ark like the one we had in our Christmas garden, and filled it with animals which, to this day, I always think of as wooden, with a leg or two missing; that Lot's wife was turned into a pillar (I heard it as cellar) of table salt; that the Tower of Babel was twice as high as the Baltimore shot-tower; that Abraham greatly pleased Jahveh by the strange device of offering to butcher and roast his own son, and that Leviticus was the father of Deuteronomy.

- H.L. Mencken "Happy Days"

From J.V. McAree's column in the Toronto Globe & Mail: "Black Shirts and Blue Suede Shoes writes: 'Hundreds of parents at this moment have youths with black windbreakers hanging in their clothes closets. Dad doesn't buy Junior's clothes and Mom thinks black is good because it doesn't show the dirt. Today, a black jacket or black windbreaker on a youth means only one thing - he is a Hellcat and liable to all the troubles Hellcats get into. Standard equipment for a Hellcat is a black jacket, knuckle-dusters, a spring knife on a chain, and a bar of steel which fits into the hand and lands a Rocky Marciano punch without breaking the knuckles. Heaven help the innocents who buy black jackets because they think the jacket looks smart, or because some friend has one, or one of many other innocent reasons. To every real Hellcat, the black jacket indicates a rival from another gang, looking for excitement, armed with dangerous equipment, bent on proving to the world he isn't 'chicken'. Not only bent on it, looking for opportunities to prove his toughness.'"

Blabbermouth.

If we are put on this earth to help others, what are the others put on for?

HOW THE OTHER HALF

Which is by way of being extracts,
printed by permission, from the
letters of Alex (or Rich) Kirs.

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I rather enjoyed the con. I can see, though, that if it had been in any city but N.Y., there would have been long periods wherein I would have been bored to tears. As it was, any time I felt particularly bored and could see no surcease in the immediate future, I went home and showered and ate and slept a bit, between times frantically convincing my friends that, No, I was not moving downtown, and No, I could not come to Conn. for the weekend.

There were only two things I actively disliked. One was the number of people who looked at me as if I were a fish, and the other was riding interminably in elevators. I mean, there were times when I seemed practically to live in the things. There was one particular elevator operator who appeared to be convinced that we were mad, mad, mad. Oh well.

There was one incident I shall treasure. Ellik and I spotted three kids standing in front of the easel on which my paintings rested, two of the children giggling appreciatively whilst the third lectured derogatorily with much arm waving and pointing-out of points. Quietly, Ellik and I drifted over and loomed over the kids. Eventually, the lecturer turned around. There was one timeless moment while his eyes took in my I.D. badge and the fact that Ellik and I stood a foot taller than the biggest of them, and then, frantic, oh frantic, apologies and verbal about-faces and all like that. Throughout the whole thing I maintained a suave, emotionless, sophisticated demeanor. Hoo hah.

I told you about the girl I'd been madly kissing, didn't I? Well, the next evening I met her in an elevator. We both smiled tentatively. "Where are you bound for?" I asked, in discreet invitation. Something seemed to crystallize between us. "Shopping." she said coldly. I slunk off into another elevator, the operator of which was unsympathetic.

It is very easy to look at a person as if he were a fish. Upon being introduced, one looks vaguely over the person's shoulder as if scanning the room for a means of escape, and elevates the upper lip in the sort of smile one sees on haute couture models. It is exactly the sort of sneeringly disgusted expression one assumes upon encountering a long-dead fish. Victor Mature does it to perfection.

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Now that Roy and Fran are married, they have sort of moved in with his family. It's simple, in a complicated sort of way; they live in a house that looks as if it must be haunted, all paintless and falling apart and tacked together with tarpaper and like that. Inside is a veritable warren of tiny little rooms with a seven-foot ceiling. I get violent claustrophobia every time I am over there. Anyway, the house is divided into -- roughly -- two apartments with the upper one formerly occupied with Roy's divorced and sexy sister. Well, the sister got married a while ago, and sort of danced happily to a desolate place in New Jersey where she and her husband hold sex-orgies (with only the two of them present) and roam around their new house stark naked all the time and eat nothing but oysters and hormones and are very happy because the new house is even older and wretcheder and more warren-like than the old one, and besides, the nearest neighbor is five miles away, so they can very well live forever in one constant unending naked orgy. But I wander....I wander. Anyhow, Roy and Fran are now living in the rabbit-warren, only they keep coming over here because the hot water in the

warren doesn't work or something, so, they make use of our bathroom to take showers in all the time, and besides, my mother can hardly not invite them to dinner, and I tell you, I'm being eaten out of house and home. They must use up awful amounts of energy, because they seem able to eat and eat and eat and eat, and I've no chance whatever of keeping them away from my own personal edibles and titbits.

