DOUBLE BILL 8

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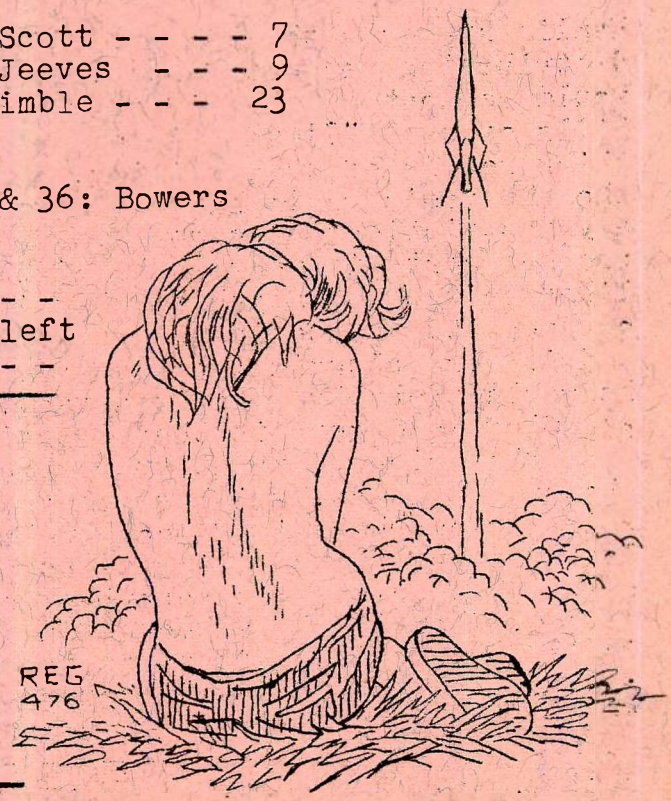
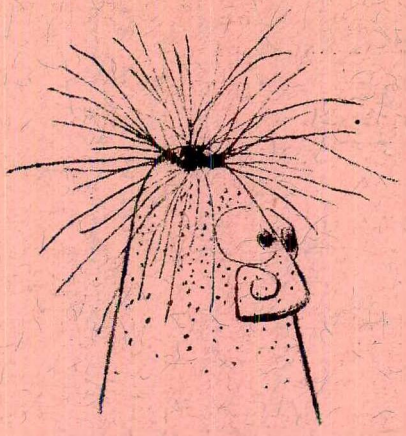


As this issue goes to press, we were saddened to hear of the death of

MARK CLIFTON

His contribution to the DOUBLE-BILL Symposium was one of the last things that he wrote. Mr. Clifton had a terminal illness of 3-4 months; he died of cancer. We hope to include in DOUBLE-BILL #9 a tribute to him, written by Judith Merril.



THE BEMS' CORNER

EDITORIAL BY:

BILL MALLARDI

It must be that I've got a slight case of Nydahls Disease, of which Bob Tucker mentions in the lettercolumn. Oh, don't worry, Bob, we won't fold.. (We can't.) It's just that after busting a gut on lastish, we had relaxed a bit longer than usual. (You people may not realize it, but that Annish took a lot out of us -- both money-wise and physically.) The way we figure it, for what we charged against the actual cost of #7 (including postage, paper, ink, cover, electronic stencils, and whatall) we lost between 50-75¢ on <u>each</u> copy.

And we're tired.

So we took our time before starting this issue --- and then had to rush it through in one big flurry.. Never again. We'll take the advice of the pro's in the Symposium ourselves, and not get so involved that "the tail begins to wag the dog", as methinks Dean McLaughlin said.

One word on the letter-col this time: I didn't edit the letters as much this time, thus resulting in a 22 pager. Owell, let me have a few flings, huh? We had to celebrate #7 someway...

Bowers points out that our repro hasn't been too hot lately...and he's right. For one thing, I just bought an almost new typer and it cuts out the "o"'s, "e"'s,etc., completely. I now use one helluva "Dagwood" sandwich -- typing plate, cushion sheet, stencil, and film.

Also re: letters...Clay Hamlin suggests the N3F subsidize a printing of the Symposium for general distribution thruout fandom. Tell me, Clay, do you honestly think the N3F would consent to that if they know we want the money to help support the bills of the "Cleveland For '66" group, of which we are a part? I hardly think so. As of this writing, as far as I know, it <u>would</u> be ok with <u>us</u>; tho the pro's would have to give their permission too. But we don't want any restrictions like not letting us use the money made (above cost) for pre-con costs if we get the bid. For one thing, I don't think the club likes to support anything that is done by and for an individual fan group, or does it? And seeing that Howard Devore is on the Directorate of the club and is also plugging for and helping the Detroit group re: a con in '66, he would probably veto it anyway.. (That is, unless Howard would RATHER see Cleveland get it than Detroit, thus saving himself a lot of work!)

The price to print the symposium quoted in the lettercolumn was a thousand dollars, which seems a mite too much. It seems there should be a printer somewhere in fandom or the mundane world who could do it for us a lot cheaper. The questions also arise as to how much to charge for each copy, whether make it paperback or hardcover, or if it should be illustrated.(There'll be a heck of a lot of monotonous printed type if it isn't.) We'll leave it up to the N3F now...Don Franson, Hamlin, and the other Directors...what do you say? Will you consider our request? <u>We</u> certainly couldn't pay for it, ourselves.

"Quick, grab the Raid!" "What for?" "Becasue the BEATLES have invaded.."

Speaking of Franson, Don comes up with a good question in the latest TNFF re: both cities wanting the con in '66. Like, how would the US fen who didn't go to London in '65 vote for their choice? (Presuming of course, that they are non-attending members of the LonCon.) Don suggests that "a sort of primary election be held at the '65 Midwestcon, with the winner going to London with the con in his pocket for the formality of selection." But Don, doesn't that seem a bit presumptuous? Isn't it possible that the results of the London voting would sway the results of the stateside voting to the other bidder? No, that suggestion doesn't seem to fit the bill. What I suggest is this: Have the London Convention Committee send out voting ballots to all the non-attending members when they send out the progress reports, and let them chose either Cleveland or Detroit, send the ballots back to England, to combine with the con attendee's votes. That seems fair, to me. (Of course, if London doesn't like this idea, and they agree to it, we could by-pass London and let the fans vote here in the States this year for the '66 con -- at Pacificon II.) By the way, this is all based on Franson's thought that "how a handful of Americans at London, plus disinterested (or uninterested) Englanders and continentals can make this decision?" Which is something else to be discussed by fandom here and abroad. Should we worry about how the conventioneer's would vote re: both cities? Should US fen have a voice in the voting, who don't go to London? I think so, to a degree; as I mentioned above, that would be a good way to handle it.

In this issue we have a new columnist: Jack Eldridge, an expert on modern jazz and a disc jockey with one of the few, if any, all-jazz shows in Ohio. I'd approached Jack on the possibilities of a column almost 6 months ago or so, even before ENCLAVE got Ted White to do his column -- so any callers of "imitator" can herewith swallow their own gore. But perhaps I'd just best explain it? Jack came out with his show on radio station WCUE (1150) a year ago..and it was about that time my musical tastes changed somewhat radically. So when I heard about the program I gave it a listen. To my pleasant surprise, I liked the stuff he played, and listened every chance I got. One night I heard him mention he read sf, so I promptly gave him a ring, and we talked on things from sf to D-B... Twas then I broached the idea of him doing a jazz column for us. It finally jelled, and I think you will like what he writes. The station he works for, by the way, is one of the few around this area that plays good, "adult" music, compared to the trash the rest of the herd drums constantly into the publics ear.

= =

What would you call them if "The Singing Nun" joined forces with the "BEATLES"? Why, "The Praying Mantis's", of course...

+ +

While on the subject of trash in music, one of the worst is "The Bird" (Is The Word) by some clowns aptly called "The Trashmen". Sometimes I suspect the folks who make the pop records of the day deliberately go out of their way to make the most horrible things conceivable just to see if the gullible public will buy it. The sad thing is, they do.

President Kennedy's assassination occurred just after #7 was mailed out, and I was just as affected by it as most of the other fans' reactions were. However, Time has passed, and it's too late to go into it now...

And that farce the other night between Cassius Clay and Sonny Liston just about took the cake...I don't doubt but that it speeds the end of boxing in this country. See you later...Bemmishly, Bill Mallardi

COA: E.E.EVERS, AP'T. 4-C, 208 E. 4TH ST., N.Y. 9, N.Y.

