

Beyond
4.



EDITORIAL

Either you're blind, or you haven't seen this magazine before, or you'll have noticed the fact that this issue is duplicated on an ink machine, not a spirit duplicator. There are several reasons, the most important being that a spirit duplicator is really limited to 100 copies; and Beyond is now being read by over 100 people. Secondly, while colour is not as simple to produce, reproduction of illustrations by electro stencil gives a much better effect than is obtainable with a spirit duplicator. Thirdly, the text is sold easier to read, and lastly the magazine is much easier to produce with this process of duplication and this format. The folded-foolscap format was abandoned reluctantly, but it caused too many problems to justify its continuance. Changing to quarto pages results in almost doubling the number of words per page; 650 instead of 350. From this you will see that since the number of pages has not been cut by half, there is now more material in BEYOND than ever.

Perhaps you've been in the town of Cambridge and have thought what a pleasant place it looks. Sometimes the old college buildings can appear very beautiful when obliquely lit by a rising or setting sun. To be an undergraduate in Cambridge is the ideal of school pupils all over the country; student life is widely thought of as a combination of merriment with short periods of intense work on fascinating subjects.

If this expresses your ideas about Cambridge, I fully sympathise; this was what I thought about the place before I came here, last September. Consequently it was something of a shock to discover how different the University is from the image I had in my mind.

The place is still populated by a majority of public school people. The Grammar Schools are infiltrating, granted, but even so most of the Grammar School people I have met here are identical to the public school type in practically every respect apart from accent. The pathetically juvenile sense of humour, which is lacking in most cases, the single-minded devotion to the subject they are studying and nothing else, and the inability to relax and have a ball are characteristics common to over 90% of the students here.

I can't back this up with statistics, only my personal experience. In my first term here I met and got into conversation with as many people as I could, and even the occasional 'rebels', of which there are very few, were pretty weak rebels. Non conformity here extends as far as wearing dirty jeans, leather jackets and no gown after dark, growing sideburns, and expressing dislike of work. It does not usually extend as far as deliberately defying authority, apart from the commonly ignored rule about not sleeping with female students. And even in the so-called non conformists or rebels there is widespread inhibition. For example, getting drunk at a Cambridge party (at least, in my college, Churchill,) is frowned upon. The offender gets disapproving looks and people pointing at him the next morning. I know; it happened to me.

Cambridge parties are very typical of the whole atmosphere here; they are forced, artificial, and downright respectable. If there is any sex involved it is approached in a mature and discreet fashion, usually after the party, which is more a stand-up-and-natter affair. Exhibitionism or free expression is not looked

on with tolerance, by officials or by fellow students. Working for examinations is the most important consideration, and is at the expense of every other facet of the student's personality. Grammar and Public school pupils come to Cambridge having had little time during their schoolcareer to do anything else besides learn what they are taught; and they are not taught how to have fun, or how to possess a sense of humour. The standards are so high that work to get here, and work so as to be able to leave with a good pass, are more important than anything else, so that even at Cambridge, from which it is commonly supposed come mature students of balanced personality, the fact is that the majority of people are stereotyped, and mass produced.

In the first year, I would say from my own experience that the course of work is even more boring than the non-existent social life. My Economics course is made up of reading boring textbooks which have not been substantially revised since they were first written 20 years ago, and of learning fundamentals in the same way as one would learn fundamentals in the third form at a Grammar school. The standard may be higher, but the approach is identical.

The system of learning from lectures often fails because it is such a lengthy and boring process; several lecturers have written books on their subjects, and their programme of lectures is merely the reading of a precis of their own books. There is no attempt whatsoever to make the subject come alive. Supervisions, at which one's essays are criticised and discussions take place, vary tremendously; but it is often the case that the supervisor, while brilliant at his own subject, cannot teach, or tolerate anyone less intelligent (or more intelligent!) than himself. My first supervisor was found of shouting 'think, damn you, you're at a University now!' A primary school teacher could have suggested a better approach.

I have been discouraged by the dullness of the vast majority of students here, by the monotony of the work and the complete lack of imagination in the way it is presented, and by the difficulty there is in meeting other people. There is no feeling of community in Cambridge, unless one is lucky enough to be living in college, and this is just another aspect of how the character of the student has been ignored, all emphasis being placed on his mental powers. It is a sad comment on the hopelessly out of date approach to education of the University that in some colleges girls are not even permitted to enter the dining hall. A coeducational college is, of course, out of the question. The students are treated as machines, not individuals of different and interesting character, and so it is hardly surprising that it is as one-track-minded (although possibly brilliant) machines they leave here, churned out by the educational sausage machine.

---Charles Platt.

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Plus any other features that can be fitted in here and there.

B.S.F.A. SURVEY

I would prefer to be writing this article having been a BSFA member for a year or more, a committee member, and generally knowledgeable and well known where the Association is concerned. Unfortunately I am a member of only 4 or 5 months standing and I know only fragments about the BSFA. Nevertheless, I feel that there is a desperate need for some sort of comment on the organisation, with the convention approaching, and with it the AGM and elections. There's been too much of the 'leave it so to someone else' attitude for me to be able to join in and do the same. If there are one or two factual inaccuracies in this article they are a result of my own inexperience, and should not affect the main theme.

I discovered that "all was not what it should be" with the BSFA purely by accident. Interested, I enquired further, and received letters that were progressively more flabbergasting: tales of woe, inefficiency, complacency, lack of any interest, bungling... each one was more demoralising than the last. Behind all this was a feeling in some of the committee members that they were doing all the work, and that not only their contemporaries, but the rest of the membership, did not give a damn.

It's all very well to complain, as I myself did at first, that certain people on the committee are not in the habit, for example, of replying to letters sent to them; but the fault lies not in the committee members themselves but in the system that forced people into office who just hadn't the spare time to cope with the job properly. The fault lies also with the people who could have taken the jobs on, but didn't, and with the rule (at the time of writing) that committee members must be over 21. With the exception of the post of treasurer, this rule is totally unjustified and bottles up a lot of enthusiasm, which soon turns sour and becomes disillusioned apathy.

To some members this situation may not seem worthy of comment or investigation. All right, so not all of the committee is active. Is this anything to get worked up about? No society has a 100% enthusiastic committee. The majority of the BSFA members are more or less satisfied, aren't they? They don't complain.

Let me remind you of the aims of the BSFA, as expressed in the Constitution: "The Association.... shall encourage the reading, writing and publishing of good literature of this class (sf), shall assist and encourage contact between enthusiasts, shall provide liaison between its members and the science fiction profession, shall endeavour to present science fiction and associated art form to the Press and general public in an advantageous manner and shall provide such amenities as may prove desirable for the use of members."

Let's go through these aims one by one, trying to see in what way they are not being fulfilled, and what changes could lead to improvements, and why these changes have not been made.

To a small extent the BSFA encourages the reading of sf in its members. This is mainly through reviews of books in VECTOR; but there is no sort of special service notifying members of newly published books in the country. Reason: lack of funds, lack of someone willing to organise the service. The BSFA library is elaborate, extensive, well catalogued but under-used. Reason: lack of interest in members, and the fact that with paperback sf so common that reading bought books is relatively inexpensive, a postal library is not particularly useful. The BSFA

encourages the writing of sf hardly at all; Roy Kay's "BSFA Orbiter", a sort of round robin magazine where each member puts in a sample of his own work and a letter of comment on other people's, is the only example I can think of. There is no official sub-group in existence whereby would-be authors can get in contact with each other and exchange work for private criticism. Reason: no organiser.

I am informed by Mr Archie Mercer that where encouraging the publishing of good sf is concerned the BSFA is active, in that it commends praiseworthy attempts on the part of publishers and condemns unpraiseworthy ones. How much notice the publishers take of this I do not know; but obviously the BSFA would have more influence if it were a larger organisation.

Round Robins are a very efficient means of promoting contact between members, but I suspect many new members don't even know they exist. They have not been well publicised, and until recently hardly any were organised. Reason: the organiser had no time to do this, and evidently didn't realise their value. Aldo he was uncertain of whether in fact the job was his, and if so how he should go about it.

Little in the way of liaison is provided between professional authors and members. A few authors turn up at the Convention every year, but this is the only occasion where the amateur meets the professional. Reason: because the BSFA is not a very large or important organisation, authors don't bother to join; if they did, this would attract more members, and the organisation would become larger and more important. It's a vicious circle.

As for presenting sf to the public... suggest this to a committee member and, assuming you pick the right one and get a reply, the answer will quite rightly be that if you want an image presented, you'll have to present it yourself, since committee members have enough to do already. Reason for lack of ties with the general public: lack of finance for advertising, lack of organisers, lack of contacts.

"Amenities for members" is a subject largely covered by the above. There are some amenities provided, but not really enough.

It will be seen from the above that the BSFA is not fulfilling any of its aims completely. Seeing that less than one person in 100,000 in this country is an active fan, chances of personal introduction to sf fandom are slight, and I think that it is in its capacity of initiator that the BSFA is particularly useful, and necessary. Yet it is in this respect that the BSFA is particularly bad; there is little advertising to attract the new fan, and no real drive to keep him or her interested once a member. Vector comes round 8 times a year and that's about all. New members are left largely to themselves where contacting other members is concerned, and this can be discouraging. I agree that a lot of members don't write letters to Vector and don't make their voices heard much; but then, they were never really asked to, were they?

It will be seen that one of the main causes of unfulfilled aims is the lack of people to organise things. Why? Because you and I and all but 6 or 7 people in the BSFA are content to leave it to other people. Don't you think you could offer to help in some way? Something that wouldn't take much time but would help the BSFA become more satisfactory for you and other members? Just a letter to Vector is a good gesture of interest, and an offer to contribute is even better. An offer to take on a small job will be very much appreciated, or if you have the time to spare (and this need not amount to all that much -- enthusiasm is the main thing) you could well stand for a committee post at the coming convention.