I realize that the above is slightly hysterical, but -- dash it -- I am sort of hysterical. I feel so awfully put upon. It was bad enough when they were merely boy and girl, but now that they're, uh...er, mates, every one of their less laudable traits seems grossly flourishing, only Fran's good qualities are being submerged in Roy's many many bad ones. They come in here demanding meals and cigarettes and all, and when I have guests, they fall upon them with glad cries (I defy you to even so much as visualize the situation. I defy you. Nobody can have even the faintest idea of the social vacuum resulting when Roy falls upon Alphonse Calenda III with glad cries.) and inveigle them in conversation and make all sorts of gauche faux pas, while we all sit fidgeting in embarrassment for them.....silly asses. The general air is of violently extroverted bonhomie coupled with excruciatingly naive superiority....as if they were sneering nicely at us all for not sharing their marital bliss.

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I wrote some time ago to Lilith Lorraine, she-poetess, requesting a copy of her "magazine", FLAME. Comes a week later a lil teeny weenchy lil ole mag with the horriest editorial I ever saw, all full up with the lousiest poems ever. A couple of them had a couple of semi-good lines - which must have slipped in by accident - but the rest were pure blechnh. Pseudo-sophisticated and trying hard, sickeningly Oh-the-hell-with-everybodyish, nauseatingly sentimental - the whole damn line of crap you'd expect from a passel of neurotics trying hard to build up their overinflated self-esteem. And all this in bald spite of the fact that in her letter in Writers' Digest in which she was defending her magazine against somebody who apparently knew the score, she said they didn't publish sentimental slop or contrived obscurity, the two main ingredients in the issue I received. I get a horrible picture of lots, just lots, of pansies and lesbiac semi-dames and wee old ladies and purse-mouthed fiftyish hernia'd bookkeepers, all sitting around in their pathetic imitations of "artist's studios", writing stuff for dear old Lilith to publish. Real sickening. Pseudo-intellectual ran sort of rampant in the ish. But was very, very pseudo. For sheer ego-inflating of the ed and publisher and - rubbing-offishly - contributors, this lil ole magazine has fanzines beat all hollow.

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A couple of weeks ago, I went to the candy store to get some pepsi and some stamps. As it was eightish in the evening and my usual time for doing so, I took the hermaphrodite dog out too. The candy store was filled to the brim with all manner of exceedingly young teenagers, complete and replete with black leather jackets, motorcycle caps, garrison belts, and all like that. Anyhow, I entered, wearing my black leather jacket, and -- as I am obviously not a teenager -- immediately there was a pregnant, smouldering silence, as the delinquents regarded me with contempt. "Come, Choo-Choo." I said, and the dog which had been hanging back outside (I never keep it on leash) entered. Choo-Choo is a chow-alsatian cross-breed, with a ferocious snarl and a quite terrifying bark and large numbers of incredibly white fangs. I strode across the room towards the icebox in the back, where the soda is kept. Halfway across, a kid about sixteen years old and six feet tall happened to be in my way. He stood there, sneering. Choo-Choo, hair bristling all down her/his/its back in the most formidable manner, sort of lunged at him, whereupon he, white-faced and trembling, backed off in the most satisfactory manner. "Heel, sir!" I said, crisply, and bought my soda, stamps, and a packet of cigs. With much aplomb, you understand. As I was leaving, Choo-Choo sort of

leaped onto my shoulder and then upwards, going maybe a total of seven feet into the air, a trick she/he somehow taught itself. I couldn't resist looking back into the store at the round, popping eyes regarding me. Simpering ferociously, I made a little, effeminate wave. It was all most enjoyable.

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You appear to be following the usual custom of underestimating the mental perversity of juvenile delinquents. Teenagers, as it may be. At any rate, the thing to keep firmly in mind is, they have not only expertized hypocrisy, but have perfected it to a point where doublethink becomes a conservative parlour-game. By comparison that is: to a male j.d., a parlour is a place where, drinking a glass of beer supplied by the Madame, one looks over the lineup before repairing to one of the rooms upstairs. Ho well.....

Anyway, follows a few of what I believe to be j.d. party-line catchphrases, with translations.

- A) "Joe and I are going steady." Trans: "Look what extremities of sacrifice I will make in order to be noble, adult, and demure."
- B) "Jane and I are going steady." Trans: "Frigid Brigid or Virgin Pigeon, I've never been unfulfilled yet."
- C) "Ancients are Squares. They got us all wrong. They don't dig."
Trans: "Mother and father won't give me a car and twenty a week allowance."
- D) "Rock and Roll is the absolute end." Trans: "Actually it isn't, but you don't like it, and that makes all the difference."