WALLABY STEW

Robert Coulson/FANZINE REVIEWS

fanac #93, 95, 96

(Walter Breen, 2402 Grove St., Berkeley 4, California - irregular - four for 50¢) Here I've been thinking harsh things about Walter for his non-publishing, and it turns out that he had been publishing; I just hadn't been getting copies. Of course, now that I get these three issues I find that two of them are mostly taken up with con reports, but you can't have everything. (Even #93 has a short report on the "ESFAcon".... hmmm....FANAC, the mag that comes out whenever there's a con report to include.) #95 has the Midwestcon report, and #96 consists entirely of an 18-page commentary on the DisCon. The first two also contain various items of fan news, plus a few new shots in the feud with STARSPINKLE. (As I don't get STARSPINKLE, I can't make a full report, but I understand there have been a couple of bitter exchanges.) Irregular publication is not the best type for a fan newsletter; too many of the news items have already been acquired from other sources before FANAC appears. But Walter always manages to find several that nobody else has mentioned.

science fiction times #409 & 410

(James V. Taurasi, Sr., 119-46 27th Ave., College Point 54, New York - 15¢) Even as a monthly, it seems that SFT has to maintain its spurious numbering system by sending out two "issues" bound as one and indistinguishable from what anyone else would call a single issue. (They want 30¢ for this "combination", too--it isn't worth it by about 25¢.) Newcomers who might stand in awe of a publisher who can put out 410 successive issues should be informed that actually he hasn't--at a guess, he's published about 300 actual issues (which is quite a feat in itself, and one that another publisher would be quite proud of, without attempting to artificially inflate.) This magazine is devoted almost wholly to professional news, with occasional items about conventions and so on sneaking in. This particular issue publishes Hugo Gernsback's "Prophets Of Doom" speech--I've now seen that speech in at least 4 places, but to give SFT credit, it came out with it first. There is also considerable news of the professional field, which is actually providing some news these days.

NOTE: Juanita just read the first page of my "manuscript" for this column, and said that the Gernsback speech did not neither appear first in SFT; it appeared first in another fanzine. I'll take her word for it; she glances over the fanzines as they come in. I sometimes don't read them at all until I start reviewing them (occasionally not even then).

menace of the lasfs #82

(Bruce Pelz, Box 100, 308 Westwood Plaza, Los Angeles, California, 90024 - bi-weekly - 10¢) All the news of Los Angeles fandom, if you're really interested in Los Angeles fandom.

skyrack #61

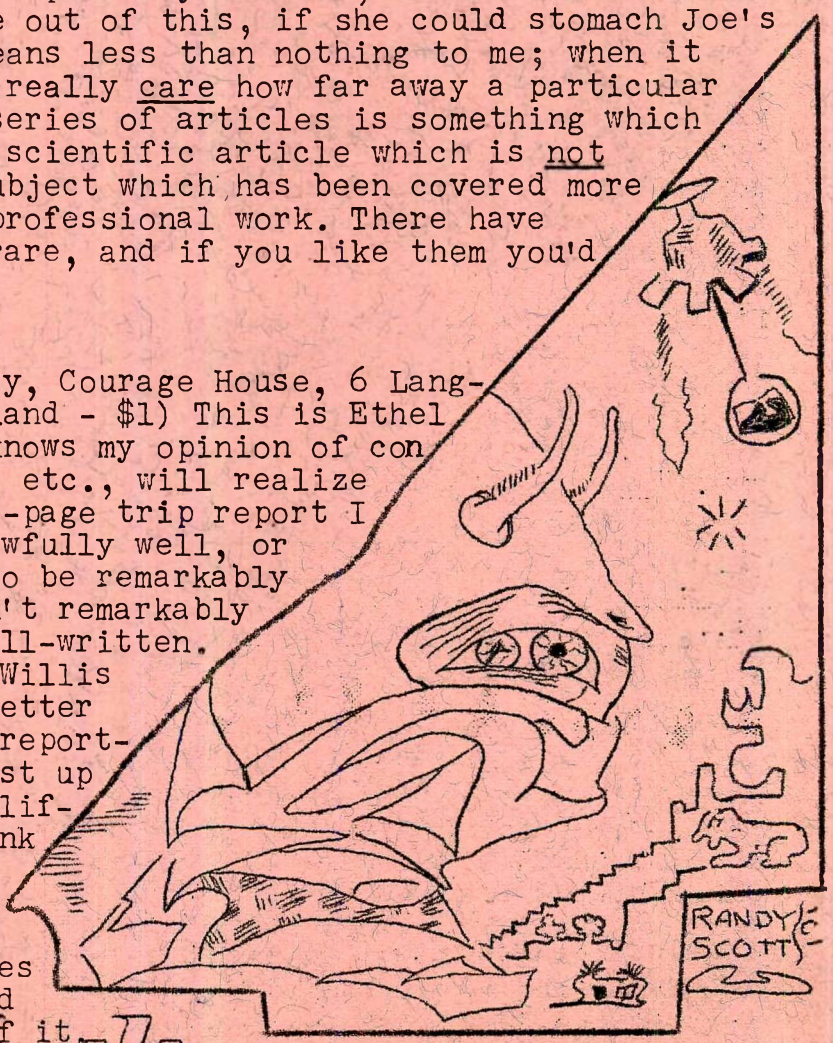
(Ron Bennett, 17 Newcastle Road, Wavertree, Liverpool 15, England - monthly - 6 for 35¢) The magazine of British fan and professional news. This issue is mostly devoted to the demise of Nova Publications and to fanzine reviews. A flyer with it advertises the German "Castle-Con"; for their 1964 convention the German fans have managed to rent a genuine 1000-year-old castle. (This is one that Poul Anderson should attend.)

G^2 Vol.3, #2 & 3

(Joe and Roberta Gibson, 5380 Sobrante Ave., El Sobrante, Calif., 94803 - monthly - 3 for 25¢) Both of these issues are mostly letters, which give free rein to Joe's really remarkable talent for arguing agressively while failing to answer a single one of his opponent's points. I admire facile debaters, and Joe is one of the best; it's no use trying to make him stick to the points under discussion. He just won't do it. (However, he's quite good-natured about his evasiveness; I once spent considerable energy trying to get John Rackham to stick to the subject instead of inventing straw-men, and he simply got mad and refused to write to me at all anymore. Joe simply chortles cheerfully and goes on giving irrelevant answers. Even to the point of flatly denying statements that he has previously made in print, as he did once with Rosemary Hickey.) Joe is busy charting stars, also--possibly Juanita, who is an astronomical-stf fan, would get some pleasure out of this, if she could stomach Joe's pseudo-cute writing style. It means less than nothing to me; when it comes right down to it, I don't really care how far away a particular star is. However, Joe's entire series of articles is something which is almost unique in fanzines; a scientific article which is not simply an amateur rehash of a subject which has been covered more lucidly in a readily-available professional work. There have been a few others, but they're rare, and if you like them you'd better grab G^2.

the lindsay report

(Ethel Lindsay, Courage House, 6 Langley Ave., Surbiton, Surrey, England - $1) This is Ethel's TAFF Report, and anyone who knows my opinion of con reports, accounts of fan visits, etc., will realize that before I spend $1. for a 60-page trip report I either have to like the author awfully well, or think that the report is going to be remarkably well-written. Actually, this isn't remarkably well-written; it's moderately well-written. It isn't in the same class as a Willis trip-report, but it's somewhat better than the average run of fannish reporting. I rather enjoyed it, at least up to page 35, where the trip to California begins. I don't really think that this section was any less interesting; it's just that California fandom publishes so much stuff about itself and its parties and club meetings and picnics and whatnot that I'm thoroughly sick of it. □//□



(This is reinforced by the fact that I mildly enjoyed the comments on the Ellingtons, who don't usually get included in other reports.) There are two pages of thoroughly blurred photos; good enough so that if you already know the fans pictured the photos are enjoyable, but providing nothing of interest about the fans you don't already know. Also, the back cover was coming off my copy; this was speedily remedied by the use of our Swingline #13 stapler and some 3/8 inch staples. 1/4 inch staples aren't quite big enough to hold this together. Is it worth the price? Well, that depends on how well you like to read about fans and their home lives.

niekas #7

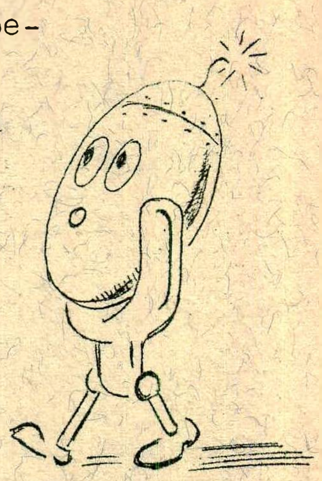
(Ed Meskys, c/o Norm Metcalf, Box 336, Berkeley, California, 94701 - quarterly - free for comment - co-editor, Felice Rolfe) This issue contains two excellent items; Poul Anderson's review of The Man In The High Castle (in which he mentions a book of which I hadn't previously heard and which sounds quite interesting, Swastika Night) and the poem by C.S. Lewis, reprinted from PUNCH. There are other minor goodies, including the cover. The only drawback is a personal dislike of mine; I detest reading items which are "continued on page xx" and I feel that there is no possible reason for having such items in a fanzine. (Or, rather, that the only reason for having them is bad planning, which has been responsible for one or two of them in YANDRO.) I particularly dislike having the editorial continued just behind the letter-column because it's especially confusing; unless the reader is markedly alert the tendency is to read the last editorial answer to a letter, glance over to the next page and suddenly find yourself reading something which has no relevancy to the previous comments. However, Ed has enough good material in here that I'll grant him a minor fault and say that this NIEKAS is a fine fanzine.