Finances are urgently needed. Their absence is due to lack of members, who would be attracted if there was more to be spent on advertising. From contacts I have made with the non-fan but sf-reading public it seems that a lot of people

know vaguely of the BSFA's existence, but don't know enough about it, or haven't seen it advertised often enough, to be encouraged to join. Also it is irritating that a lot of fans selfishly declare lack of interest and support for the BSFA, saying that it has nothing to offer them. They don't seem to realise that 'fandom', an institution which they would in name be devoted to, will not be perpetuated unless the BSFA has funds to recruit more members. And the funds won't just appear magically in the treasurer's hands, they need to come from someone. We need more people like Ethel Lindsay, who pays her membership fee and gets little in return apart from the knowledge that the BSFA is being kept alive and capable of performing its duties at least to some extent.

Money, members and enthusiasm; but of these three, money is the main necessity, since with its aid members can be attracted, and in the new members, one hopes, there will lie enthusiasm. However, since we have not the money to attract the new members at present, and in fact we need new members before there will be money to spare to attract new members, the answer lies with you reading this, unless you are already really active in the BSFA. You aren't a member? Why not? Don't you care about 'fandom', or aren't you interested, or can't you be bothered, or what? You're a BSFA member, but so far you haven't been active. Why not? Have you actually considered helping? The BSFA won't run by itself, and with a small membership of between one and two hundred, a fair amount of responsibility falls on your shoulders to do something. You could, easily, just by offering help. Such offers of help will be received very gratefully indeed. Write to Jill Adams or Archie Mercer (addresses in Vector). It's really up to you; things have been left to a nonexistent 'someone else' for too long already.

That's what I have concluded about the BSFA. In response to some slightly aggressive circulars I sent round to 25 or so members and non members here's what other people think.

FROM ROGER PEYTON, BIRMINGHAM:

The BSFA is out of date? Stagnant? Never!

I'm quite sure the officers are doing a very good job. In any association or club there are a lot of things going on which, since they are behind the scenes, an outsider never knows about. As a fanzine publisher you will obviously realise what a difficult job it is getting the thing out on time. Imagine what it is like publishing VECTOR and also running the BSFA when the officers are spread over the country.

Instead of implying that they are letting the Association stagnate I suggest we congratulate them (officers past and present) for doing such a great job. Remember the majority of the officers also contribute to other fanzines, and the big factor is, of course, that all their work is voluntary -- not one penny goes into their own pockets. Maybe there are one or two improvements required (nothing is perfect). What the BSFA needs is ideas for making money so that the officers can get some remuneration for all the sweat, tears and hard work they put into it.

FROM DAVID WOOD, RADFORD, NOTTINGHAM:

I am not a member of the BSFA; the first thing that put me off was the ridiculously high membership fee. No doubt the people who run the BSFA will shout about "overheads" and "expenses", but when one takes into consideration what one gets for one's money, the fee does seem a bit much. A friend of mine did join, and I

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saw one of his copies of VECTOR. It was complete and utter rubbish from cover to cover. I must admit that it has improved since Archie Mercer took over editorship, but it would have to improve a great deal more before I would be tempted to part with my money.

VECTOR, as far as I can see, is all you are entitled to as a member (except for an infinitesimal reduction in Convention Attendance Fees). Charges for loaning library books are also exorbitant.

No, I'm sorry, unless someone injects a bit of life into the BSFA and its members, I'll stay out. Indeed, the majority of its members are so apathetic about the state of the association that I would be surprised to hear that more than half a dozen have taken the time to set down their views for this article. And THEY want US to join!

((Out of 15 circulars that I sent to BSFA members who in the past I have found to be more enthusiastic than average, about 7 were replied to. ---CP.))

FROM ETHEL LINDSAY, SURBITON, SURREY.

I am a member of the BSFA and have been since its inception. I can only speak for myself and what I want from the BSFA. And the answer to that it is -- nothing! I don't need the library, I don't need letters of interest sent from other members to me, I don't particularly need VECTOR! I have more to read than I can consume already; I have sf correspondents by the score. As for fanzines, I get more than my fair share. I am up to my eyes in fan activity as it is and all I ask of the BSFA is that they don't ask me to do any more!

So why am I a member? Because something like this is needed for fans; some sort of organisation that new fans can understand before they either enter fandom or fly from it in horror. When I first entered fandom I was helped by fans who were kind and good to me. It's only right that I in turn should support an organisation that is aimed at the new fans.

My feeling is that anyone who isn't satisfied should roll up their sleeves and pitch in to change it more to their own liking. There are a lot more things that the BSFA could offer but they all require voluntary work of some kind from people who care. Anyone who isn't involved in such voluntary work has really no right to criticise.

FROM RICHARD GORDON, GLENALMOND, PERTSHIRE.

The BSFA achieves most of its objects but there is a danger of stagnation. Any amateur organisation such as the BSFA must have a constant flow of new members, to bring in new ideas and views. But the Association doesn't seem very interested in self advertisement apart from the occasional ad. in SCIENCE FANTASY or NEW WORLDS, which are almost defunct anyway. This proves that a large part of sf fandom don't read these mags; a lot of people who would otherwise join the BSFA never even hear of it. As it is a lot of members must be recruited by word of mouth, or by pure chance. More publicity might be worth while.

Otherwise I think the BSFA does pretty well. For anyone marooned like me in a wilderness not yet reached by fandom it is a positive boon. The contact with other fans has put me off cyanide for a time at least.

Interior stagnation should presumably be prevented by an annual election, an excellent thing, though whether BSFA politics contain any underhand skullduggery or tricks I wouldn't know.

FROM DAVID BUSBY, WOKINGHAM, BERKS.

What was your first reaction to joining the BSFA -- disappointment? That certainly was my reaction. Somehow, from what I'd heard generally, from what I'd seen in various rather vague advertisements, I expected something considerably more imaginative and bold than what I actually encountered.

I'd got hold of the idea, somehow, that the BSFA ran a service for new and hopeful writers, handing out advice and general information, newsletters and encouragement of contact between writers and artists. I expected that the BSFA would provide a wide coverage of sf-things of interest; information and news, discussion and comment on recent events, and so on. I expected that the BSFA would have organised or have helped to organise many satellite local-area groups, and a service for publishing their journals and magazines. I expected to find the Association running letter round robins, writers' and artists' groups, fanzine publishers' groups, and many other projects like a publishing programme of checklists, biographies, etc. I had expected a much greater liaison with U.S. organisations, an exchange and pool of material, and so on.

I had heard that there were many professional artists and writers in the BSFA, and I have been waiting in vain for their appearance, with their names at the head of articles, reviews, and so on.

In fact what I have written above is surely a catalogue of what the BSFA doesn't organise. Yet such things are possible. Look at Zenith, and the Birmingham group. Why can't it happen to the BSFA?

I feel that in some quarters there has been a bad failure; not of enthusiasm, (though even this seems lacking in all but the ten per cent who more or less run things by themselves); but of imagination. This can almost be classed as a worse failure than that of enthusiasm. There is a lack of bold, imaginative, forward-looking plans. While other groups may be progressive the BSFA stays stodgily the same.

What can be done about it? Several things, I feel. ... Specifically what is needed is a really bold and tough campaign to get people interested. A really carefully worded questionnaire, asking people what they would like to see in the BSFA, should be sent out, accompanied by quite a lot of publicity and with loud and elaborate pleas for a large return. In fact it might be an idea to send the questionnaire out again to all those who didn't reply the first time, and keep sending them out until people get the idea. If you drum hard enough, loud enough, and long enough, there is bound to be a large reaction. People must be prodded in to sending in their own ideas, views, criticisms, pet schemes and demands.

I feel that some of the things I have outlined in this letter as what I expected might well be incorporated. Personally I think there are quite a lot of dissatisfied people like myself, nearly all of them younger members, and quite honestly I think we should do something about it. It strikes me that it wouldn't be a bad idea to organise interested parties into some sort of committee to prod some action on the official level. I don't know quite how it would work, whether we should get official BSFA sanction, or what. But all the things that I have mentioned would entail some extra work, although not that much, and I suggest that such a committee could handle these matters.

(Since to my knowledge Dave didn't know Beyond would be carrying this section on the BSFA, his letter was not originally intended for publication. All the same I think it is important, for the number of ideas it contains and the fact that it quite possibly may speak for quite a large number of other younger members. --CP)

FROM ROY KAY, BIRKENHEAD, CHESHIRE.

There is a massive reluctance -- or there has been in the past -- for anyone to want to take on any job on the BSFA committee. No one sends in nominations, so the whole thing is left to that the last possible moment: the BSFA Annual General Meeting at the Convention. Now and then you get someone who has made up his mind to stand. When this happens you almost always get an enthusiastic committee member. The person wants the job, he has ideas. But, as I say, such is rarely the case. At the A.G.M. Committee members are picked by an astonishing process, with last year's mob pointing at people in the audience who hadn't actually had a post before, and asking, bullying, begging them to take the job. Any job. Just to fill the hole up, as it were.

You can't blame anybody for resorting to this technique. It is the only possible thing to do with the blank apathy of the BSFA membership.

That's the trouble with the BSFA. People want to coast along, just keeping things as they are, scared of introducing any ideas or a new scheme that might benefit the Association or bring in new members, because it might involve them in more work.

.....On the other hand you won't get anything done by treading on people's toes. You'll certainly antagonise people, and you may even raise a hell of a stink, but you won't get anything done Don't go accusing people right and left when you have not enough knowledge of what these people, and I'm talking about those with good intentions, are up against. They are facing this lethargy themselves from the bulk of the BSFA membership, and that is a very disheartening thing indeed to have to face up to.

There is a section of the BSFA, by far the largest, who never write in, communicate at all. Deadwood, you might say, but the Association should accomodate all kinds of members ... people who just want to use the library and read VECTOR are welcome, as far as I am concerned.

Ideas are needed. New ideas, new schemes to make members enthusiastic. I'm all for these. But these things can only work through cooperation; nobody can hope to go out on a crusade and accomplish everything by himself, even though he may succeed in setting the ball rolling.

SUMMING UP.

The letters I have chosen come from as many different classes of people as I could think of: new fans, more experienced fans, non members of the BSFA, members of the BSFA with little knowledge of it and members intimately connected with it.

In present conditions of low membership, lack of enthusiasm and general apathy one cannot ignore the question of whether there is any point in struggling to continue. If no one cares, why bother with the BSFA at all? But things aren't quite this bad. Even in its present tepid state the Association is still functioning valuably in introducing people to the world of fanzines, long letters and Conventions. Some people are satisfied with things as they are.