Maybe a year and a half ago, I was left alone in the house with a girlfriend of Fran's. I don't know exactly why. So, I sat there, smoking a cigarette in my best French Inhale Manner, and typing madly away at a letter or something. The kid, called Joy, was much impressed. She sat there like a gone goose, hands virginally folded in her lap. Since propriety excluded any chance of a seduction (as the Brother of her Girlfriend, we might as well have been sisters. ((very subtle crack that))), I endeavored to make conversation. "Have you a boyfriend?" I asked, with a rather avuncular simper. "Oh yes," she cooed, "I have. His name is Mario and we are going steady." The besotted phrase was uttered with facial writhings indicating reverential awe; I am quite sure she expected it to elevate her ten feet above my prostrate worship. Immediately it was uttered, she became much more relaxed, much as if, having dialectically castrated me, she could settle down to the serious business of Defending her Age-Group against the sly workings of Adult Misunderstanding. However, I refused to fall for the gambit. "How nice," I said, "and what does Mario do?" She looked me levelly in the eye - the better to observe my reaction - and dropped her bombshell. "Mario is in jail," she said. My self-control was masterful. I managed a swallowed yawn and a polite "Oh." She started in confusion; one got the impression she thought I had not understood her. "He's in jail for robbing a gas station," she enlarged. "How nice," I murmured. "I suppose he was on dope?" Momentary confusion scurried mouse-like across her plucked little face, discernable with difficulty through the layers of pancake makeup. "Yeah. What's it to you?" she said, belligerently. Someone had obviously taught her about Defense; best. "Oh, nothing. How old are you, by the way?" I asked, boredly. She seized upon my question as upon a life-preserver in mid-Pacific, barely able to suppress a chortle of triumph. "I'm fourteen." Pregnant, pregnant pause. "And Mario's twenty-five." I could not help blenching, mentally visualizing the combination of sex-fiend and mongoloid idiot Mario must undoubtedly be, to resort to such cradle robbery. She, perceiving my unease, flung the harpoon in for the kill. "He'll be out in three years, with good behaviour. I'm going to be true to him." Just before I could have a fit of hysterical laughter, she stood up and took a hesitant step in the direction of the bathroom. "What.....?" I said, at the exact instant that she spewed (there's

absolutely no other word for it) a stream of thin, yellow vomit all over the floor. Horrified, I sat rooted to the spot, while she burst into a flood of tears and dashed for the bathroom. At length, remembering that it contained lots of razor blades and things like that, I followed. To make a long and disgusting story short, I held her head over the toilet for a while, cleaned her up, gave her a bit of sugared water to drink, made her take off her soiled shirt and put on a clean one of mine, and re-sat her in the living room while I cleaned up the mess. "I'm on horse." she said, a little later. I nodded, and murmured something to the effect that I should have known; she had been sort of sweating and swallowing all evening. She looked at me piteously, and all her self-control (and I swear, she must have had just carloads of it) broke. "Could you.....give me a shot?" she asked. I'm sorry what started out as a farce should end like this, but that's the way it happened. "I'm sorry," I said, (and I truly was) "but I don't take dope, and haven't any." After that I sat with her and fed her cigarettes until Fran came to take her away. She got married last week - not to Mario - which is probably why I remember this particular case.

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Again, re teenagers: They have a sort of flexible code or something, whereby there is a marked difference between what they are, and how they act to each other, and how they act to non-teeners, and - in the first instance - what they want others to think they are. They live in an aura of sloppy sentimental pseudo-nobility (going steady, gang loyalty, group loyalty and all, like sticking up for each other no matter what) out of which come their incredibly egotistical claims like Loving Presley and "being true to him", and as how "Jimmy Dean Is Still Alive" and (with personal implications in many cases) "Jimmy Dean Wouldn't Have Wanted To Hurt Us". and all like that. It is all very blind and bigoted and sick-making and practically screams of being a defense-measure. They are absolutely unshakable from their fantasies, such as making-a-go-of-marriage-at-age-fourteen and being-true-to-steadies (who, in the being-true sense, are usually in the Service or in jail or like that) and Adults-Don't-Understand-Us and Psychology-Is-Nothing-But-BUNK (when it doesn't suit their idea of themselves) and....oh but why go on?

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S H E E R H O R R O R

A MODERN CAUTIONARY TALE

Once upon a time three fans were making a walking tour of Transylvania. Although they had names, they referred to each other as Weepy, Sleepy, and Creepy, for no reason other than that it sounded just awfully faanish. Weepy was demonstrably female, Sleepy was principally male, and though Creepy wasn't any too sure what he was, he consoled himself with the fact that anyway he liked to watch.

At the time in question, they happened to enter a deep dark forest; one of those things where the black pines brood over blacker lakes, with luminous eyes tastefully glowing here and there. Night was almost upon them and, though they'd not seen a road marker in many kilometres, they strode sturdily onwards, sure in their hearts they'd find shelter if they only just tried hard enough. At length, it began to rain.