The Bills requested a short column this time, so I'll close by mentioning that I recieved an ad for a forthcoming horror publication called DANTE'S INFERNO, to be edited by Dave Jones, 324 Avenue "A", Battle Creek, Michigan. "YOU simply cannot afford to let this opportunity /to subscribe/ slip through your fingers..." it says. You might be surprised at the number of opportunities to subscribe to crudzines that I can afford to let slip, Dave.

PANICDOTES---1 SI STRICKLEN

Anybody who talked to Harry Norf ended up talking about frozen Mastodons. Harry was a nut on the subject; he had read somewhere about those frozen Siberian mammoths that were found complete with mouth-fulls of fresh buttercups, and ever since then he had entered every conversation by declaring in a loud roar, "God-dammit, you just can't freeze an elephant so quick it can't swallow!" At first, everybody took it as an amusing eccentricity and didn't think much about it, because Harry was infamous for wild notions. For example, he was convinced that smoking was deadly, and had switched exclusively to chewing. And he once spent the better part of two weeks perched in the top of a large oak tree because, as he put it, "Trees are the natural home of mankind!"

So we all resigned ouselves to a couple of weeks of being buttonholed by Harry and, while dancing lightstep to avoid stray spurts of Bull Durham, being told about the freezing speed of large animals, the wilting time of fresh buttercups, and the multiplicity of scientific hoaxes. This was just another of the side-tracks that Harry was constantly chasing down, or so we thought until the time Harry was arrested, roaring drunk, for breaking into the Rollins Coal Company's icehouse. When they came to get him, he was cramming fresh buttercups down the throat of a panic-stricken baby elephant he had stolen (God knows how) from a nearby circus, and shouting at the top of his lungs, "Freeze, you little bastard, freeze!" His boss managed to keep it out of the newspapers, but everybody was worried about Harry, because he was liable to do anything when he really got on a kick.



This was about the time, you remember, that Prof. Korpal over at Evergreen U. created such a hullabaloo by inventing the first time machine, and various members of the History Department created an even bigger one by refusing to go through it. They said they knew what the old times were really like, and they had no intention of exposing themselves. Korpal was really taken aback by this, because he had already refused to go through himself. and he was hard-pressed for a qualified volunteer. He was even considering taking a Negro, when Harry appeared, dressed in a brand new Frank Buck outfit, bearing about a dozen cameras, and demanding to be sent to Siberia "In the time of the Mastodons". Korpal was so delighted to have a volunteer that he hustled Harry into the chamber and bundled him off to his destination right then. He (Korpal) said later that Harry muttered the whole time about fresh buttercups, quick-frozen elephants, and finding out the truth.

It's really too bad Harry didn't wait another week; he would have gone wild when the Russians announced that they had found a herd containing no fewer than six Mammoths, all quick-frozen and all with fresh buttercups in their mouths, along with two quick-frozen Elk with fresh wintergreen leaves in their mouths and, most remarkable of all, a quick-frozen Harry Norf with fresh tobacco in his mouth.

The Grey Rhythm-Tide of Space

Caught in the grey rhythm-tide of space,
Eternity flows from shore to shore,
Spanning ages from race-to-race,
Where man-and-mind will soar.

BILL WOLFENBARGER

Remember: It's Cleveland in '66 for the WorldCon!

Straight from the JUG

COLUMN BY JACK ELDRIDGE

Lately jazz critics have spent the majority of their time writing about how sick jazz is today and the low productivity of many new (and old) jazz artists. This is true to a point, if you spend your record listening hours searching out the weaker sides that are being released each month by money hungry record companies. A point that is sadly being neglected however, is that seldom has jazz as a whole, been played by so many talented and strongly proficient musicians. Before I get into this I would like to talk about some of the reasons that much of the jazz heard today is not as good as it could be.

In the mid 50's, when the popularity of "West Coast" jazz had begun to peter out many clubs found that jazz music would not bring people thru the doors. More and more clubs began to drop their jazz policies and many musicians found themselves out of work. About this time, the music of organist Jimmy Smith was becoming popular and he was drawing large crowds to the clubs he worked at. Many piano players made the switch to organ, sensing the trend that was coming. Soon, small clubs were buying organs and small groups were wailing to packed houses and the age of the "Organ House" had begun. Because of the popularity of the small organ trio or quartet and quintet, with its hard, driving sound, many musicians who had made their living playing rock and roll music were able to get jobs working with organists who wanted tenor or alto men who could lay down a hard, earthy sound, and many of the problems that plague the jazz scene today developed.

This is not a condemnation of organ players or the organ in jazz. Personally, I have always liked the sound of organ in jazz when it is played well and many modern organists such as Jimmy Smith, Richard "Groove" Holmes, Eugene Ludwig and Shirley Scott have a lot to say, and say it well. However, it is time that jazz took a long look at itself and decided to clean its own house. Many of the things that the non jazz orientated audience comes across and makes popular are certainly not within the realms of proper musicianship, although some will argue that we should not knock success. I think success should be knocked if it is built on phoniness, or, as in the case being discussed, inferior music that is sucked up in the age of predigested thought, thrown out of a million screaming juke boxes, and casts a shadow of suspect on what we truly know as jazz.

Getting back to the brighter side of the jazz scene today, there is a multitude of brilliant young musicians playing and recording. Unfortunately, many fine artists are still being neglected by the jazz listener, and most unfortunately, the jazz critic, the majority of which choose to turn a tin ear away, to listen only to the familiar musicians to whom they have been listening for a decade or more. The same can be said about the jazz listener when one looks at the results of the yearly jazz polls that are conducted by the major jazz magazines. In the majority of cases, the same musicians who won the polls ten years ago are winning them today with little or no mention made of the young hipsters who are cutting the

oldsters to death in many respects. Although many of the artists who have been on the scene for years, (Miles & Diz) are still high on the list it should not mean that the young musician should be ignored. If you scan any of the jazz polls you will find the names of trumpeters Freddie Hubbard, Tommy Turrentine, or Dupree Bolton far down the list, if you find them at all. These are just three of the brightest, finest young trumptet players around who are not getting the recognition that is due them. The same holds true in all musical catagories, and it seems to me that those who write about jazz and criticize it so severely should spend more time exhorting the public to take the time to listen to the young musicians to find out what they are missing.

Each night on my all night jazz show, I receive phone calls from people who have discovered a musician he had not heard or noticed before and this gives me more pleasure than anything that happens on "Adventures in Jazz". I do not believe in spending precious moments of my program, talking about what I just played and what I am about to play. I don't try to educate the listeners by talk. I just play the music and let the listener hear for himself, and it seems to be working out pretty good judging from the comments on the show.

Now, seeing that I have been asked to write a column on jazz for "Double B", and seeing that there are enough jazz critics around who dote on the negative side of things, I hope that I can spend much of my writing about the bright side of the jazz world with revues of some of the albums that are released each month.

I had a chance to talk briefly with John Coltrane during his last stay at the "Jazz Temple" in Cleveland and John was under the impression that jazz is being received rather heartily right now. He told me that he has played many cities in the past year or so that have been rather rugged for acceptance of the Coltrane brand of modern music, but the fact that more radio stations are playing jazz and are not holding back on what is being played is definitely helping jazz. With more and more stations playing things that have never been allowed to be played before, the public is able to get a chance to hear and decide for itself what it likes and does not like. I find that I get far fewer calls and letters complaining about my playing Coltrane, Charles Lloyd, Ornette Coleman etc., now, than I did when I first brought "Adventures in Jazz" to Akron-Cleveland. Many persons have told me that the chance to hear it opened their ears to music they were condemning without proper trial.

I have a friend who thinks the public's recent acceptance of jazz, or I should say, more jazz, is fine, as long as everybody doesn't start digging it. He says that if everybody digs it jazz will lose its appeal to the hipster and he will have to start digging the Lawrence Welks and Lester Lanins. Wow!! That's a long way to go! I for one don't listen to jazz to be different, and I would like to see it become more widely accepted. But, if to gain the additional acceptance would mean having to lower the quality of the product, forget it.

I have an aunt who believes that everyone who listens to jazz smokes marijuana. I have never been able to convince her that only a small percentage do. (The larger percentage just wishes it could be bought legally.) Those who actually do don't talk much about it anyhow. But, my aunt hates jazz nevertheless, although I never hear her complain about those dexies her doctor has her on. How about that!

Generally, the day that jazz was thought to be that nasty music, played in smoke filled back room bars is over. More people are digging it, better musicians are playing it, and in the months to come, I will take a crack at writing about it.

Personal Rundown on JACK ELDRIDGE -- Originally from Westerly, R.I. 25 years old. Married with two children. In radio ten years with tenures at WERI in Westerly, R.I., WEET in Richmond, Va., WSBA in York, Pa., and WCUE in Akron, Ohio. Host of "Adventures in Jazz", all night jazz show heard on WCUE six nights a week from Midnight to 5 AM. Play bass and a little flute and fool around with a collection of hand carved recorders.