With an energetic and enthusiastic committee, inside a year the BSFA could be transformed. This is unlikely to be possible unless the rule that committee members must be over 21 is discarded; this is a first step that would lead to a younger committee with more ideas and plans: a leadership that would inevitably have a strong effect in forming the BSFA into an organisation nearer in practice to the theoretical aims set out in the Constitution.

----Charles Platt.

Rain was heavy in the air and threatening black clouds sagged like dirty linen above the bleak marshes. Pillars of watery sunlight splayed down from the blackness above to the dimness below and something glittered in the sky.

The chopper came arcing down, its downwash parting the rushes. Skidding over the group of huts it settled on a patch of dryish land, its wheels sinking a little into the sodden earth. Howard Dugan stepped out of the cramped cockpit while the feathered vanes were still whistling above. Cramp and caution made him stoop as he walked away from the helicopter. Outside the compass of the whirling blades he straightened up. The native village was in the hollow ahead, squatting in the slime, while beyond, the marshes stretched away to where a curtain of rain, silver in the few shafts of weary sunlight, hid the distant hills. Uuren, one of the natives, was squelching across the land towards him; the native-alien came round-shouldered, rain running down his fur. No pride: pride was washed away like so much else that was human. How can you swagger when you slither in mud? Venus did not hold with arrogance. Or was it that the natives never had those human failings; were they washed clean in the stagnant pools? Exchanging greetings, man and alien slipped into the village.

Howard Dugan was the head of the Venus Research Colony: to reign in the rain was his delight, or plight. The worst part of his visit was now. Dugan scrambled out of the waist-deep mud onto the flooring made of floating rushes in Uuren's hut. It was a delicate intercourse, between the natives and the V.R.S. You just made contact, and regular visits to the little huddles of huts. Never ask, just wait and watch and listen. Sitting on the floor of Uuren's hut, listening to his guttural language and feeling the dampness soak up through the woven rushes struck Dugan as being less than comfortable. But watch and listen and maybe you will learn whether that sodden creature sitting in the corner, next to Uuren, is his mother, mate, mistress, meal or slave; or all five. Uuren leaned forward towards Dugan, his furry face gleaming wetly in the oily lamp light.

"Have you ever seen our dancers, friend?" he said.

"No, Uuren, never." Keep it simple, don't ask to see them; for all you know there might be some weird taboo, and he make may think you've broken it.

"Would you like to see our dancers?"

"I would, Uuren. Thankyou." The two creatures slipped back into the street and began wading towards a large round tower, Uuren leading the way. The door of the tower was up at its top, reached by a flimsey spiral staircase. Uuren paused at the bottom step and motioned Dugan to climb first. The steps were wet and the wood soggy and slippery with some mossy growth. Dugan climbed slowly so as not to tire the weak limbed alien. At the top of the tower was a little veranda without a hand rail; here Dugan waited for Uuren who, despite Dugan's consideration, was panting some distance down the stairs. Dugan noticed some children were squelching happily around his helicopter but they seemed harmless enough so he turned back to Uuren, who had reached the veranda and was resting a moment. Recovered, Uuren opened the door and led Dugan inside.

A gallery ran round the inside of the tower, which was roofless, the rain pattering on the walls and floor. The floor, fifteen feet below, was filled with dancing natives. Music was provided by one drummer who was beating out a strangely attractive rhythm on two huge drums. The dancers chatted as they danced. It reminded Dugan of The Shake, in the cellars of his teenage.

"This is our dance, friend Dugan." Curiosity comes, and to hell with dead cats!

"Why are they dancing, Uuren?" Dugan asked.

"Because they must dance -- no reason!"

"When will they stop?"

"They never stop the dance."

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 23.)

REPRINT R DEPARTMENT....

Since a fair number of the readers of this magazine are unlikely to have seen the fanzine Les Spinge, the following review that appeared in Les Spinge 12 is reprinted for general interest.

from THE FANALYTIC EYE

JIM LINWOOD

Price only 6d for 28 pages

The "New Wave" fanzines have arrived in fandom with the impact of a dud firework. Every so often fandom reaches a low point, and then receives a shot in the arm from someone like Ella Parker or Bill Donaho, and presently, when the only fanzines that have survived from a halcyon period of pubbing are Les Spinge and Skyrack, such an injection is urgently needed. Two new editors who seem to think that they are starting an important trend are Charles Platt of 'Point of View' (now called 'Beyond') and Pete Weston of 'Zenith'. Both these fanzines are similar in attitude and material, both are directly influenced by prozines (even to the extent of having subscription forms), both feature dubious attempts at fiction and both editors share opinions that can hardly be called humble. As you might expect of two equal forces, they are antagonistic towards each other, and the next few issues promise a good natured feud. One is reminded of Eurasia and Oceania.

'Zenith' (2) is the nearer of the two to an average fanzine, this is due to the fact that it has other contributors than the editor, it is in fact the "official" organ of the Birmingham SF Group, although a few of the members are dissatisfied with a few of Pete Weston's pretentious aspirations. Despite this the zine is very much an in-group fanzine, all the enthusiasm of the group has exploded into a boring orgy of name dropping, title listing and tedious fiction. The only commendable feature is the artwork by Mike Higgs which only lacks originality. The only attempt at a serious assessment of SF is an article on future history series by the editor, but when you read it you find it is only an ad for a series in the next ish. DON'T MISS IT screams the blurb, ORDER NOW!

Point of View concentrates on fiction, all of which is written by the editor, who has the nerve to award prizes to one of his pseudonyms for the best piece in each issue. All of it is atrociously bad, why put crud into fanzines when we can get professional crud on the news stands? The editor assures us that his fmz "Gives such quality in such quantity in a convenient size for so little" ... is this overpoweringly egotistical or has Mr Platt a wonderful self satirical quality?

Both editors seem to think that sf is such a wonderful subject that any effort at writing it or discoursing on it will be equally wonderful, after seeing the end result of their belief I hope they change their opinions. Few sf novels are written well enough to appeal to the intellect as well as the emotions, and very rarely do we get a controversial novel that provides heated arguments (such a novel was Starship Troopers). It takes a writer like John Baxter to make book reviews interesting and remove them from the "Goshwow this is his best so far" school.

Of the two only Zenith in my opinion will improve, and learn from mistakes, because the editor doesn't take himself too seriously but with Charles Platt, who does, I predict disillusionment after a few more issues.

LAST WORD ON THE 2ND ISSUE

This letter arrived too late to be included in the last issue.
From Seth Johnson, 339 Stiles Street, Vaux Hall, New Jersey, USA.

That editorial of yours (in Point of View 2) reminded me of a literary experience I had a few years ago. First I read THE JUVIES and MEMO FROM PURGATORY by Harlan Ellison in which the rumbles and battles of teenage juvenile delinquents were described in gory detail, and in which Harlan expressed the belief that the basic reason for juvenile delinquency was pure boredom. The fact that in slum areas there were no facilities for social get-togethers or companionship or the like. So the kids would bunch up in teenage gangs and engage in rumbles or wars with neighboring kid gangs, using everything from broken bottles rammed in the face, to potatoes embedded with safety razor blades, to real Army surplus guns and even heavy stuff. Also home made zip guns, etc. Many of these kids get maimed or disfigured for life as a result of these rumbles. Many others get into the narcotic habits and wind up stealing twenty to one hundred dollars a day to pay for heroin and the like.

Then after that I came across a pocketbook by William Vogt. This one was PEOPLE, a study in world population and reasons for national planned parenthood. One of the things it brought up was that by 1970 if present trends continue over half the babies born in New York would be born on charity, raised on public assistance or relief, and in other words raised in the exact environment that produced the Juvies of Harlan Ellison.

Think of it for a minute. From 1970 on the majority of the population will be increasingly slum born, criminal instinct, lawless and ready to for any manner of violence just for kicks. And what problems your kids will face who have to grow up in a world with this type of Juvie in the majority.

So now coming back to your editorial we come to the conclusion a culture where it's quite all right to steal because the majority believe it's the smart thing to do. Where it's all right to commit murder, mayhem and arson just for fun. What price conformity then? And just what do you think the moral standards of judges will be with that kind of electorate?

And now consider another point. Automation is displacing one million people a year. The USA has a working force of 50 to 60 million people. Reduce this by one million each year and also raise the educational standards necessary to get a job each year and by 1985 you have 25 million unemployed, these being the lowest educated of course. You can give them some sort of social handout such as the British Dole or the American unemployment social security payments, but the fact remains they will have plenty of leisure in which to cook up devilry and violence. Go on to 2010 and you'll have all but a couple of million unemployed, and scholastic standards mounting by leaps and bounds if only to screen out all but the most mentally endowed people from those jobs still available for human hands and brains. Now read Huxley's BRAVE NEW WORLD and Orwell's 1984. Only BRAVE NEW WORLD won't apply particularly because all that labour postulated won't be needed. Only a few brilliant scientists technicians and engineers will be needed. And if all the world's population is on relief then who is to purchase the shining products of our automated industrial system?

---Seth Johnson.

FREE SEATS FOR THE BEATLES

This morning, when I was out shopping, I spied a newspaper placard saying: "Free Seats for the Beatles". Yes, I thought, and only right, too. Why shouldn't the Beatles have free seats. They are just as much entitled to free seats as the rest of us. After all, they can't help looking like that.

Then another thought struck me. What seats? Bus seats? That's plainly ridiculous; can you imagine any bus company giving free seats to anyone? Cinema seats? But would they be entitled to watch the film, or would they have to leave the cinema when the performance began?

Perhaps the placard was referring to seats along the embankment. Perhaps only certified tramps and layabouts are allowed to sleep there, and they objected to the Beatles. In that case, it would be a nice gesture if the newspaper in question donated some back issues for use as bedclothes when their crusade had been won.

Sheila Barnes

Frost

Spider, spider spinning white
In the deadly hush of night
Hanging on your silver kilt
Where drops of vampire's blood are spilt.
Listen for the werewolf's cry,
Echoing through the trees on high
Listen for the witches' scream
And awaken from your nightmare dream.
Little spider spinning fast
Watch as warlocks hurry past
Go back to your web, back to your silver loom
Before the clouds scud across the moon
Spider spider spinning white
In the deadly hush of night.