Oh, you should have seen them; jaunty they were in lederhosen, swinging gnarly canes, with their helicopter beanies cocked at appropriate cocky angles. The wind blew, and the rain flew, and, what with the sun sinking and the stars being hidden behind clouds and all like that, it became dark. Just when they were at their wits end, however, (though why they should be there, Virginia, I do not know) they espied a craggy castle in the distance.

"Joy!" Weepy yelped happily, and, since the others could not at that moment improve on the exclamation, they pressed onwards at top speed. Suddenly a dark shape

leaped gibbering from the furze and confronted them.

"Obble gobble boggle obble edcjckweyz eistedfodd!" it obladed, in oozy gutterals.

"A peasant!" crowed all three, overwhelmed. Creepy instantly whipped out the latest Tucker Survey blank, Weepy leveled her Leica, and Sleepy suavely asked Sie if it sprechened Deutsch. However, it did not, and, with muttered snarls of "Isolationist" and "Vorzimmerite" the three fen made as if to brush it out of their way and continue towards the castle. Instantly the peasant reacted. With mad enthusiasm it leaped about in ghastly pantomime. It flapped its tattered arms like wings, gnashed its teeth, pointed at the castle again, and leaped upon Weepy with its pursed mouth aimed at her throat.

"Fresh!" she snapped, and acted accordingly. Leaving it grovelling and clutching its ruined groin, the three pressed onwards.

"You know, dears," remarked Creepy, "Actually, I expect it was trying to warn us. Vampires and like that."

"Oh, quite!" They laughed in merry concert at this proof of the continued existence of Superstition in Modern Europe.

Soon they came to the castle. There was nobody home. With admirable presence of mind, the three tried the massive oaken door, found it unlocked, and straightaway entered, brushing their way through enormous cobwebs and occasionally stumbling on clods of graveyard earth. By the time the Master of the castle appeared, the three were clustered about a roaring fire, toasting weinies and sipping tea. When the tall shadow loomed over them, they looked up with delighted smiles.

"I am Count Tslantchak." it said impressively. The Count was indeed impressive; blue-black hair, white face, red lips, and all like that, and six feet four inches tall. With a flowing cape.

"Ha ha ha ha ha!" trilled Weepy.

"Ho ho ho ho ho!" laughed Sleepy.

Creepy simpered.

"I beg your pardon?" said the Count. Enormous echoes grumbled at his voice; he had long, sharp, white teeth.

"We were only thinking...." Weepy began

"What the peasant would do...." continued Sleepy

"If, my dear, he could see you!" finished Creepy. They explained at length, chuckling merrily at how coincidence had so fittingly bolstered the peasant's warning. The Count chuckled exactly like a body being dragged from a tomb.

"My dears, how funny. But I forget myself; welcome to Castle Tslantchak. Welcome indeed!" and he licked his red, red lips.

"You know, I think...." began Weepy nervously, as the Count advanced on them, menacingly.

"The peasant might have...." continued Sleepy, as the Count's cape flared behind him and proved to be enormous bat wings.

"Had something there!!!" concluded Creepy in a shriek, as the Count's eyes glowed red, red, red and he leaped at them with a horrid roar.

Sleepy shot him in the face with a water pistol filled with a mixture of holy water and garlic extract. Creepy twisted his cane to bring forth a sharp oaken blade, which he plunged into the Count's evil heart. Weepy occupied herself with filming it all with her cine Kodak, stopping only to turn on a midget tape recorder to catch the final blood-curdling dying screams. They buried the body under a crossroads, were feted by the peasantry, granted the castle which they quickly turned into a slan-shack on the cooperative system, and all three lived to happily ripe old ages, every night of which was spent in riotous revelry.

the moral: If you own a Tslantchak, lock the door.

BARD THOU NEVER WERT

An American drama critic has failed to find evidence by opening an old English tomb that Christopher Marlowe actually wrote the plays of William Shakespeare. This came as no surprise to me and I could have saved the fellow all that digging if he had only asked me first. But that's the way it has gone all along in this business of who wrote Shakespeare's plays. Everybody has been ignoring me in this controversy and I'm getting sick and tired of it.

Christopher Marlowe didn't write Shakespeare's plays.

I say that with some authority for I have uncovered a manuscript which was buried in an old tomato can in the Old Belt Line Ravine, that solves the mystery at last. Actually, all of William Shakespeare's plays were written by a bartender named Mickey Spillane who worked at the Mermaid Tavern in London in the closing years of the 16th century.

This fellow Spillane was courting a farmer's daughter named Anne Hathaway who lived near Stratford-on-Avon and who came of a strong temperance family. Spillane, because of his close association with grog, was unable to visit his girl in his capacity as vendor of the Demon Rum. Old Man Hathaway would have chased him down the nearest post road, post haste. But, being an ingenious fellow, he arranged with an unemployed actor named William Shakespeare to use Shakespeare's name. Shakespeare didn't mind for he was a shiftless fellow who spent most of his time hanging around the tavern, telling lies and cadging free drinks from his friends.