RESULTS: 1st Annual Double-Bill Ego-Booster POLL

BEST ARTICLES:
1) BILL BOWERS: "Born to Die: The Essence of a Fan" (#4)
2) TERRY JEEVES: "Space Wars: The Highly Improbable Dogfight" (#6)
3) G.M. CARR: "GMC on: Integration" (#6)

BEST FICTION:
1) MIKE DECKINGER: "Encounter" (#6)
2) MIKE McQUOWN: "Cycle of Retribution" (#5)
3) DON F. ANDERSON: "Into the Valley of Death" (#3)

BEST VERSE:
1) BILL MALLARDI: "End of Indian Summer" (#1)
2) LEWIS J. GRANT: "Pome" (#6)
3) BILL BOWERS: "Monument" (#2)
& BILL R. WOLFENBARGER: "Nightfall to Eternity" (#4) (tie)

BEST COLUMN:
1) ROBERT COULSON: "Wallaby Stew" (fanzine reviews) (#1-6)
2) MIKE SHUPP: "The Mimsy Borogoves" (book reviews) (#2, 4&6)

BEST COVER:
1) (#4): ROBERT E. GILBERT
2) (#3): "A. NONYMOUS"
3) (#6): TERRY JEEVES

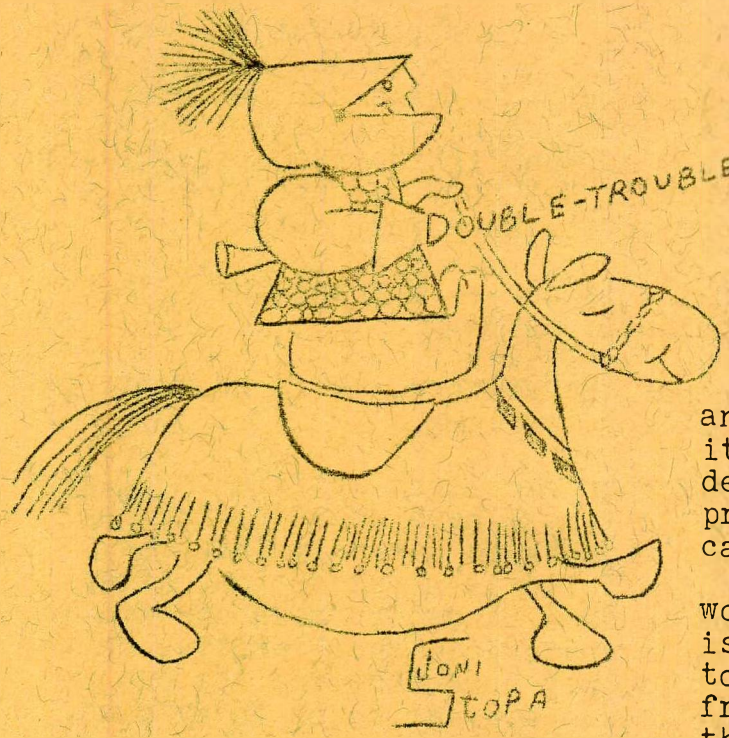
BEST FILLERO'S: 1) ARTHUR THOMSON; 2) ROBERT E. GILBERT; 3) TERRY JEEVES

BEST FILLER:
1) A BASIC S.F. & FANTASY LIBRARY - by the readers (#4)
2) E.E. EVERS: "Love-At-First-Sight - A Word Portrait" (#6)
3) CLAY HAMLIN: 'S.F. & Fantasy Quiz: II" (#6)

BEST LETTERHACK: 1) "Famous MidWesCon Letter"; 2) Harry Warner
3) Robert Coulson

BEST ALL-AROUND ISSUE: 1) Issue #6; 2) Issue #5; 3) Issue #4

Our thanks to those who voted: Rich Benyo; Buck Coulson; Mike Deckinger; George Fergus; John Foster; Clay Hamlin; Harvey Inman; Harriett Kolchak; Al Kracalik; Bob Lichtman; Bill Plott; Lou Pochet; Vic Ryan; Richard Schultz; Mike Shupp; Chas. Smith; Si Stricklen; Walt Taylor; Rob Williams; Ruth Woehrman; Bill Wolfenbarger; James Wright and the Editors. ###



...the point is, this is the Lettercolumn, where the Readers jab back, and the BEM bluntly edits...so enter at your own risk.

oOo --oOo --oOo --oOo

"BOB" TUCKER

I keenly appreciated the idea and the work that went onto page six; it is the kind of thing that appears deceptively simple (even easy) in print, but which I know took time and care. Thank you, gentlemen.

Meanwhile I hope and trust you won't publish another hundred page issue. I like Double:Bill too well to see it fold, and let me tell you friends, hundred page issues are just the thing to fold it, and you. Surely you have heard of the dread Nydahl's Disease.

There is a thing I have about fan artwork. I realize that fan artists are not to be compared to (or against) professional artists, anymore than fan writers are to be made to suffer by comparing them to Sturgeon or Alexander Blade -- but what am I to use as a yardstick? I know little or nothing about art and lack the sense to criticize it in any constructive manner. Lacking the taste and insight of a Juanita Coulson, or a Bjo, I usually keep my mouth shut and say absolutely nothing about the art found in fanzines. If very many other people are in this same boat, then it explains the general silence in letter columns.

In your present issue, for example, I can only say that I enjoy the cartoons of Jeeves -- I have done so for fifteen years or more, and think he is Peachy Keen. Likewise, I enjoy Barr's girls -- such as that one on page 28. Beyond that, I am helpless. I like some of Juanita's work (page 41 is a good example of my likes), and some of Bjo's. As for others, I dare not open my mouth. I am not competent to judge, except for those henscratches one finds too often in very new or very young fans.

RICHARD KYLE, 2126 EARL AVE., LONG BEACH, CALIF.

This 7th issue rather astonishes me: it has more good things in it than all your previous issues combined.

1. "The Future of Clothes," Lewis J. Grant
2. "The D-B Symposium"
3. "Dr. Clarke's Care Clinic," Bob Tucker
4. "The Reunion," John Foster
5. "No Holds Bard," John Berry

I've gotten tired of the Space War bit, and I didn't bother to read Shupp's piece. Evers's "Two Cities," seemed to have a couple of good moments; however, poetry and I are virtual strangers, so that should not be construed as either a compliment or a condemnation. "Wallaby Stew" was

RICHARD KYLE, cont:
as tasty as ever. The editorials were a far --- and pleasant --- cry from those in the first issue. And the lettercolumn; when it was not discussing those banes of the fan magazine letter columns, segregation and virginity, was really quite good. The cover was as interesting as it could be to someone who will probably never meet any of the lighthearted participants. "Only Time Will Tell", was pretty dreadful. Not only has the idea been done to death, but the names of the characters were just out and out cheating.

So, only one really bad item in the issue --- barring the suject under discussion below. Quite a performance.

Terry Jeeves asks for comments about the artwork. He is going to get them. I have tolerated too much fan art for too long.

Let us turn to the "art folio."

I am indebted to Juanita Coulson for an excellent article in Silme on mimeo drawing techniques. From time to time I have seen drawings by her that were not too bad. But most of her work is markedly inferior, and her picture for the first page of the folio is no exception. After all these years, she does not know how to draw hands, or make one arm as long as the other. I will skip over other anatomical peculiarities on the grounds that the creature on the right is only humanoid, and the one on the left entirely alien, but they still leave a great doubt in my mind. They are not, in short, very convincing.

Jeeves' contribution is beyond understanding.The alien creature's body from the shoulders down seems to vaguely suggest a Bok I once saw somewhere; from the shoulders up it resembles the owner of a mom-and-pop grocery I once patronized. There is nothing enlightening or interesting here.

Joni Stopa's drawing, by no means as attractive as Joni Stopa, seems to be of inventory day at a mad-house. She has not yet mastered the male hairline, nor discovered that mustaches are not painted on, the way Groucho Marx's used to be, but are actual three dimensional objects that project into space.

Dian Girard displays the same felicity I have credited to Juanita Coulson.

DEA, who seems to be Margaret Dominick, works as though she is copying from one of those puzzles where you draw from one number to the next and create little jagged angles on everything. I am appalled.

Arthur McCourt gives evidence, here, of no talent whatever -- unless he is very young.

Ruth Woehrman appears to have come across a still from an old Carmen Miranda film, or something. The execution is very poor. I cannot really figure out how the female figure in the background is constructed, and although I assume that junk on the ground is supposed to be vegetation, I nontheless have the uneasy feeling it is intended to be flames.

Greg Trend's drawing is utterly absurd. Is that a mountain to the man's right? Is it in the background or the foreground? Why are the man's hands so incredibly huge? What the devil is it all about?