Dave Johnstone.

REVERSE REACTION

BY 15
REG
HALDRICKS

He turned the frequency control gingerly and stared at the oscilloscope. Don't panic, Ashmead, he thought.

Yes, there it was: the green trace humped itself, broadened menacingly, and then flashed off the screen.

Don't panic, Ashmead. Perhaps you've made a mistake. Polish your glasses - carefully - and think.

The single lamp threw grotesque shadows into the blackness, glinting on the shielding of the cascade generator, which loomed behind him like a colossal bulbous insect. Somewhere near the roof, thirty feet above, its top electrode was hissing faintly; a blue glow flickered at the tips of the corona wires.

No, he hadn't made a mistake. Uranium atoms in the target were picking up the three co-resonant frequencies, blurring into time-dependent quantum states and snapping over into technetium.

How ever you looked at it, it meant only one thing. Anyone who knew about this could make technetium by the ton for a few thousand pounds. Any little tin-pot state, or even a private lunatic, could build their own do-it-yourself fusion bombs, enough to blow the Earth out of its orbit, in school labs, garages, back yard sheds....

He wiped the sweat out of his eyes and polished his glasses again. The Director would have to call the Government in, of course. The Army would put a guard round the institute. Security men would come snooping round, vetting everybody's ratings. He'd probably be the first to go; after all, he had been in the Party from '27 to '33, along with most of the students who'd cared at all for human decency. He'd be a major headache, because they'd have to be sure he couldn't talk. Perhaps they'd have guards trailing him all the time. Perhaps they'd find some excuse to lock him up. And the whole Institute would become a weapons research outfit, top secret, barbed wire, soldiers, passes, searchlights.

All a waste of time. This thing could be written down in two hundred words, and the departments were riddled with spies. Sooner or later somebody would sell out.

In a few months it would be all over the world. Then about, say, two years later, the Republic of Boxland would decide to Annihilate the Republic of Coxland, and the USSR and the USA would join in, and then the UEC and the UCR...

And that would be the end for all of us.

He stood up. All the time, somewhere in the back of his mind, he'd known what to do. It was billions to one against anyone else ever stumbling on this. So..

He opened the drawers, pulled out his notes, heaped them into an empty fire bucket and set light to them. He smashed the three vacuum assemblies, tore down the target, pulled out the leads, stripped the circuits. In ten minutes he had annihilated the work of three years. Breathing hard, he brushed some twisted junk off the chair and sat down again. What was he going to tell them tomorrow? Better refuse to say anything, except that he'd decided not to go on with the work.

Better not to go to work at all. Say he was ill. In fact let them think he had had some kind of mental breakdown. That was it. That would account for his smashing the apparatus, too. Disarm the questions. And while he was 'recovering', he could take a nice quiet holiday in Cornwall somewhere.

It's a good thing I'm a rational, careful, clear-thinking man, he told himself, shaking the dust out of his lab. coat. Some people might not have acted quite so wisely.

"Listen, Jill, I keep telling you, I'm perfectly all right." What a woman for fussing! "All I need is a bit of a rest."

"But what about what you told the institute? And you haven't been in to work for four days, and you look all tensed up. Darling, I'm sure..."

"For the last time, I don't need a doctor!"

"And you've been talking in your sleep..."

He caught her arm. "What's that? What have I been saying?"

"Let go, you're hurting me ... Oh, I don't know, some technical stuff... I wasn't really listening." He let go of her and sank into an armchair. He was suddenly very tired. "Listen, tonight I'm going to sleep in the spare room. Just a temporary arrangement, Jill, nothing to do with anything you've said."

The mattress in the spare room was like a sack of potatoes. Every time he turned over, the sheet came adrift, and let a freezing draught in down one side. It must be two o'clock... zero hour, the bombs were about to detonate, and he was struggling to get to the fuse to disarm them, but two grinning Chinese soldiers held him back...

He woke with a start. Somebody was in the room. He snapped the light on: it was Jill, standing at the foot of the bed and staring at him with a worried frown creasing her cold-creamed forehead.

"What the hell are you doing here?" He was speaking louder than he meant to.

"I .. I just came= came in to see if you were all --"

"Go away! Don't stand there snivelling -- go on, get out!" He climbed stiffly out of bed and locked the door behind her. Damn it, he hadn't meant to yell at her like that; he'd have to make it up in the morning.

She was still outside the door. He could hear her breathing.

This business really was beginning to get on his nerves. Perhaps she was right. Perhaps he should go and see that old fool Simpson.

Doctor Simpson guffawed and slapped him on the back. "Sorry, old boy, there just doesn't happen to be a cure for talking in your sleep. Afraid you'll reveal something incriminating to the little woman, eh, ha ha! Take my advice, old boy, just don't worry -- forget it."

He glared at the college car mounted on the wall. "Look, I can't explain why, but it really is important to me ... And another thing, are you sure that one can't be hypnotised against one's will?"

"Not up my street, old boy, but according to all the books -- not that I've read 'em -- it's absolutely impossible. Why?"

"Look, are you certain? There was a man in the bus, a fat chap with a monocle. He followed me into the waiting room. Still out there, in fact. Anyway, this man, he kept staring at me. I'm sure he was trying to hypnotise me, or something"

"Now what makes you think that?"

"Well, there are, well, reasons."

There certainly were. After all, they all knew he was working on nuclear resonances. For all he knew, the Russians or the UCR might have had men on his tail for years, not doing anything, just patiently observing, waiting for a chance. Then, when they guessed he had something valuable, they'd start probing,

trying some new Pavlovian technique or other.

Damn' near succeeded, too. It had been all he could do not to jump up, and grab that fat man's lapel and shout the whole reaction scheme at him. He'd had to hold on to the seat and shut his eyes -- he couldn't look away. He'd got off that bus sweating like a pig.

And, come to think of it, there was something phoney about that man. Whoever heard of a fat man with a loud check suit and a monocle?

"Look here, old boy," Simpson was saying, "I think it might be a good idea if you go and see another doctor. Well, actually, he's a psychiatrist who specializes in all this sort of thing, do you see? Might even know how to stop you talking in your sleep, ha ha! I'll ring him for you now and make an appointment."

"How do you do, Mr -- er -- Ashmead, I am Doctor Bartok."

A Hungarian name, of course, but his accent sounded more Oriental. Tall, thin, rimless glasses, gold tooth, receding black hair; might have come straight out of a cheap thriller. Better play this carefully. After all, a lot of nasty things you read about in the newspapers sound like lurid fiction. That Soblen case, for instance... he was a psychiatrist, wasn't he?

Mustn't let his imagination run away with him. The man was a perfectly ordinary, genuine psychiatrist. Probably. Still, he'd better box carefully with these questions...

"Come, now, Mr -- er -- Ashmead, how can I help you if you will not answer my questions frankly? I am a doctor, remember -- anything you tell me is in the strictest confidence."

He could see the man was getting rattled. The ingratiating smile was becoming more and more forced.

"Now then, Mr -- er -- Ashmead, I think that it might be a good idea if you would agree to come into hospital, just for a week or so. For a rest. I have a clinic in the country near here, and I think you will find it will help you considerably to -- er -- get away from this problem of yours for a little while, don't you?" The gold toothed grin was rigid as an old photograph.

This was beginning to get really dangerous. Once they got him into a clinic they'd be able to hold him and work on him at their leisure to make him talk. Must be firm about this. Can't take chances with the fate of the world at stake.

"I'm sorry. That's quite impossible".

"It would be in your best interests, you know."

He stood up. "I absolutely refuse."

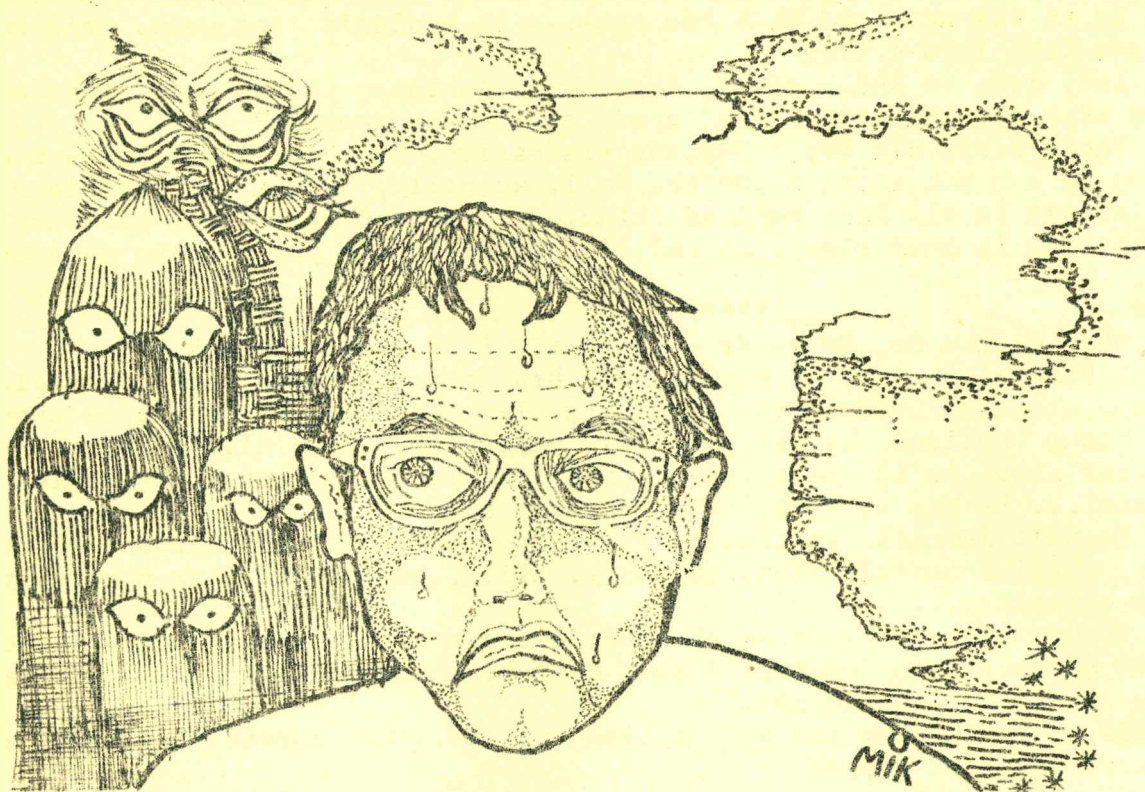
"And you don't want to tell me any more?"