And by the way, you know that well-known picture of Shakespeare, the one that appears in his collected edition, the one with the bald head and the beard? That is really a picture of Mickey Spillane. Shakespeare didn't look like that at all. He actually had long green curls and a beard that was more purple than anything else.

Well, anyway, to get back to Spillane and Anne Hathaway. Miss Hathaway (or Mistress Hathaway as she used to like to call herself) was eight years older than both Spillane and Shakespeare and smarter; as a result, than either of them. When Spillane complained to her that it was costing him a lot of money in coach fares to come all the way up to Stratford to see her every second week end, she suggested he could make himself some extra cash by writing plays. The evidence is that Spillane was shocked by this proposal for he was a proud man. As a bartender, he was reluctant to lower his standing in the community by turning to writing. For, as he pointed out, writers had a reputation for being loose-living, impractical fellows with low moral standards. But, according to my manuscript, Mistress Hathaway persuaded him to write under the name of William Shakespeare whose identity he had adopted for his Stratford visits, and thus repair his fortunes and preserve his dignity at the same time.

Mickey Spillane was a prolific writer although a poor speller and not much good when it came to grammar either. However, he used to cart everything he had written up to Stratford every second week end and Anne would whip it into shape in time for the next trip. Spillane would then take the revised copy back to London and sell it to theatrical producers.

Meanwhile, the real Shakespeare became somewhat surly, not to say greedy, when he realized how much money Spillane was making through writing. He determined to write himself. However, Spillane already had control of the name William Shakespeare. The real Shakespeare, however, began to turn out copious quantities of material on diverse subjects, much of it in essay form. He signed these essays "Francis Bacon."

And if there's anything else you'd like to know about this subject, don't go wandering all over the place digging up English tombs. Just come to me. I think I know where I can find another old tomato can.

- Frank Tumpane

HEARTS & GLOWERS

BOB SHAW, CALGARY, ALTA.

Thanks for the copy of A BAS #8 which fascinated me practically the whole way from cover to cover. Got some fiendish chuckles from the Derogation and was stricken respectfully dumb by Kirs, especially by the story about...well, what was it about? I'm not sure, but I've read it several times anyway. The Patterson drawings are great. There is something that smacks of real art about them. My favorite line in the issue was: "My mother sort of wandered around the place, driving tacks into the wall with a ballpeen hammer." It has a sort of unruly disrespect for all that the word mother seems to conjure up in the breasts of most people; as well as that it is funny, tender and penetrating. The letter section was adhesive. I laughed over G.M. Carr and Calkins' remarks on Vorzimer's defence of his mother. I wonder what he would have done had he run up against somebody who really insulted. I remember once there was a chap called Trevor who wasted his time in the same evening classes as myself, who got into a session of the kind in which the boys insult each other in a most cruel manner. All for fun. Trevor bore a barrage of scurrilous remarks with great fortitude, and then somebody name of McCune made some oblique reference to Trevor's mother. Trevor dried up at once. His face got white. He stood up and said in a tense, vibrant voice, "That's my mother you're speaking about." We all grew silent. We could see with a sort of grudging respect that if McCune made even one more reference, no matter how slight or well intentioned, about Trevor's mother, Trevor would have been on him like a wildcat. McCune didn't. Instead he looked amused, burst out laughing, and said, "Ah, ---- your mother." Trevor's eyes glazed. He gave us a sort of shaky smile and walked away. Later, when the instructor had arrived, we heard Trevor away sitting on his own in a corner, giggling to himself. In ten minutes he had got over the shock and was going around telling the rest of us to mete out the same treatment to our own mothers. A few weeks later he went to New Zealand.

ALEX KIRS, BRONX, NY.

Vorzy makes me want to vomit in embarrassment. For heaven's sakes, has he no brains at all? Doesn't he realize what writing things like that makes him sound like? Doesn't he know that the making of Godlike threats and the casting of blanket derogatives and the frenzied denials and frantic quibblings on minor points everlastingly damns him as an exceedingly immature and probably psychotic juvenile? I blush with all sorts of embarrassment for him, poor child. Can't he see that the whole thing wasn't at all personal until he made it so? The utterly juvenile use of the 'chillingly formal' "Mr. Raeburn"! The unutterable silliness of the pedantic and pompous style of the thing! That boy should be restrained for his own good. Ghod, I die laughing. What did Vorzy do, on that fateful day? Seduce Calkins? Show him dirty pictures? Sign him into the communist Party? I twitch with anticipation. You simply must get Gregg to write a complete and unexpurgated account of the whole episode. You know, I feel deeply sorry for ole Vorzy; he missed a great thing when he went to college instead of becoming a scoutmaster. Honestly, I pity the kid. He's one of the few people I know who, in heaping coals of fire upon their heads, save time and necessitate superlatives by leaping into blast furnaces. Ohhhhhhh Ghod.