Now then, none of these eight drawings have any substantial merit whatever. They are, in my opinion,an insult to the remaining drawings. They are poorly executed technically, the composition is the next thing to non-existant, the sex symbols in the pictures are manipulated with such clumsiness that I'm inclined to think they were not consciously introduced, and they almost all seem completely irrelevant to nearly everything, for they illustrate nothing and they are not in anyway beautiful

RICHARD KYLE, concl:
in themselves.

Who are these people, who have clearly made no real effort to master anatomy and composition and technique, to waste my time and to damage --- by their proximity --- the drawings of Jim Cawthorn and Eddie Jones, and to a lesser degree, those of Robert E. Gilbert and Dave Prosser?

For a buck, or a buck and a half, anyone can pick up a used book on composition. Anatomy is available in the photographs of every issue of Look or Life --- or the common or garden variety of mirror. And technique, well, a beginner can be forgiven some errors there, but not many and not for long. Any talent for observation should reveal the limitations and advantages of mimeo. And mimeo has quite a few advantages, as the reader of Juanita Coulson's article in Silme will discover, if Juanita herself has not.

Am I being sarcastic and unpleasant? You're darned right. Enough of this junk is enough.

Jim Cawthorn's winged girl is a beautiful job, and really admirable. Jones's warrior is rather a bit hammy, but well done. Although Gilbert's technique and composition is a little weak, his is still a good picture. And despite Prosser's continuing obsession with sex and death, this art also is of interest. (Although I sincerely wish Prosser would change the subject.)

Barr's and Atom's and Jeeves's spot drawings look nice, particularly Barr's, of course. (Jeeves seems much more the cartoonist than the illustrator.)

Now, I have seen Cawthorn and Jones and Gilbert and Prosser and Barr and Atom drawings that I felt were poor, but I have seen very few pieces by these artists that did not display a sincere attempt to master their medium. I may be wrong, but I see no such interest in the work of the artists whose art I've criticized above.

However, aside from this and "Only Time Will Tell", you have put out a very good issue. Your best to date, and one that's really worthwhile.

~~ You ask about Greg Trend's --- well, his artwork was done during the Discon, on stencil, (as was Juanita's at the Midwescon and Dian's also at D.C.) and I personally feel it's rather difficult for an artist to draw as good as they usually would, on the spur of the moment like that -- not having the proper amount of time to think of something specific to do, or enuff time to do it in. I think they did fairly well, considering the above mentioned facts. Also, who said the creature with the huge hands in Greg's illo WAS a man? ## As for McCourt -- I doubt if he's even in fandom anymore...we got his from the files of a fan who was in fandom the same time McCourt was...any older fans recall him then? 'Twas many years ago, Y'see...## In general though, I can see where you think the latter fanartists' work was cheapened somewhat by the others...but not everyone IS a Cawthorn, or Jones, or Prosser, etc. I think it would be kind of boring if they were...any comments, fanartists?? ---BEM~~

WALLY WEBER, BOX 267, 507 THIRD AVE., SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98104

All four of my eyes are big and round, attempting to take in the enormity of DOUBLE BILL whole number 7. The zine is on the floor because the table won't take the weight of it, and besides it would require jacks and cranes to lift it to table height anyway. What in the universe were

WALLY WEBER, concl:
you characters thinking of when you constructed this monsterpiece? You want to crush fandom perhaps?

A photocover is always a winner. The heading on the contents page is superb. The Superman lino was heeheeheelarious. Only 8% of your magazine is letters? How can you butter up Hugo-voters that way? {{ Sheesh, these Scientific-minded people....hope this lettercol satifies your craving--BEM}}

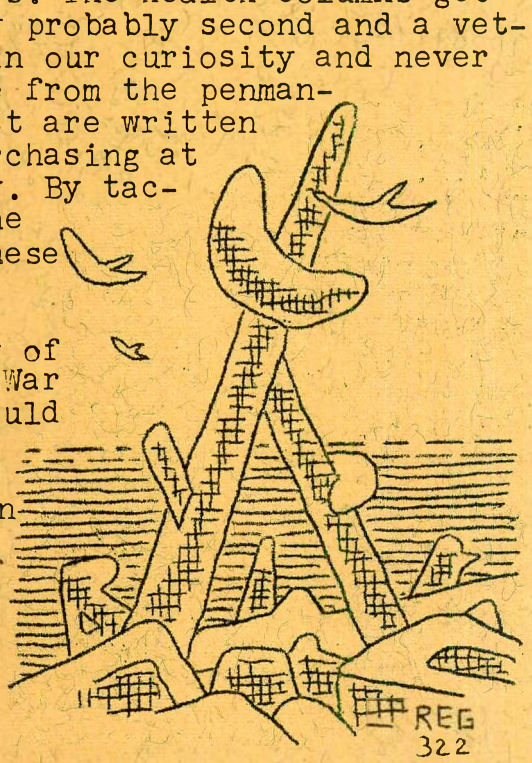
You must have put a lot of effort into making this issue a lot of extra effort. I think I'm going to enjoy the issue very much. From my point of view, that trail of blood and money you made leading up to this issue is worth it. Hoping you feel the same. {{ Blech! ---BEM}}

An acknowledgement isn't an acknowledgement unless it includes a gripe or two. Aha! Page 40 you have Mike Shupp's address as 2333 Mayfair, and on page 68 it is 2331 Mayfair. DOUBLE BILL is a pack of lies, lies, lies. Your fanzine is dishonest. I'll never read it again until I get back from work this evening.

HARRY WARNER, JR., 423 SUMMIT AVE., HAGERSTOWN, MD.

There should be, as Bill Bowers hinted, a printable term to describe the fans that reach or crack the 100-page barrier. Maybe fandom could inaugurate an Order of Eney, since he is the individual who has broken loose into the cosmic proportions more frequently than any other individual fan and he has the physical dimensions to make the term doubly applicable. Your achievement is a remarkable one, and I think that there have been only two or three equally fat fanzines that made easier, faster reading than this Double-Bill.

I wouldn't care to guess which of the numerous syndicated features Tucker has parodied, and in fact I don't recall any that lists its cases by number in this manner. I can testify from my job experience that some people take these columns more seriously than I do. Mail to the syndicated features that we publish in Hagerstown is directed to the local newspaper for forwarding to the home offices or addresses. The health columns get the greatest mail response, by far, with Abby probably second and a veterans' affairs columnist third high. We restrain our curiosity and never open any of these envelopes, but I would judge from the penmanship and the quality of the envelopes that most are written by quite well-educated persons, capable of purchasing at least the better-quality dime store stationary. By tactile means, we have determined that most of the writers include coins for the booklets that these volumnists invariably publish.



Lewis Grant's article reminded me vividly of the articles that kept appearing during World War Two, telling about the future clothing that would result from wartime research. Almost always, the emphasis was on sturdy garments made of paper so economically that they could be thrown away after they became sufficiently soiled to require cleaning, because replacements could be bought more cheaply than the usual laundry bills for conventional garments. I can't help wondering if their failure to appear results from miscalculations about the resourcefulness

HARRY WARNER, concl:
of the paper products industry or the existence of a lobby for the textile industry in some key point or a fear by stores that the public wouldn't wear paper garments.

I liked The Reunion very much, except for the first sentence. It's too studied an attempt to tell the setting and situation in the opening lines.

I've already tried to apologize in many fanzines for my inability to prattle on at great length about fanzine artwork. Most fan artists have one style and stick to it so consistently that it's hard to find new things to say after the first couple of dozen pictures; those of us who have no ability at all with pen or brush are quite reluctant to criticize roughly the accomplishments of artists who possess the gift we lack and are to be honored and regarded with awe for this reason; and it's much easier to make words relate to words than to lines.

I found the symposium as interesting to read as you people took delight in stencilling it. But I confess that I learned more about some of these writers than about science fiction. Bradbury and Zelazny sound like the most honest answerers to your questionnaire. Most of the short answers evade the problem instead of replying to it, and several of these pros have an unforgivably exalted idea about the importance of science fiction in the universe.

LELAND SAPIRO, C/O MATH. DEP'T., U.S.C., LOS ANGELES 7, CALIF.

In his review of the LASFS Menace, Buck Coulson makes a statement with which I entirely agree. Buck's contention is that the club could not possibly be hurt by the Menace's comic edition, and I must acknowledge that I was wrong in believing that it could.

That the comic Menace could be harmful is, as Coulson says, a "fuggheaded" notion--but I derived it from Buck's own column in Yandro #121, where he says:

> "This is just the minutes of the LASFS...tricked out with a new title...Fun, fellas! See, everybody's referred to under the name of a comic book character and...you can try to guess which...is which...Just loads of jolly good times..."

My argument before the LASFS consisted essentially in reading aloud the above passage and then remarking that if one fan derides the club in this way, harm would arise if other fans did the same.

(Of course, the columnist did not state his opinion explicitly, but that wasn't necessary: when you laugh at somebody you don't need to tell him you think he's silly)

That this passage was read to the club members and that it did furnish my original motivation can be verified by consulting anybody who was present or by checking the Menace #81, where Bruce Pelz reprints the outline of my argument. (All new business, it must be explained, must be submitted in writing to the LASFS director before he can put it before the club--and Pelz reprints what had been submitted.)