"I refuse to answer any more questions. You can't trap me that way."

"You will have to tell me, you know, in the end..." The narrow eyes were staring at him through rimless glasses... Suppose he just told the whole story; it would be a load off his mind, a relief; it would be so easy; those eyes, boring into him...

Something clicked in his head and he sat up with a jerk. What had happened to him? He stood up and strode towards the door, but Bartok had anticipated him and was standing in the way, smiling nastily and saying something he didn't catch...

Something seemed to impel his arm forward. His knuckles crunched into Bartok's face; the doctor staggered, but held his ground, looking very surprised.



Damn it, the man was too big to tackle. He stared wildly round. Got to get out of here ... He ran to the bay window. No time to open it. Some external force seemed to lift him, and he was leaping through the big pane, his sleeve over his eyes to protect him from the shattering glass, and then stumbling on the flower bed outside. If he ran to the right he could get to the Underground station, only a few hundred yards, then he could get home and pick up a few things and disappear quietly for a bit while he thought what to do. His head was hammering, his breath came in painful gasps. But they didn't seem to be following him.

The people on the platform all seemed to be staring at him. When he got into the train he realised why; he'd cut his wrist on the window and it was dripping copiously on to the seat. Funny, it didn't seem to hurt. He wrapped his handkerchief round it; a large dark stain seeped slowly through. He brushed a few pieces of glass out of his clothes.

Better go round the back way and in at the window. No need to disturb Jill. Just pick up some money from the desk and tidy himself up a bit and then sneak off. Then he would write to her, say he was all right, but not give an address. Don't want her involved. The less she knows the better.

He opened the window with his penknife and climbed in. It was too easy -- must a get a better catch fixed, it's a burglar's paradise at the moment. He tip-toed across to the hall door and opened it cautiously. Two big burly men in white jackets were standing in the hallway. They whirled round and saw him. One

of them started to say: "Mr Ashmead, we must ask you to come with us --"

He slammed the door and bolted for the window. But they were too quick for him. His arms were gripped from behind in a wrestler's lock and he was carried struggling and shouting to the front door, down a path and into a white van. One of them held him down and he felt the prick of a needle...

His head was spinning. He blinked in the strong light from the naked bulb. He was in a bed in a tiny, dingy green-distempred room with no other furniture. A tough looking man in a blue suit was sitting on his legs. He was heavy. Another in a white jacket was leaning casually against the wall.

Damned stupid of him to have panicked like that in Bartok's room. Gave himself away. They must know he was on to something valuable now. Whatever happened he mustn't tell them. Suppose they started torturing him...

He didn't seem to have any clothes on under the blanket.

The thug jumped off his bed and sprang to attention as Bartok came in. He muttered something to the white coated tough by the wall, who went out purposefully. Then Bartok had a long whispered confabulation with the other one. He strained to hear what they were saying but only caught the words 'Emergency Observation, Section D60' and 'Seventy-two hours'.

Bartok was grinning that nasty rimless gold-filled grin at him.

"I am sorry you are not wishing to tell me your thoughts, Mr Ashmead. I am very interested to know what is this secret you are nursing in your head. Very interested indeed." I'll bet you are, thought Ashmead. "Are you sure you would not like to tell me? No? You say nothing? All right, Mr -- er -- Ashmead, you will be a little readier, I think, to cooperate with us in a few moments. Just a little sodium pentathol. All right, Nurse."

The white coated thug came in wheeling a medicine trolley. The two of them held him down while the 'doctor' carefully pumped something into his arm. All the sharp corners of the room seemed to be getting smoother and rounder. The bed was floating on an ocean swell. Bartok's face hung over him, far away.

"Now, Mr -- er -- Ashmead, tell me your secret. Come along."

A voice started reciting the multiple resonance data in a monotone. It didn't feel like his own voice, but it was. It recited the cross-term quantum levels, the nuclear species involved, the values of the frequencies...

"...And the exchange forces resonate, so the rate of the reaction is increased by a factor of ten to the twelfth, that is, a million million, so the Uranium atoms decay to Technetium a million million times faster than normal, and of course, the same applies... to the reverse reaction..."

The reverse reaction! What a fool he'd been! The reverse reaction was accelerated by exactly the same factor as the forward reaction: as fast as the atoms jumped from Uranium to Technetium, they would jump back from Technetium to Uranium. The whole thing was perfectly harmless!

"Now, Mr -- er -- Ashmead, I suggest that all these incomprehensible technicalities are a diversion to distract me from what is really going on in your mind..."

What was he bumbling about? Good God, the man must have thought he was mad! And he had been convinced they were foreign agents!

"Mr Ashmead! What are you laughing at, Mr Ashmead? Tell me.... Tell me..."

END: REG HALDRICKS.

20 JOHN CARNELL

The following is simply a transcript of an interview held recently with the editor of New Worlds, Science Fantasy, and, before it folded, Science Fiction Adventures: John Carnell.

Q: There has been some concern about the future for new writers; after New Worlds and Science Fantasy have closed down, how will the 'young hopeful' break into sf?

A: I think this is mainly a matter of new thinking, and this applies to not only the new writers but to the older ones as well, who just cannot visualise change. We're working on the assumption that, because the magazine market is closing, (and the situation is just the same as when we discussed it a month or two ago) ((See David White's article in the second issue of this magazine --CP)) all possibilities for the new writer, and the markets for him, are also going to close. Now I'm absolutely convinced that this idea of pocket book short stories is the right one. In fact I am very enthusiastic about it indeed. There's nothing like it in the country at the moment; in fact it's taken a number of years for our paperback publishers to accept anthologies and short story collections, as opposed to the novel; up to last year there was a lot of resistance against trying anything new. The Americans made a breakthrough four or five years ago when they started going all out for new novels, and as a result of this the authors found that they earned a lot more money. Previously, they had dealt with the hardcover publisher, who prints only a few thousand copies, and then sells the rights to a pocket book publisher, taking half of the subsequent proceeds, which can be up to three or four thousand dollars. As long ago as 1956 when Alfred Bester was living in London he had already made up his mind that he wasn't going to write any more for hardcover publishers. He wrote his last two or three books expressly for pocket books and took a lot more money than he would have got otherwise. Most of the paperback firms began to see that there wasn't enough material coming from hardcover sources for them to keep all their lists going at capacity, and this was another inducement which has ultimately led to them having contracts with authors that are virtually book contracts. Now a year or so ago this idea gradually broke into British publishing, and Corgi books are now quite prepared and ready to go into production with a collection of stories that have not previously been published. We shall have the edge over every other paperback publisher in the country. That this is the right course to take has, I think, been confirmed by the New Worlds Survey reports which show that a lot of people only buy perhaps one magazine a month, although they buy up to 6 paperback books a month. I think that the idea of publishing new sf in paperback form must have a tremendous advantage over any other form of short story collection, and I've been assured that Corgi will be doing some tremendous publicity. Personally I think it will eventually be possible to bring out a collection every month.

Q: Do you still stand by your opinion that as a form the magazine must by its very nature die out?

A: I'm more convinced now than ever before. I had heard that 'If' or 'Worlds of Tomorrow' is going monthly in the Summer, which is of course a good sign, but overall I don't think the field has improved. There are so few magazines left in the USA, now, that the publisher who owns his own presses can afford to bring out another magazine, like 'Worlds of Tomorrow'. No, I don't think that the situation has altered at all, and in a few years' time most of the magazines will have gone.

Q: Have you anything particular to say on the subject of New Worlds, now almost on its way out?

A: Yes, I have. It is something of a disappointment to me that New Worlds is going out without ever having received an award. In fact one of the big bones of contention I have had for many years is the system of voting at American conventions, which makes it virtually impossible for a foreign magazine to win an award. While the initial lists of proposals are compiled from nominations sent in by people everywhere, two months prior to the Convention they bring these lists down to one composed of the 'top five'. The only people who make the final votes are those who actually attend the convention, and if, for instance, there were 500 people there the chances are that not more than 150 at the most will have ever read New Worlds, or seen it. Obviously, they only vote on what they've read, so it has to be one of the American magazines that wins. Actually, Science Fantasy seems to have stood a better chance than New Worlds, in the past, having got on to the short list at least, mainly as a result of the people in England who nominated it. But then there's been no one at the Convention to vote for it.

Q: What's the state of science fiction in foreign countries?

A: The interesting thing to me is that France, Germany and Italy never actually entered the magazine field. They went straight in to paperbacks, and now all three countries are doing very well with sf. Germany has two major paperback houses and one of these, Wilhelm Heiner, the equivalent of Penguin, is now doing a regular series, pay very good money, and are taking short story collections as well. The other one, Wilhelm Goldman, does hardcover books as well as paperbacks, bringing the hardcover edition out first and then following it with a paperback edition six months later, which often sells around 30,000. Although I did say that Italy never entered the magazine field, in fact they did start with a reprint of 'Galaxy'. But they produce it in a pocket book size, and it fits all the news stands as a book. The top Italian publisher has two series of paperback books, in which sf plays quite a good part. They haven't had, and never will have, the problem of magazines. They missed the period that we've been through as a result of copying the Americans, and went straight to the new form of sf publishing.

Q: How about the USSR?

A: I understand that a monthly magazine was to have been started last October. This was to be in a large size, the same size as the Women's magazines in this country, distributed nationally as a newspaper - cum - magazine. So you see Russia is also going to avoid the interim magazine stage, the problem of the Digest magazine size. In England now the Digest size of magazine, so called because I think the Reader's Digest was the first to use this size, is virtually disappearing from the bookstalls. None of them fit any of the existing display racks.

Q: About your personal tastes. Would you say that sf has lost something by being of more widespread appeal for the masses, and less technical or inventive?