GREGG CALKINS, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.

Vorzy, far from growing up and becoming more mature in college, seems to be retrogressing. I don't know what sort of crowd he runs with up there, but I do know that you can garner some pretty weird types at any sort of university and no doubt he is among "the-world-hates-us-lets-hate-it-back" group. For instance, take his statement that Clod Hall is one of the only persons who takes fandom seriously and tries to get enjoyment out of it and contrast it with his later

implication that you are getting farther and farther away from reality and into the hole called fandom. Now why does he applaud Hall for taking fandom seriously and at the same time deride you for retreating from reality via the same trolley Car? From this, I'll just jog back to my original statement....that Vorzy is attempting to merge with a group of his own, having found that he cannot fit into ours. Hall, being another of fandom's lesser talented lights, is an ideal choice for the Vorzimer attitude...c'mon, pal, if they hate us we'll just stick up for each other and hate them back together. Which is perfectly o.k., I guess, if it weren't for a basic fallacy...we don't hate Vorzimer and Hall. At least, I don't. Sure, I get a hell of a big kick out of teasing him because he makes it so enjoyable by his answering tirades -- and, dammit, as far as that goes I'd do the same sort of teasing towards Grennell or Willis if they chose to make the same sort of fuggheaded statements that Vorzy does with such aplomb. His comments about me are interesting enough, if rather vague in content. It's rather an honor to be even a Little Tin God, don't you think? I mean, some people aren't even that..... But I do wish, if Vorzy is going to keep on this threatening-to-reveal-my-dark-past kick, he'd hurry up and reveal it so I could see what he means. It's one thing to realize that everybody has something in his past that he doesn't necessarily wish revealed...it's quite another thing to know what that something is, as Vorzy hints he does. My Ghod, I'D like to find out...maybe it's something about my former life as Bridey Vorzimer, one of the original ancestors who snuck over on the Ark. I'm quite sure that's about the deepest, darkest thing I've ever had to besmudge my name.

ERIC NEEDHAM, MANCHESTER, ENGLAND

I met Lee and Larry Shaw, a few weeks back, and suffered a terrible disappointment with both of them. Neither conformed to my preconceptions of what decadent Western capitalist reactionary thugs looked like - they were very nice people. Maybe Bob Bloch looks more like my idea of a Wall Street hyena. The bits of quote all through the zine make any comments awkward, so I'll just say that I read and noted, and in some cases, approved - where the quotes were in English, instead of being written by furriners like Bob Tucker. Why this passion for the performances of Gilgamesh? Perhaps Tucker has reached the stage where his visualization surpasses his virility. Derogation again....All I can say is that no fees would be necessary to bury Paul Enever. As a gardener, pro-type, he need only be ploughed under, and I think he would approve of being used as organic fertilizer. Master of the Mille Miglia....a transparent falsehood, this. No one in England uses tea-bags, so there. I thought the MG piece was phony, but now I know. Another clue is that only Americans use the serial numbers method of establishing aristocracy, and while it is in order to use the numeral system on Henry Ford II, in England people are expected to KNOW. A book is published showing ancestry and some of the hereditary defects. False, false, false. Kirs' Dejeuner piece wasn't up to the standard of Apres Midi in A BAS #7, principally, I'd say, since this time he is trying to duplicate a former success, which is never easy. This piece shows effort, and becomes strained in attempted humor. Slightly synthetic. He ought to change his topic, and use his vocabulary on problems of interest to all, such as how to open a can of sardines without an opener in a dire emergency. He could easily provide the emergency and the solution, and blown up into an article in his own way, the result should be good. When will some fans get your idea that fandom is for fun and not for bickering? I can take no interest in fan-feuds, and you don't seem perturbed at the prospect of being embroiled in any tussles with infuriated neofen. So more praise to you for dripping a little ridicule where it may be of benefit. Keep it up. Start on me if you like. The Lettercol is its usual self, and left me with the feeling that I've been missing a lot in the past few years. Add Pat's two illos, and you once again have a good issue of a good zine. I like. Have some egoboo. /And you have some too. See page 17 for the result of your suggestion for Kirs. The Gilgamesh quote was thrown in as a frustrating filler. It did.]

TRINA PERLSON, OZONE PARK, N.Y.

Honestly, Boyd! I mean, really, you make me sound like Alice in Wonderland. I didn't mind it too much when you had me talk about little green Ellisons, because I think if Harlan were green and little, he'd be very cute. But this is too much! Sir, I am a red-blooded American blonde, and I not only thought that the "From Here to Eternity" scene was plausible, I thought it was definitely possible. Last summer I spent twenty minutes on a lonely stretch of beach, sitting and watching a couple enacting the scene. Honestly, I'd have thought they were dead, except that they would twitch ever so slightly when a wave broke over them. So there!