It is not necessary to rehearse here all the reasons why the argument was fallacious. Suffice it to say that by virtue of the work done by Paul Turner, Virginia Mills, and Allen Sundry the LASFS has now supplanted the ESFA as the most worthwhile

LELAND SAPIRO, concl:
fan organization in the U.S.--and that this can hardly be changed by the derision of any particular magazine columnists.

To Coulson himself, who has allowed his malice to overide his good sense, I can only say: Try to remember what you write from one month to the next: the fuggheadedness you criticize may be your own.

JOHN BRUNNER

My compliments to Lloyd and everyone else responsible for your symposium; it looks like being the most (I could probably say only) successfully organised attempt of its kind that I've run across, and the contrast between the various comments is illuminating. A real illuminating gas, in fact.

But I can't resist a comment on Bill Plott's letter, which is about the 397th, give or take a few hundred, which I've run across of the species beginning, "I'm not a segregationist, BUT." (This is about due to follow "Some of my best friends," isn't it?)

Would recommend him to dig around a little and find out something about the matrilineally continued family, which is no perogative of Negroes; it used to be - and to some extent still is - common in Britain as a result of the Industrial Revolution: road-builders sometimes belong to this pattern, and soldiers and sailors and others with itinerant callings. Its commoness in the West Indies and American South suggests a continued African influence.

Sounds as though it accountd for a lot of bastardy in Alabama.But hell, you can't take people with one set of social customs (in this case, a different habit pattern in the raising of children) and dump them in another culture where by definition these habits are antisocial or criminal, and expect them to conform without assistance. In Moslem countries alcohol is forbidden, so people smoke hemp. In India, I hear, if you want a drink you register as an alcoholic. In Britain if you have a heroin addiction you register under the National Health Service. Etcetera. Well, there are lots of places where the law says if you want some sex you buy a marriage licence - including the States.

Custom has law beat all to blazes. It'll keep right on that way till we finally figure out what makes people act as they do; so far we only know it's not putting words on paper and a pretty red seal at the end.

MIKE SHUPP, 2331 MAYFAIR ROAD, DAYTON, OHIO 45405

DOUBLE-BILL Seven, if I haven't already said so, was very very good. The art section was particularly fine, with special praise to Eddie Jones and Dave Prosser. That Prosser illo ought to be on sale as it is, for putting on walls, without tearing up DBs. High point of the ish, without doubt, was the pro symposium, and no doubt you will be getting green glares of envy from all the other faneds by now. That was a great idea. DOUBLE-BILL for the Hugo in 64 or 65 shall we say?
((Incidently, Mike will be back with his book review column, "The Mimsy Borogoves", in D-B #9, now that school work has slackened for a while.))

ARNOLD KATZ, 98 PATTON BLVD., NEW HYDE PARK, N.Y. 11043

Robert S. Coulson: As the sole member of the Correspondence Bureau, I will state unequivocablythat the N3F Cor. Bu. will not do your correspondence if you join. However, if you do join, I will promise to use my influence to get you a spot on the N'APA waiting list. Now, I realize that this is an extravagant promise, but I will stand by it, nevertheless.

"Equal or superior to N'APA"! That, Robert, is tantamount to heresy. Have you seen a N'APA mailing lately? I think you will find N'APA 18 September superior in every respect to the September mailing of SFPA. To even mention SFPA in the same breath as SAPS is another highly heretical statement. What are you trying to do, Buck, bring the wrath of the OElephant down on your head?

I enjoyed the art folio more than even the pro's questionnaire.

Tucker's satire is very funny. Glad he's not my doctor. God, Bob Tucker, M.D. I can see it all now:

Tucker: Clamp.
Bloch: Clamp.
Tucker: Suture.
Bloch: Suture self.
Tucker: We're almost done, Bob.
Bloch: Yes, Dr. Tucker, and it's been a brilliant operation.
Tucker: Yes, it has, hasn't it? Suture.
Bloch: Suture self.
Tucker: You used that pun.
Bloch: Oh, yeah.
Tucker: Sponge
Bloch: Sponge.
Tucker: We're all done.
Bloch: Can I ask one question, Dr.?
Tucker: Does it concern the patient?
Bloch: Yes, Dr. Tucker. Why the hell did you amputate his head?
Tucker: Well, it seemed the fannish thing to do...Campbell never used it much,anyway.

~~ You will be happy to know, Arnold, that Buck just joined the N3F (I just got the info from Janey Lamb) ...what is the fannish world coming to, anymore! However, I doubt if Buck will join N'APA, since his views on APA's are the same as mine: I don't care for them very much...I have more fun putting out a genzine than an apazine.---BEM~~

MIKE DECKINGER, 14 SALEM COURT, METUCHEN, NEW JERSEY

This issue is easily the best yet. Will 100 page annuals be a regular occurrence? The cover photos were vague in detail, but nicely presented. Biggle's symposium was highly interesting and stimulating, and probably the most worthwhile single item that DB has yet presented. It would be interesting to see a follow-up, perhaps incorporating the remarks of sf editors, publishers and/or artists. The art folio was well appreciated too, though I think I prefer Prosser doing outre grotesqueries rather than interplanetary scenes.

~~ Bowers & I answer your first question with a resounding: "Hell No!" We went ape on #7 'cause it was our FIRST annish..the rest won't be as big.# I like your idea of a follow-up including publishers & artists, but we just won't have the time for it for quite a long while yet. Mebbe in a year or so, unless someone else beats us to it. ---BEM~~

ROBERT COULSON, ROUTE 3, WABASH, INDIANA. 46992

Just for the record, the best things in the issue were (1) Biggle's symposium, (2) the Barr illo on page 32, (3) Tucker, (4) Berry, and (5) the photocover. Not that the rest of the stuff wasn't good, but these were the best. I do wish you had arranged the symposium differently, however. Instead of putting some of the answers to all of the questions in this issue, I wish you had put all of the answers to some of the questions. (That is, in this issue you could have put all of the replies to questions 1 thru 4, in the next issue all of the replies to questions 5 thru 8, etc. Or however it divided the best. Possibly you had a very good reason for not doing it this way, but it would have been far more helpful to someone who wants to compare all of the different answers given to question #1, or whatever one he's interested in. This way we'll have to look thru three issues to do that. And there is no way to find one author's answers to all the questions, because as far as I can tell none of them answered all the questions; so the reader would benefit more from the other type tabulation.).

{{ Your suggestion of that type of format WAS discussed by us before we put it in print, and was rejected because: 1) It seemed possible that 70-plus answers to the same question might become boring after the first 3 dozen or so; 2) There was a definite advantage in having each installment of the Symposium complete in itself; 3) and perhaps more important, the arrangement adopted makes it much easier (we think) to check the answers of any one writer or editor, to all the questions; and 4) It was much easier for Bill and I to tell how many pages the first installment would run us, in order to keep the count close to 100 pages.---BEM}}

WILLIAM F. TEMPLE

You have a sterling stapler there.

Part 1 of the Symposium was concentrated meat. Surprisingly, not so much repetition as I'd expected, although I happened on previous echoes of some of my own answers.

On the eve of Xmas Eve some of us British authors gathered in Ted Carnell's office to drink a farewell toast to New Worlds and Nova Publications, lying under sentence of death (execution date is March) after 18 years of brave existence.

GEORGE FERGUS,3825 W. 160TH STREET, CLEVELAND, OHIO. 44111

To my mind, science fiction (like most fiction) is meant to entertain the reader, no matter what else it does. Science fiction's chief value is that, in general, it entertains a reader more than any other type of fiction. Now SF can be defined as all fiction not encompassed by the ordinary "mainstream" fields, but let's make this clearer. (I use SF in this sense to mean the whole field of imaginative literature including fantasy) There are four main areas that fiction may explore: the known past, the present, the possible future, and the "not of this world" category (the unknown past, other time-lines or parallel worlds, alien cultures, and fantasy in general). The present (which would actually span about 20 years or so in time) is the setting for most fiction. Historical novels, somewhat more daring, explore parts of the known past. Science fiction, on the other hand, may explore any of these four realms, and has exclusive rights to the latter two.

GEORGE FERGUS, concl.

Messages, morals, social criticism, stimulating scientific theories, etc., are often good in a story, but a story should be first of all (and foremost to the reader) entertainment. Now entertainment depends mainly upon interesting the reader in what goes on. And a person is interested if he can be kept in suspense. Suspense, in turn, depends upon giving the reader what he does not expect, or at least what will surprise him a little, so that he will always be wondering what will happen next.

Of "present" fiction, only mysteries (such as those by Fredric Brown, for example) consistently do a good job of giving the reader a surprise, (Sherlock Holmes approaches science fiction in this respect) although as with any type of literature there is bound to be much virtual duplication of plots, stereotyped scenes, predictable characters, etc. This holds true for historical novels also: we are bored with trite "westerns", but are entertained by descriptions (perhaps by someone like Andre Norton) of relatively forgotten societies of the past. Historical novels, works actually written in the past, and stories of foreign lands are generally surprise-giving. Yet none can hold a candle to the corresponding possibilities of science fiction in dealing with societies of the future (for example, the novels of Philip K. Dick) , societies of the unknown past (the Conan stories), or alien societies (either in parallel universes or on alien planets).