A: Yes, I agree with this very much. I enjoy sf as it is now far more on a wider scale than I did 25 years ago, because 25 years ago it was the ideas that interested me and I wasn't critical of the author's writing. One didn't have to have a degree in English Lit to understand for example what Edgar Rice Burroughs was writing about. Certainly the writers of 25 years ago were not literary men, but their ideas were tremendously intriguing and new, whereas now I find myself desperately groping and looking for something interesting. While I can enjoy the literary standards of writers like Aldiss and Ballard, I seldom get excited about the plot. This is a trend that I

think is necessary for the masses.

From a science fiction reader's point of view, and I mean a reader of many years' standing who has some yardstick to compare modern stories with earlier ones, this indefinable so-called sense of wonder is missing nowadays; I suppose we have lost our sense of wonder because technology has moved on that much faster. Surprises become fewer and further between. 25 years ago if it had been announced suddenly that the first space ship had been built, this would have been more than sensational. There would I have no doubt have been riots. But since the war progress has moved on and we have become indoctrinated to accept the fact that man will be on the moon within the next ten years. The sense of wonder has been taken away by the actual mechanics of our own civilisation, and this is one reason why I think that science fiction had to change itself, from a literary point of view; authors just had to dig around for plots that didn't rely upon too many scientific future developments. Wyndham, for instance, has kept all his plots simple, based around one main idea, and yet his books sell tremendously well. He is probably the best selling top sf writer in the country. This if anything is proof that that is the type of sf to write.

Q: Are there as many new writers coming along as you'd like to see?

A: There never have been. In all my years of editing there have never been sufficient writers. In fact there is a sort of never-ending cycle. Let's assume a would-be writer submits two or three stories to me, all of which are rejected. This is the way it usually happens. He shows promise, so he is encouraged, and finally his fourth story is published. Then there's a mad splurge of writing when he feels he's hit the jackpot and can't do anything wrong; but the next two or three stories don't get accepted. Now this is the crucial point in any young writer's career. He will either tell himself he is going to master this, or he'll give up trying to write sf; and I suppose seven out of ten promising writers abandon it for something else, try other forms of writing, don't get on any better, and give it all up. The three who remain are the ones that interest me. They go on trying. They eventually find that suddenly it begins to flow, the acceptances become more frequent, and it is much more easy. Eventually they get up to the 10,000 word sort of length, and by this time they're thinking in terms of writing a novel. Probably one in five only gets round actually to writing one, but those who do mostly make a success out of it. Philip High has just about got to this level, where he can do either short stories or longer pieces. As writers increase in stature they move into the more profitable American field, or into writing ordinary fiction, out of the New Worlds field completely. By this time their cycle has ended, and a new one is coming along in the form of a new 'wave' of writers; this way, the cycle repeats itself. The current cycle is just about over, and if the magazines were going to go on for another year I think I'd be introuble; but this is the problem all the time.

Q: To finish up with, could you give a few words about yourself, your connexion with sf, your other interests?

I'm one of the few people who earns all his money out of science fiction. The only other person in the world who used to, until 'Famous Monsters' magazine came along, is Forrest Ackerman. Practically all the others earn money elsewhere; Aldiss is with the Oxford Mail, Asimov does lectures and scientific works, and so on. In fact I can't think of any professional writer who earns all his money from science fiction.

If I had the chance to live my life over again, I wouldn't want to do anything else but what I have done, because it's been a tremendously happy experience. I really love this sort of work and being in science fiction; the people I've met are tremendously interesting. I think the greatest pleasure I get out of it is

in seeing authors develop and make the grade, and become novelists, and even branch out into other fields. It's all been a really tremendous experience.

Q: So science fiction is really your life. Certainly it is the major part, but are there any other important interests?

A: No, because I have to do so much work in my spare time. One couldn't possibly edit three magazines during normal working hours. Then the literary agency side and the foreign sales side have all contributed to the fact that I do up to 70 hours' work a week. My spare time activities are things like cine photography; and I have one night off a week in which I go off with some of my local friends. I like reading good novels, but I have to take them in gaps: when I've got really soaked in sf I give it up for three or four days and read an ordinary book for a change.

Q: How long does it take to get soaked?

A: That depends on what comes in. At the moment by coincidence all the material that has been coming in has been very poor, and this is a depressing period. In such a case I do other things to break the routine; but then the whole thing might change next week: I might read five stories in a row that would all excite me, and I'd be off on a reading binge again for a couple of weeks. To suddenly discover a new writer -- like Colin Kapp, for instance -- is a tremendous thing; it's like having a shot of something that puts you on another plane of existence. It doesn't happen very often, but there's always the possibility that somewhere amongst the sludge pile there lies a streak of gold.

WILL YOU JOIN TH' DANCE? Continued.....

"But surely, they must feed, Uuren."

"They dance until they die; it is an honour."

"How are the dancers chosen?"

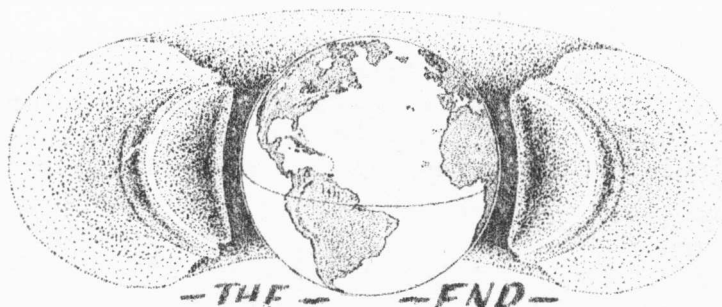
"We do not choose the dancers; fate does. If anyone feels like joining the dance, they do. Perhaps one day I, too....."

Uuren and Dugan stood for a while watching. Then another native came on to the gallery and spoke quickly into Uuren's ear. Uuren turned to Dugan.

"I am sorry, my friend, but I must leave you for a few moments." He left.

Dugan stood watching the dance below. It was curious how the drumming grew on one. He crossed to the edge of the gallery and, taking hold of a hanging rope, swung down on to the dance floor. Furry dancers jostled on all sides. Thump, thump went the native Tom-Tom. Slowly, but with dead sureness, Howard Dugan joined the dance.

END: PETER WHITE.



B²⁴OOKS

BYPASS TO OTHERNESS 35 cents
RETURN TO OTHERNESS by Henry Kuttner. 50 cents Ballantine Books, available
from 'Fantast' (Medway) Ltd

Henry Kuttner's posthumous collection, the 'Otherness' series, are an honest attempt by the publishers to present the author's best short works in collected form. All the stories in these two books were written between 1943 and 1951, considered by many to be this author's best period. The stories range in theme from light fantasy to pure sf, but their manner of narration is consistently convincing and shows a true professional standard of high competency.

Odd indeed that the first story in "Bypass" should not, in fact, be written by Kuttner, but by his wife! This is "Cold War" and features those fantastic hillbillies, the Hogbens. The idea for the story was indeed supplied by Kuttner, but it was entirely written by C.L. Moore. However, such is the rapport between the two authors that the narration is indistinguishable from the rest. No mention of this fact is made in the credits in the book.

There is a certain tendency within the pages of this first book for Kuttner to examine the problems of Homo Superior. Four of the eight stories are based to some extent on this theme; they ask, and answer, the many questions emerging from the results of advantageous mutations. Best of these is "The Piper's Son", the first story in the now-classic 'Baldy' series.

"Bypass to otherness" finishes with two stories datelined during the last war. And it is these two stories which, to my mind, best demonstrate Kuttner's incredible versatility. "Nothing but Gingerbread Left" is the first: a speculation on how to defeat Germans (teach them a brain-rotting mnemonic rhyme), and the second is "Housing Problem", indicating the advantages of having Little Folk as tenants.

The second collection, "Return to Otherness", is a little larger, and a little different. With the exception of the first story, another Hogben episode, these are written around the general concept of robotics. Some are humorous, some are horrific, but all are good and are almost surgical in their precise attention to detail. From the hilarious tale of Galleher, the drunken scientist, to the chiller concerning the last man left alive in a world of androids, these stories are a fine collection of Kuttner's work.

Let us hope that the publishers will be encouraged to continue this series as long as possible, for these stories are without doubt a much-needed stimulant to my occasionally-flagging faith in sf.

--Christopher Priest.

GLADIATOR AT LAW, by Fredrik Pohl and C.M. Kornbluth. Gollancz or Ballantine.

Having waited and waited for this book to appear in Britain, it comes from two publishers simultaneously. The Ballantine edition first came out in America in 1955, was reprinted in 1962. A pity we have not seen it before this.

It's easy and obvious to label this book a 'classic', and in a way like all sf novels from the Pohl-Kornbluth team it is. The writing style, the way the

background, fascinating in itself, fills itself in, and the occasional vivid descriptive passages are all typically excellent. But as I found in 'The Space Merchants', the changes that come about in the characters of the story are not always entirely credible. In this book it is little Norvie Bligh who finds that being plunged into 'Belly Rave' (Belle Reve estate of slum houses) changes him from a small employee of no account who his assistant tricks out of his job to a confident and sure footed individual. His part in the plot is not really revealed until he becomes strongly associated with the lawyer, Charles Munding, short of clients, money and luck until he happens on Norma Lavin and her brother Don, who have by a fluke re-inherited 25% interest in the vast GML bubble home organisation at present run unscrupulously on the lines: 'no job, no home'. But Don has had vital information erased from his brain, and it is the search for this and the eventual recovering of GML homes to Norma and her brother, who plan to see they are marketed as her inventor-father planned, that makes up the theme of the book.

The description of how the Belle Reve estate of identical quick-built houses becomes Belly Rave, a slum area of decaying and crumbling semi-ruins, is masterfully told. It rings so true, as does the picture of the legal and business systems of this future society, and the book is worth reading for this alone. As a whole, the structure is not too well planned out; one gets the feeling that having spent too long in preliminaries the second half of the story is rather crammed up into too small a space; moreover, the otherwise beautifully logical plot line is disturbed by the intrusion of an element of semi-fantasy: the mysterious Green-Charlesworth firm that threatens the whole scheme built up by Munding and three tycoons in it with him. Green-Charlesworth exist, after a fashion, but are a bad flaw in the plot, as is the too-simple ruse of stock-selling that Munding uses eventually to overcome them.