And Rich is a nice young man and well brought up.

[Trina doll, you can't complain this time. But I still sorrow for the occasion when I sat at your feet madly writing down your sayings, only to lose the manuscript.]

DICK ELLINGTON, NEW YORK, N.Y.

It was a (yawn) pretty average issue of A BAS. Which means it was a little joy to behold and makes pleasant a whole couple of hours at work where I pour over the fanzines. The Lovecraft item wasn't bad but I, for one, would prefer no more of them. Damn it Boyd - you'll get a rep as a serconfan. Moskowitz will start getting interested in A BAS. Oh forecasts of dooooooom. So one now and then doesn't bother me particularly. Trina likes being in Derogations - as do I, think it's hilarious - but she says - imagine the scene first: Trina standing there in sweater and tweedy skirt, little yeahs jutting out in front and even nicer little behind jutting backwards and saying, (squeakily) "But Deeyick, why does he have me saying things like that?" It was too much. I flipped. Mason has cat called Tangerine and budgy called Willis. Is trying to teach budgy to talk but fool bird refuses to say anything but Meow. Reports have it that Tangerine almost ate him because Willis is too soaked in nicotine to move when Tangerine stalks him.

[So this time I have real genuine certified Trina-talk in the derogation. At least I plan to....I haven't written the thing at this stage.]

DEAN GRENNELL, FOND DU LAC, WISC.

Excellent Derogation this time - specially liked "angels with dirty phrases"

TUCKER WAS SUPERB. Especially liked his last line. The R&T excerpt reads well and Anon shows much promise. I hope he keeps on trying. Kirs' poem about the arson-wife was even better than usual. I suppose you heard about the witless chap who didn't know the difference between arson and incest so he set fire to his sister.

ANDY YOUNG, CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

Prologue was very interesting. We're glad to see that you, too, are an undirected type. Congratulations for having the foresight to nip in the bud a potential discussion of nursery rhymes. I am perpetually amazed at the way fans keep publishing articles on the deadest of non-controversial subjects with which everyone in fandom is well acquainted. The worst offender is the article on ESP; everyone seems driven by some madness to publish an article on the subject at frequent intervals, even though the articles never contain anything new but hash over the same old ground again and again. Of course, all your quotations were excellent, but we especially appreciated the one from Reed Whittemore. Gads. You don't know how true it is. I wonder if the Derogation was really more brilliant this time, or if we liked it better because we happened to be familiar with some of the offenders involved. Normally, we try to avoid seeing things which are suitable Derogation material, but by happenstance we'd fallen over some of those featured. Ech. Kirs' subway news item seems about the most lucid thing he's ever done. I have never been able to appreciate the subtler points of the arts, and Kirs specializes in subtleties. Or so it seems to me. I don't hold it against him; it's just that I don't always understand him. But to return to the subject at hand -- this I did like, very much. I have the feeling that I'm writing incoherently enough to get A's in Journalism. I easily understood Kirs in his column. He sort

of reminds one of G.C. FitzGerald. The letters were all quite interesting, as they should be, but for me the best was the one from Grennell. I despise typical teenagers. I was unfortunate enough to have to go to school with them for years. Quite a number seem to turn up as undergraduates, too; these have faults different in species, but of the same genus.

CURTIS JANKE, SHEBOYGAN, WISC.

People accusing A BAS of purporting to be a this, that, and a them zine? - news to me, dad - that it purports to be a fanzine, even - yet. Now me, I ain't telling you what to print; only that you print it in English, for a change. "Entrechats", indeed! "Between us cats" - nuts! It has always been a bitter pill to me that you Torontoans get an entirely gratuitous reputation for culture that you do not deserve, merely because you have learned to mouth (on stencil? - h-mmm, not so mere at that!) phrases indigenous to the locale - if I tried the same thing I'd be accused only of vulgarity, German being what it is. So I'm only too pleased to have caught you out on that "entrechat" faux pas - even a clot like myself knows that it means conversation at dinner before the entree. (Entree - chat, if you're slow today.)

/Look, man, if I mouthed on stencil (neat trick, no?) phrases indigenous to the locale you wouldn't find A BAS in your mail box. And since when is French indigenous to this local? Have a look at your atlas./

CLIFF GOULD, SAN DIEGO, CALIF.

You have my absolute forbiddance to use Squawk Ellik as nomenclature...Squirrel Ellik ---- some sort of line like.....

Raeburn: Here comes Ellik!

Gould: You mean squirrel....alla time grabbing for other people's nuts and all!

Ellik: Gould I'm going to blow you...

Gould: Hyia! Squirrel...

Ellik: Dammit Gould stop interrupting me! As I said I'm going to blow you.....

All: (laughter)

Ellik: Dammitdammitdammit....I'm going to blow you out of EXISTENCE Gould!

Gould: That would be a novelty, Squirrel!