Of course neither does science fiction escape the stereotype, as evidenced by the general public view that all SF deals with invaders from Mars or the like. And John Campbell does have a point when he complains that not enough new idea-areas in science fiction are being explored, since surprises are science fiction's stock in trade.

Considering the prejudice, the ignorance of science, and the emotional resistance to change in our world today, it is not difficult to see why science fiction is not as universally popular as it might be. It cannot be taken, however, that SF fans are more intelligent or more reasonable than other people. Most simply happen to have come across SF when they were young, had time to read it extensively, and been pliable enough to stomach imaginary changes in society.

Arthur Porges' statement that "if you haven't written a novel, it's almost impossible to get even your best stories out in book form" rubbed me the wrong way, since I could mention quite a few authors whose first published books were short story collections. The most recent example would probably be Cordwainer Smith.

I didn't enjoy "The Reunion". It had little suspense and didn't keep my interest. The SF & Fantasy Quiz was good except for the last three sections with their idiotic matching of Convention dates, awards, cities, and guests of honor.

ROBERT BLOCH

Your hundred-page issue arrived to give me several hours of intense enjoyment, and I thank you muchly. I was particularly delighted with Bob Tucker's article, which is really a thought-provoking piece, although I fancy I detected a note of levity somewhere in it. The Symposium also pleased me greatly, and I felt very humble as I saw how easily some of the contributors managed to get past or around the questions which leave most writers -- myself included -- somewhat tongue-tied.

E. E. EVERS, 118 W. 83RD ST., NEW YORK, N.Y. 10024

DOUBLE BILL #7 will be praised, remembered, and reccomended to anyone who didn't get it. Numerical rating on all categories: Ten. Your First Annish is one of the best single issues of a fanzine I've ever seen and will go down in fan history as one of the Classic Annishes.

The "Phan Photos" on the cover are well-reproduced and, a rarity for fanzine fotos, interesting to the general fannish reader. They are the first published Discon fotos I've seen and probably will be among the best since the winning costumes at the Ball are always the most photogenic Worldcon subjects. ((I wasn't satisfied with the cover results, but all I had to take pics with was a dinky old Brownie "Starmite" Camera. Next time I'll know.--BEM))

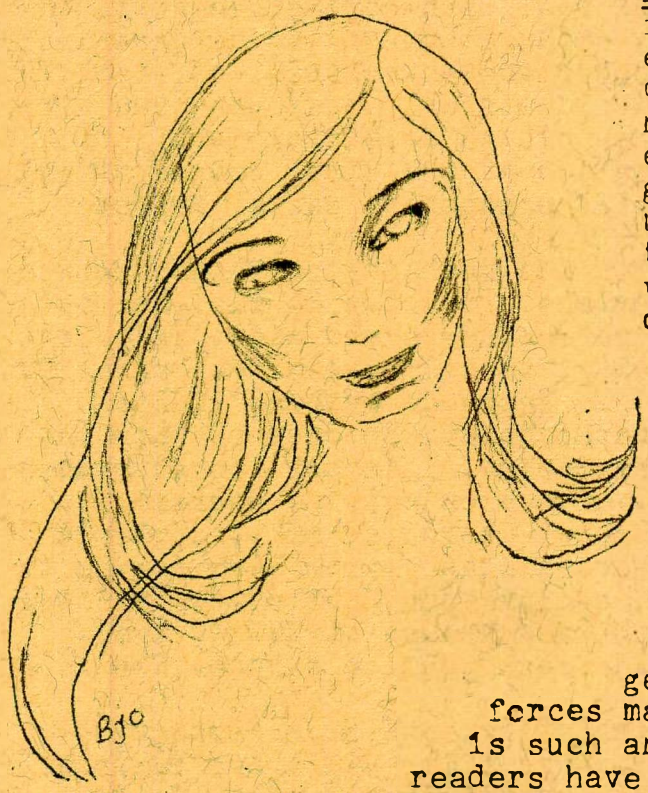
Tucker's satire is as funny as anything in the professional humor mags, and more critical of the newspaper advice column than any pro humor mag would dare to be. I think he points up an important fact - most fans are intelligent people and take advice columns as a joke, but they are meant and taken by many readers as deadly serious. And I've read a number of items of advice in "Abbey" and elsewhere that could be extremely damaging in certain circumstances. The Coulson reviews show his usual professional treatment, in fact most of thematerial he reviews doesn't even deserve the thorough dissection he gives it. He's one of the few reviewers I use to judge fmz by as he gives reasons for his opinions. I almost always disagree with the majority of his opinions, but his descriptions of the material are still objective.

Lewis Grant's article on clothes is either funny around its information or informative around its humor. Either way it's typical of everything I like in a fanzine article. I wonder how much of his conjecture is wishful thinking rather than sincere extrapolation - I can picture the girls nude on Rockaway and walking around East Forty Second Street showing their underthings through transparent dresses, but it doesn't seem too likely as laws change slower than customs. But I'm right in there wishing with him...

"The Reunion" is a good piece of writing stylistically; John Foster's handling of words in both description and conversation is interesting. His characters are well drawn and realistic. But his piece isn't a story and isn't even a real incident. No plot of course, but little fan fiction has more than a trace of plot anyway. His major trouble goes deeper than that - he has no clear theme. What he has basically is a word picture of a conversation, but he doesn't use that word picture to make the reader feel anything. I finished the piece wanting a lot more and unwilling to feel satisfied with what he gave me. What ahppned to the woman's husband? What happened later between the man and woman? If nothing, then hoe did the reunion affect them? It's all right to leave the reader with questions or something else to think about,but you should plan the story to make him think along certain lines and draw certain conclusions. Foster has the beginnings of a good mundane story here, and he shows enough talent and skill based on that talent to pick up where he left off and produce a story.

"Space Wars - Cause and Effect" is well written, but as far as I am concerned, not very controversial. Until Man undergoes some major mental change,and a change so basic it hasn't even started to occur from anything in history or archeology, we will always have wars where we have two or more people.

During a war, most people have the desire to win, whether for"patriotic reasons" meaning they want to win because they want to win, or fear of dying if the country loses, or desire to end the war as soon as poss-



E. E. EVERS, concl:

ible. This means they will devote more energy than usual to developing technology, as technology wins wars. Not just now, but in the past too, as most past empires were built on military technological advances like the Roman Legions used, for instance. (Tactics are part of technology too, not just gadgets.) Also, war is wasteful and so is the development of a new technological development. In the face of mass destruction of lives and war goods, a little waste to develop an airplane or atom bomb isn't even noticable. And in the face of the desparation war often brings, ideas are sometimes considered that normally would be laughed at. Notice that the losing side often produces more new developments than the winning side. (Though the winner of course usually gets the benefit and often the honor.)War forces man into science. Right now, war in space is such an obvious reality that I'm amazed some readers have said it's improbable. How can something be improbable for the future when it's happening right now? We wouldn't have more than a token space program if it weren't for the cold war. And any war that happened now would involve space - ICBM's pass thru space on their way to the target, and relay satellites would certainly be used for communications, so we can be sure even a war tomorrow, unless it were a small convertional war, would be a war in space.

John Berry can make even a trip report interesting, though there was nothing in his article to stimulate comment. I enjoyed it.

"Only Time Will Tell" is right on the median for fan-vignettes. Perhaps a little better than average.A vignette is either good or not. If you want to improve your skill you have to use longer forms where there's room to work. Oh, yes, most vignettes need poetic writing to carry the theme - there's no room for action or characterization or anything else. It's a good mag you have when the worst piece is only average.

The DB Symposium is rapidly going to become a fannish collector's item. ~~Well, I can't argue with you, we are now completely OUT of #7 -- so please, every one, inform your friends of this? No current plans to run off more, either. ---BEM~~

It has true lasting value, both in its advice to young writers and its insight into the pro's minds and mental processes and personalities."I don't think...that other classes of literature are able to replace Science Fiction as a <u>way of thinking</u>." That statement explains my own reasons for being in fandom. Not that fandom is a way of life for me, but that SF has something you can't get anywhere else. What it is I don't know any more than I know what SF is or what poetry is. Both are fundamental means of expression, indefinable and impossible to pin down.

JIM HARKNESS, 112 W. HARDING, GREENWOOD, MISS.

I read Buck's review of STRANGER THAN FACT with some discomfort. The main thing is, I agree with him. The only thing I can say in defense is that I just hadn't been in fandom long enough to know what I was doing. I realize you have to be somewhat of a damfool to start a fmz when you first come into the field, but I was conceited enough to do exactly that. Of course, this was obvious from the presentation of the first couple of issues — though I still think that much of the material was of decent quality.