Otherwise the action and the background it is presented against are at all times vividly real. The action is gripping, the plot fascinating. In a book like this it is obviously just not possible to draw good and complete characters of the individuals involved, as well as everything else. Munding remains a featureless figure in the text. It is the tycoons who come through most convincingly as actual people.

This is an obvious first choice for anyone looking for something to read. And for that matter it will easily stand re reading, several times.

-- Charles Platt.

THE GREEN MILLENNIUM by Fritz Leiber Icon, 160 pp at 3/6d.

Unlike Icon's last attempt at science fiction, which was frankly pathetic, they have a fairly good choice here. Fritz Leiber seems to have difficulty in writing a bad story; mediocre is as low as he gets. 'Green Millenium' lies about half way between average and good; Leiber's writing plus the careful background construction lift this book out of the ordinary, with the help of off beat subject matter, but not far enough t for it to be exceptional. If you like cats, or entertainment, or just Leiber on principle, try this one.

--Charles Platt.

FANZINES

Every other issue Beyond will feature extensive fanzine reviews.

LES SPINGE twelve, produced by Dave Hale, 12 Belmont Road, Wollescote, Stourbridge, Worcs. 1/6d a copy or available for trade or in exchange for letters of comment.

It's still not too late (I hope) to get this copy of Spinge, although it is dated January this year. The overall appearance of the magazine is (as usual) extremely competent and professional; electro stencilled illustrations add to the effect and no doubt to the price. The artwork itself varies; Atom's illos of the John Berry story are too small and not very imaginative. This artist's back cover picture I have seen in similar form in various other magazines, but it is still good. There are competent if uninspired contributions from Terry Jeeves and Jim Cawthorne.

This is a fannish fanzine. Where else would one find 'The Goon Goes Under' a not-very-funny farce about the adventures of a special agent who does everything wrong but muddles through in the end? This story is all of 16½ quarto pages long. And where else but in fandom would one find people lapping up this sort of amateur rubbish? It is in my opinion the worst feature of the magazine, which has several redeeming features, such as the editorial by Ken Cheslin, which rambles interestingly and intelligently over many interesting topics.

Jim Linwood's review section is overall too much composed of unsubstantiated strong opinions. It would be nice if the reviewer expressed more clearly the reasons for his beliefs and prejudices. While his review of this magazine and Zenith may be inaccurate in parts, I suspect it reflects the views of several older fans too polite or too reticent to speak their minds in public.

An article by Michael Moorcock suffers in the same way as the review section in that it is not well enough reasoned; there are a lot of opinions (and side tracks) but no solid frame to hang them on. But it has its interesting points.

Last of the articles is by Alan Burns; this was too obscure for me to comprehend at first reading, but not interesting enough to encourage the reader to take it again, methodically section by section.

Fiction comes in the form of two short pieces by Terry Jeeves and Roy Kay, both of them competently done and based on original, if not exciting, ideas. They are enjoyable reading.

The letters section is much too large in comparison with what the letters actually say, and in comparison with what the correspondents actually know of what they are talking about; it takes up 11 pages. The atmosphere, chatty and familiar, is good from the initiate's viewpoint but inevitably boring to the uninitiate. To make this section more interesting and of wider appeal (not that I have any reason to think the editor should want to do this) a lot of cutting needs to be done.

To the less 'fannish' reader Spinge is of interest as a 'phenomenon'. He probably won't find it particularly enjoyable or interesting, in its contents, and it may even be incomprehensible in places, but at the very least reading it would be a mind broadening experience. To a fan, of course, I need hardly bother recommend this magazine; other reviews it has received have already performed this service for me.

RATING: 7/10.

More have arrived in the last few days. Such as...

Scottishe, from Ethel Lindsay, Courage House, 6 Langley Avenue, Surbiton, Surrey. Four times a year, 1/9d a copy, 7/- for five. 26 pages.

I personally found this issue not quite as absorbing as the last; but it's a good fanzine for all of that. The going is heavy -- though not boring -- in parts, but it's interesting if you're patient enough to sit down and read through it. Worst point of the magazine is Walt Willis's article, which seemed to lack inspiration of any kind. He takes up a lot of space with previously circulated material; this obviously has its advantages as a policy, since in future he will be able to reprint bits of this article, and a few years further on still he'll be able to reprint the reprint...

'Machiavarley' deals well with Anglo American relations. Coherent, well written, well argued. Good stuff. Whether one agrees with Brian Varley, who is the writer of the article, or whether one is in opposition, it is possible to appreciate his points, merely because they are clearly laid out, reasoned, and expressed. Other article writers please note...

What would a fanzine be without a big lettercolumn? Scottishe is no exception except that the overall standard of the letters as pieces of prose (and they are of such a length that this is how they must be considered) is high. The cutting is a little detrimental to the letters in some places.

The Editor's Natterings is good in parts. The overall impression could be one of sensibleness. In spite of the fact that attitudes to America have been extensively discussed already in the Letter Column, Ethel still finds something new -- and enlightening -- to say on the subject.

RATING: for entertainment, 1/10. For interest, 9/10.

Mirage Volume One, number 6. From English agent Alan Dodd, 77 Stanstead Road, Hoddesdon, Herts. Published by Jack L. Chalker, Baltimore, USA. 42 pages + cover and backover. Publishing schedule: between 2 and four times a year.

An excellently reproduced cover (why can't British fanzines do this?) is in tune with the tone of the whole magazine, which is predominantly fantasy biased. There's too much of this fanzine for me to review it in full, so I'll pick out one or two points, ...such as the editorial; although Jack Chalker has something of value to say he does take some time to say it. It's not a bad piece of work, something one might expect to see in the editorial column of Analog if John Campbell were sane, but it could have been cut without any loss. The bits of poetry here and there in the magazine are pleasant and fairly well done; good, but not outstanding. There are longish pieces of fiction from Seabury Quinn, Clark Ashton Smith, David H. Keller and Donald Fryer. There is a reprint of an article by H.P. Lovecraft, with added notes from August Derleth.

Highly recommended if you like this sort of thing.

Skyrack 63, same address and details as in the review of Skyrack 62.

News snippets about forthcoming books take the place of the 'Who's Who In Fandom' section this issue. I hope this isn't a permanent change... Several reviews, bits of other news here and there, coverage of Brian Aldiss's departure from England, + usual sections.

RATING: 8/10.

Zenith 3, from Peter Weston, 9 Porlock Crescent, Northfield, Birmingham 31. Single copies 1/- each, subscriptions of up to 5 issues' worth accepted. 40 pages, + front and backover.

A lot of electro stencilled artwork appears in Zenith now. There are also quite a few pieces of fair reproduction of photographs. This issue is a great improvement over Number 2; the bad features have been altered or scrapped and the whole appearance is much cleaner. Some of the letters could have been left out, others could have been cut a little less; comments on the magazine can be interesting, if they are left roughly as the correspondent wrote them. Comments from the editor in this section are occasionally distracting.

Other features in Zenith include a reprint of an article warning against sf societies that get out of control, a short non-critical descriptive piece about the 'Doctor Who' tv series, an article on the fads and fancies of Analog's editor John Campbell, a final instalment on Astro-Philately, a checklist of Panther books, and news of forthcoming sf titles in both paper and hard backs. There are some fairly good fanzine reviews and some good book reviews. This month there is only one piece of fiction: 'No Smoking' by E.C.Tubb. The theme is in no way connected with sf, . strangely enough. Reading the story serves to make clear the gulf that lies between amateur efforts and the work of a professional writer: one of slickness. Where an amateur writer struggles to express himself, the professional does it automatically, almost. By professional standards the story is average but it is good stuff for a fanzine.

Mik's artwork, which appears throughout the fanzine, looks much better electro stencilled than it did last issue drawn straight on to the stencil. Also represented is Atom, who does the front cover and one typical Atom interior illustration. The cover is original but is marred by the most peculiar looking wheels on the hopelessly unstable land yacht pictured. Still, the effect is a good one.

This is a good fanzine, which should appeal to most people. It has only to become less self-conscious and a little more casual in approach. I hope to see an interesting editorial not on the subject of the magazine next issue.

RATING: 8/10

Vector 24. Sent to members of the British SF Association. Edited by Archie Mercer, published eight times a year by Michael Rosenblum.

I'm not sure whether Vector is suffering from a lack of material or a plenitude of mediocre contributions. Either way, the material is not good. The main article is titled 'A Flight Across Barsoom' by Brian Rolls and the heading is the best part of it. The writer tends to describe (rather laboriously) the planet of Mars as visualised by E.R.Burroughs as if it really existed. He then goes on to give summaries of the plots of the Martian books at present available in four square books in this country; I cannot really see the point of this. Anyone who is a Burroughs fan will find this article boring, and anyone who is not a Burroughs fan will find it boring. The former will know it all already, the latter will not want to know it, unless he has never heard of Burroughs; and this seems unlikely, with the number of his books around. There is a feature article on 'The Hypotheson' which has been reprinted from somewhere. It is an example of a scientist amusing himself, which limits its interest to other scientists. I'm afraid it didn't amuse me.

Vector contains a very good letters section, some useless not-reviews which are less informative than the blurb on the back of the books they describe, and various sales and wants. The articles aren't up to the standard of the departments.

RATING: 5/10.

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"HAVERINGS" from Ethel Lindsay, Courage House, 6 Langley Avenue, Surbiton, Surrey appearing 6 times a year, 1/6d for two issues, each one containing 8 quarto pages.

While Ethel may prefer to call her opinions on fanzines 'comments', most people would class them as reviews. And this is all 'Haverings' is composed of: reviews of fanzines Ethel has received. Unfortunately, they are not very good reviews. They suffer from a combination of superficiality and lack of perception, plus a tendency to wander. Too often after reading a review the reader has little better idea than he had beforehand of whether the magazine would be of interest to him or not. This is a pity, since the field 'Haverings' covers is wide, and it could be a useful publication. As it is, its main interest must be for editors wishing to find new fields to trade in.