(and so they did)

The Canadian Navy was in town a couple of weeks ago. Courval happened to be in the store at the moment and I was feeling frightfully clever and witty and all as usual. A Canadian chief walked in, and wanted to know how to use an exposure meter, which he said he had bought the day before at another store, but forgot what store and had forgotten how to use it. Would I teach him how. I said, jokingly: "What did you get drunk on?"

"Captain Morgan's Rum." says he without batting an eyelash.

"But Raeburn...er, I thought that it wasn't available here in the States..."

"It's not, but they issue us some every day...I smuggled some off...."

"Duuuh..." Regaining composure at being floored by mention of semi-mythical drink:

"Ha ha. Okay, I'll show you how to use the meter, if you bring me a fifth of

Captain Morgan....hahahahahaha ha" A half hour later I was the proud possessor of one fifth of Captain Morgan's Rum.

/Nobody, Suh, but nobody, dictates what I write in the Derogations. But I hope you like it./

RODGER H. SKIDMORE, FOREST HILLS, N.Y.

Read Turner's letter in the ish, and he forgot to tell you something about his bird. It does go along with jazz except for once when I was over at his house playing cards. The bird chirped along with a Rock & Roll record. But Al says this is all right as it was one of the better R&R records. I bet if the bird went along with just R&R instead of jazz you would find one defunct parakeet lying in back of his house.

GEORGINA ELLIS, CALGARY, ALTA.

Some people have stated at times that WENDIGO is a crudzine, a fugghead zine, a hopeless zine, even a god-awful rag. Having decided for me the nature of my zine, some of these individuals have gone on to declare that I should print Wetzell and Ellis and shouldn't print Grennell and Clarke because I am supposed to be printing a crapzine. I am getting tired of these imbeciles. Considering the wide range of quality of most "fanzines" I don't see why poor little me should be singled out for this criticism. My policy is that I print whatever I can get my sticky little hands on and I don't give a damn about what will or won't interest you, so there. If you don't like it, you can....

Now then, some of you may be a little surprised in view of the predominantly gunky material normally used to find a Grennell item in this issue. I half expect the more alarmist readers to start bellowing that Grennell is being degraded or that Wendy is improving to the point where there will be an ugly red gap in the venerable (truly venerable, that is) STARROCKETSTHURBAN slot. Fear not.

/Touche!/?

KENT MOOMAW, CINCINNATI, OHIO

"Derelicti Derogation" lives up to all the rave reviews it has been drawing through out fandom. Dear old Clod Hall should get a real charge out of the remarks sent his way; Clod gets my nomination for Fannish Whipping Boy of '56 now that the other contenders have dropped out. # I don't know why I'm mentioning this, but here is a bit of sign-of-the-times info for what it is worth. Down in the Smoky Mountains about two years ago, I was hunting for some sort of useful souvenir in the Cherokee Indian Reservation there, near the North Carolina border. More specifically, I was browsing through a little shack which featured all sorts of peace-pipes, knives, pennants, and rugs tacked on the outside of its chink-log structure. One table near the door was loaded with little wooden figures and pieces of bone shaped in many sundry forms, and I was content that at last I had found an authentic "trading post" which featured actual Indian craft, free from the outside world of industrialized America. I mused on like this as I picked up a knife to examine its carved handle when...what should I find displayed next to it but a box of falsies....

ROBERT BLOCH, WEYAUWEGA, WISC.

As to Lovecraft letters, I'd be inclined to suggest running whatever you get that seems interesting. Despite the tendency of splinter-groups, such as alleged "Seventh Fandom", to go whoring after new gods, there is a continuity and almost a growing tradition in our little field, and anything which perpetuates same is helpful. One can agree or disagree with individual viewpoints, but the fact remains that most of today's active BNFs sooner or later seem to come around to this viewpoint and begin to take an interest in fan and proo "history". I've noted that tendency in Moskowitz, of course, and also in Tucker, Grennell, Rotsler, Willis, Hoffman and others. Neos tend to shy away from that "old stuff" -- defensively, I believe, because they prefer to spend all their time augmenting their own status and thus emphasize only the present. Anything prior to 1953 is Ancient History in their book. But their book, or books, usually don't hold the interest because of a preoccupation with sheer topicality. Boggs and Warner and the rest of the Old Guard maintain a position largely because they have this long-range perspective and a firm grounding and orientation in the field as a whole. So whether there is much "interest" on the part of the neos in people like Lovecraft, Weinbaum, Merritt, etc., or not -- allusions to their work seem worthwhile to me. Bill Grant knows this, I think. One of the signs of maturity is ability to cope with the past, as well as with the present. Only kids are resentful and afraid of the "old" songs: and that merely because they're afraid they don't know the words. End of sermon. Unnecessary anyway, because your remarks anent the Tucker thing show that you must have arrived at similar conclusions.

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