RATING: 5/10

SKYRACK 62 from Ron Bennett, 17 Newcastle Road, Wavertree, Liverpool 15. 6d per copy, 2/6 for six issues. 4 tightly packed pages of news about all aspects of fandom.

News of general, as well as specialised interest is presented here in a non-esoteric form that should interest neofan and older fan alike. The 'Who's who in Fandom' section is this issue by Archie Mercer on Terry Jeeves, and is well done indeed. The fanzine reviews are informative, but tend to be too kind. I fail to see how 'Skyrack' could not be interesting to anyone the slightest bit inclined towards sf fandom.

RATING: 8/10

THE SCARR number 3, January 1964. From G.L. Charteris, 3 Lancaster Avenue, Bangor, N. Ireland. No price given so perhaps it isn't for sale. Try asking for a copy.

For me this fanzine started off on the wrong foot when I saw above the contents: "Crazy or not, this edition's not too serious". With misgivings, I proceeded. An article by John Berry is better than his average; a little long winded but it has its amusing parts. The quotes following it as space fillers are funnier, though. The humour of 'Minor Problems' is lost as it becomes clear that the whole shaggy dog story is essentially fabricated; if it were a true account, there would be some point to it.

Bob Shaw's contribution, on how to write amusing articles, is an excellent example of how not to write amusing articles. Then those letters again. Not so many this time, but as long as ever. Perhaps they'd be more interesting if the editor wrote them himself and put fake names to them. To me, they contribute nothing.

The final section is by the editor, who prints extracts from his youthful diary, unfortunately more of interest to him than the general reader. Mr Charteris is no Pepys, alas. Some cutting could have been made here, too.

'The Scarr' has its good points, and is readable enough. RATING: 6/10

GORMLESS NUMBER ONE from Charles Platt 8 Sollershoth West Letchworth Herts. Subtitled 'A magazine of pathetic humour and illiterate crud'. Available free to anyone who'll comment on it, 6d a copy otherwise. 12 folded-foolscap pages. Next issue due out at Christmas.

Phrases like '...not very funny, just silly...' '...if you have any reputation in fandom, this should destroy it' stick in my mind. Anyway, I'm still trying to get rid of a few more copies.

FILM REVIEW: BY ALAN DODD.

"The Hand of Death" Starring John Agar Paula Raymond Steve Dunne.

Any film in which the hero disappears half way through to be replaced by a cheaper stunt man dressed in a monster outfit must surely be the most economical way of making a horror science fiction horror film these days, such a case in part is 'The Hand of Death'.

Scientist John Agar experimenting in a remote laboratory with a nerve gas is endeavouring to combine the gas with scopolamine hypnotic drugs; thus the gas spread will paralyse the enemy and when they recover from its effects the hypnotic drug will make them easily susceptible to the commands of the conqueror. Combining the two elements and binding them into one gas easily sprayable is the main problem.

Working on the gas in a primitive lab., tired, Agar knocks over the flask containing the gas and it absorbs itself into his tissues; since through previous experiments he has absorbed small quantities he appears to be immune. Awakening the next morning, though, he finds his skin is darkening as though tanned by the sun and when he grabs his assistant the touch of his hand brings death and a charcoal black mark from his touch.

Pausing only to stop at a filling station where the attendant also grabs him and dies for the trouble of it, he heads for the doctor he knows may be able to help him, but by the time he has been there a short time his body has become bloated and swollen and his clothes are bursting literally from the seams. The face has become a distorted black wrinkled obscenity that no one dares approach, since a single touch from his skin means death. Death to taxi drivers along the route. The now swollen-throated creature can't explain because he can't talk. At his former girl friend's house by the sea the police shoot him down and the swollen carcass, black and bloated, drifts back and forth with the hopeless swell of the water.

It is difficult to feel anything for the scientist to whom this happens; his interest is solely in developing a weapon which in turn destroys him as surely as Dr. Jekyll's potion eventually destroyed him. Each man is capable of creating his own Frankenstein, and in time he too will be destroyed by it. Perhaps not so melodramatically, or so frighteningly; in an age where screen scientists become HIDEOUS SUN DEMONS, ALIGATOR PEOPLE and the like perhaps one more is due to be lost in the process. HAND OF DEATH offers nothing we have not seen before.

END: ALAN DODD.

LETTERS

(This section is short because of lack of space and lack of letters).

From Archie Mercer, 70 Worrall Road, Bristol 8.

Peter White's article seemed to be addressed more to the BSFA membership than to BEYOND readers. It hasn't been submitted here, so I don't know why he should try it on you first. Anyway, toleration of artistic freedom is one thing, but liking any given brand of artistry is something very much else. If somebody doesn't like a certain type of thing, he has every right to say so and to abstain from experiencing it more than he can help. He has no right to urge its suppression just because he dislikes it -- but if he can persuade the practitioner(s) to turn to something more to his taste, why shouldn't he?

In general I thought that this issue fell far below the last in interest. The best story was 'The Bookshop', but as I don't care for most short stories anyway, even professional ones, even it didn't make my day. The best items were to the two crazy ones: "Alfred" and the Valentine.

From Terry Jeeves, 30 Thompson Road, Sheffield 11.

"Fun of the Fair" I enjoyed, and although jerky in parts I agree with you that it was considerably better than normal fan fiction.

Peter White's article was rubbish, but dangerously so. The BSFA is just as entitled to its opinion as he is -- by 'BSFA' I refer to the members -- and if the majority prefers 'Happy' stories, then they have a right to say so. If an author wishes to write 'down beat' then that is his right; but if an editor finds that his sales go down when he buys too much 'down beat' stuff, then it is obvious what will happen and no force -- censorship or coercion -- has been applied, beyond normal choice by the reader and by the editor. The point Mr White misses is very simple. The author has a perfect right to write what he chooses, BUT he has no right to expect people to pay him to write what they do not like.

"Riders in the Sky": a waste of paper, and "Death Image" was the same. Both depended on a brief idea and a scrappy, contrived situation. "The Bookshop" I enjoyed, and it was a far better piece of work than the other two.

From Peter White, 75 Ashley Road, Epsom, Surrey.

Phil Harbottle's story was one of the best yet. His innocence in the face of cliché was so unself-conscious it gave the whole story a kind of charm.

From Jim England, 64 Ridge Road, Kingswinford, Staffs.

Congratulations on BEYOND -- it's sensational! Yours is the first amateur magazine (I hesitate to call it a 'fanzine') I have come across containing 90% readable fiction. I really enjoyed Phil Harbottle's story. Having only seen his articles before, I didn't know he had it in him. He seems to be much better at story writing than at article writing.

...I completely disagree with Dave Hale about there being little left to say or argue about in sf.

New feature. All contributions from readers welcome.

DAVE JOHNSTONE, 37 Cross Hall Road, St Neots, Hunts. wishes to sell or swap the following:

Dark Mind, Dark Heart Ed. Derleth Arkham House // The Abominations of Yondo
Clarke Ashton Smith Arkham House // Carnacki the Ghost Finder W.H.Hodgson
Arkham House // Dreams and Fancies Lovecraft Arkham House // Something about
Cats Lovecraft Arkham House // Night's Yawning Peal Ed. Derleth Arkham
House // Tales from Underwood Dr David Keller Arkham House // Best Supernatural
stories from H.P.Lovecraft World Library // Pleasant Dreams Robert Bloch Ark-
am House // Hounds of the Tindalos F.Belnap Long Reprint of Arkham House // 25
Weird Tales magazines from 1936 to 1950 // A Century of Thrillers // A Century of
Detective Stories // The Mystery Book. All of these books are bound, the last 4
without dust jackets. Also available are 200 paperback sf and supernatural stor-
ies and books; if readers write to the above address stating their wants Dave will
try to be of help. He wants to get hold of the following: The Lurker on the
Threshold Lovecraft and Derleth // Northwest of Earth C.L.Moore // Mr Mortimer
Gets The Jitters Berkeley Gray // Alias Norman Conquest Berkeley Gray // Old
thriller by Victor Gunn. Send titles please.

Roger Peyton has a checklist of 'Science Fiction Adventures' magazine, indexed for
titles authors and issues with a cover by Mike Higgs. 1/6d inc. postage. Write to
Rog at 77 Grayswood Park Road, Quinton, Birmingham 32.

US correspondence is being arranged by Charles Platt, address at bottom of this
page. It's cheap and quick by airletter, also interesting, of course. And if any
fans reading this are interested in joining a round robin, these are being organ-
ised at the same address by the same person. Namely me.

Phil Harbottle's evaluation of John Russell Fearn is something of a masterpiece.
Whether you like this author or not, the Evaluation is worth having for its own
sake. 30 foolscap pages, 2/- inc. postage. 27 Cheshire Gardens Wallsend on Tyne
Northumberland is the address to write to for this.

WRITERS AND ARTISTS STILL NEEDED FOR 'BEYOND'. A prize of 10/- worth of books of
the author's choice goes to the author of the story which the Editor, basing his
decision a lot on letters received, considers to be best of the issue. Last month's
prize went to Archie Potts. Last Issue's competition had few entries; since the
competition was to suggest improvements for this magazine, does this mean there is
not much left to improve??? Dave Johnstone gets the prize for suggesting a swap
and sell column (this page, in other words). The idea may not be strikingly or-
iginal, but it's what I thought out of all the ideas Beyond needed most. Other id-
eas included: SF crossword in each issue, women's column (I'm still trying to get
one of these), more use of colour in the mag (this will come eventually), a pro-
fessionally printed cover the same for each issue (never!), a readers' ballot to
choose the best story of each issue (sure, if people would write in; but at the
moment I base my decision on readers' letters anyway) .

BEYOND costs 9d an issue, 1/6d for 2, 2/- for three, 2/6d for four. Send anything
remotely resembling money to Charles Platt, 8 Sollershott West, Letchworth, Herts.

Charles Platt will buy or trade for the following: Roy Kay's 'CHAOS' number one,
Peter Weston's 'ZENITH' number one, and the first issue of the American "Worlds of
Tomorrow" magazine.

Ella Parker is redecorating her flat and wants to paper one wall of the bath-
room with free offer coupons, circulars and the like. She'd be very grateful for any
contributions. Send them to : Flat 43, William Dunbar House, Albert Road, N.W.6.