However, I think Coulson allows for too much invective and personally-directed comment to slip into his reviews. Take Lee Sapiro. Lee is one of the most intelligent people I've ever corresponded with, in or out of fandom.(That may lead Coulson to speculate that I have a hell of a lot of dumb correspondents, but it isn't so.) It seems to me that if Buck thinks Lee's ideas are fuggheaded and remarks on it, he does no harm.But when he says, and I quote, "...coming from Sapiro, it's not too surprising.", he is simply dropping to the level of common gossip. What is it that makes Robert Coulson the Supreme Judge of Character he purports to be? It's rather plain he has no personal acquaintance with Lee, so who is he to say what is or is not "surprising", coming from Sapiro? As for fuggheadedness, I have a couple of articles in back issues of ZODIAC and QUIRK — by Coulson, that is — that could teach <u>that</u> to anyone. Shall I reprint them, Buck?

Your art folio was interesting, and much enhanced by the color mimeo work. Unfortunately, only three illos — those by Jones, Cawthorn, and Prosser — were good enough to merit a page of their own. And while we're talking about art, I wish you'd tell me: what is this thing about glueing art to the stencil? Why? What happens? How do you do it? What type of equipment is needed?

~~ Well, first off you get your artist(s) to do their work on stencil; for example:we send stencils to Terry Jeeves in England, and he does up a bunch of fillero's (that's my shortcut word for <u>filler illo</u>'s, by the by), on one stencil and shoots them back to us. Then we cut them out as they are needed, leaving enough of a margin around each one to glue them onto the stencil we want to run off. We glue them on with Stencil Cement, which anyone, <u>you</u> included, should be able to buy at your local mimeograph supply store. It comes in a bottle similar to your corflu one, though of course it's much thicker, and sticky. We get Gestetner Cement, ourselves, though AB Dick and others make it too. Ask around when you buy your other material. One thing tho, when you patch it you have to cut out a <u>corresponding</u> hole in the stencil you're going to use; and wait a sufficient amount of time for it to dry before running it off. Does that clarify it now? If not, let me know.--BEM~~

BOB LICHTMAN, 6137 S. CROFT AVE., LOS ANGELES, CALIF. 90056

Your photo-cover was well-intended, I'm sure, but fell apart for me because I couldn't see these people very well, on account of the smallness of the photographs and on account of the fact that the costumes obscure who the people are.

I'm afraid that Tucker's article is pretty second-rate for him.

Buck Coulson brings up a pretty good point in his reviews. How many fans do go around showing their fanzines to non-fan friends? I sure don't, with a few exceptions. Once in a while I will strike a particularly

BOB LICHTMAN, cont:
fuggheaded remark or whole issue of a fanzine of John Boardman or Ted Pauls, and then I will show it to other radicals and we will laugh and cry over Boardman's stupidity and general bad taste in wanting liberals to commit violence against conservatives, and like that. Also sometimes I will show Biffables to friends whom I think will find them funny and sometimes they do.

I certainly don't think, though, to continue with remarks prompted by Coulson's reviews, thatt that comic book edition of Menace of the LASFS is hurting me. There are a few people in the LASFS who appear to identify Strongly with the LASFS in that any suggestion to them that the LASFS might be regarded as a Big Laughingstock by someone in fandom is taking personally. Lee Sapiro is one of these, apparently, from his remarks as quoted in the Menace. This is unfortunate for Mr. Sapiro, in that the LASFS is considered laughable by some fans; it must keep poor Mr. Sapiro up nights worrying about his reputation. How much simpler it would be if he would simply drop out of the LASFS. Me, I don't much care. I go to the LASFS now and then-- less frequently now than I used to-- but I don't consider myself a LASFSer and have operated as essentially an independent from the Los Angeles area as long as I've been around in fandom.

John Foster's story is the sort of incident one of your letter-writers protests against. Foster's name is familiar to me; isn't he a member of the British Amateur Press Association?

Addena to my letter: The girl who had the "Bucik" has a Mercedes-Benz now and when she repeated the story about the Hollywood virgin to me a few weeks ago she said "four weeks old" instead of four months. I pointed this out to her. "You said four months the last time you told me this story," was about the way I put it. "Times have changed," she replied with a smile.

Poor Bill Plott has no sense of universality. All those things he cites as being Typical Evils of the Negro -- not bathing, having illegitimate children, working in one county and drawing unemployment in another -- are evils of the white race as well. When will people who put down Negroes realize that these evils they cite for the Negro are very much a part of the evils of their own race as well. As for any greater proportion of them on the part of the Negroes, it is due to even more of an appalling lack of education and social conscience than the uneducated whites who do the same things. If everyone were smart as hell, this sort of thing might go away. I doubt it, though.

Plott says, "When Negroes are afforded better and more equal educational opportunities, their lot will increase." I don't think this is necessarily a 1:1 relationship. Sure the Negroes need to be educated; everyone can benefit from an education. But Plott, I see, lives in the state of Alabama, one of the states in which the oppression of the Negro is the strongest on the part of the Southern White Aristocracy. Many of those people in Birmingham, Mr. Plott, who tried to demonstrate for their rights, were better educated than the mass of Negroes, inasmuch as the Negro masses aren't socially aware enough to want to demonstrate. What good does even an education do when the educated Negro demonstrating to show he wants his freedom is greeted with police dogs, electric cattle prods, lynch mobs, police brutality (nightsticks, guns, and the like)? What do you think the Negro who wants his freedom and wants it now, today, not "gradually", feels when he is beaten

BOB LICHTMAN, concl:
to the ground by a policeman's billy-club, then told to get up and "Run, nigger, run," and is beaten down again when he tries?

I am not making up these incidents, Mr. Plott; they are a matter of record in newspapers outside of the south, and I know people who have lived through this brutality and savagery on the part of southern cops and who have told me more terrifying stories than you see in the newspapers. If you really wanted to see the Negro get ahead, Mr. Plott, if you really wanted to see him accepted by whites in your South, you would do well to try to educate the people in your state, and throughout the south, to the facts about the Negro's potentiality. You would tell them that the Negro is an human being, just like Governor Wallace and just like, yes, those Birmingham cops who have been blinded to this fact, and you would tell them that given the opportunity to take his place in a society of equals, the Negro could do so. It is true that not all Negroes are ready now, on the basis of intelligence and skills, for an equal place, but some of them are, and the others need the freedom and equality that you can help to give them so that they will be ready later on, after they have had their chance to become educated. There will always be a certain number who will not fit, just as there are whites who do not fit; but that is to be expected.

In short, Mr. Plott, if you want to help the Negro to advance himself, you must help in creating an healthy milieu in your south in which he can advance, not just talk about it. If you want more information, contact your local representatives of CORE or SNCC or whatever; since you apparently attend a university in Alabama, one hopes such offices exist in your university town. If they don't try writing L.A. CORE at 1115 W. Venice Blvd. for information more precise than I can give you.

Your parenthetical remark to Deindorfer regarding the relative virtues of Lady Chatterley's Lover and Harris' My Life and Loves perplexes me. Are you basing your remarks on the amount of "dirty stuff" in the books or their literary value? In the latter case, Lawrence's work wins thumbs down, even though it is not one of his better works, in my opinion. (Would recommend Women In Love as a better choice.) I also second Gary's suggestion of reading Joyce's Ulysses. Even from the standpoint of finding sex stuff in it, it's a major work. Wowee, gang!

{{ Re: Foster...I think, but am not sure, that he was (or is) a member of the mundane NAPA. As for the British APA, I don't know. Could you clarify it for us, John? §§ Hah! So my little bait caught you, if not Gary! I was basing my remarks on the former -- by the by -- but to be perfectly honest with you I never DID read Harris' book. I saw a copy of it that our night crew boss had, and I looked through it, but I never actually read it. But I was curious just how easy it was to get the book in the states and I wanted to see how many fans had gotten ahold of it. (I suppose I could get a copy out of the library, though, myself.,Haven't read Ulysses either..guess I'll have to some day. While on books, what's the fan's opinion of Harold Robbins? Primarily I think he's a hack writer..though his Carpetbaggers was one of his best books. The rest of them don't live up to it, in my opinion. (One thing, tho, re: his "hero's", I find it very easy to identify with most of them. Dunno why, but I do.)Any Comments? I've read all of his books now except for The Dream Merchants, which I'm in the process of doing.---BEM}}

SCOTT KUTINA,16309 MARQUIS AVE., CLEVELAND, OHIO. 44111

Didn't like anything in the fiction department (No offense George buddy,but that's the way the ball bounces),and the articles weren't very interesting either. Buck's column, and Mike's series are the two best parts of the ish, excluding the symposium and that scholarly quiz (who IS that guy anyway, a genius or something?).

Hmmmmm. Now if I was a brash, impulsive neo, I just might answer Mr. Lichtman with," who the hell are you, anyway?" Well, I'm not, and I do know who you are so I guess I won't have to. If you don't like H.P.L. how come you're getting some of his APA stuff? I mean sure there were two sides to Lovecraft, the side on which he was an actifan in the APA's, and his dirty old pro side, where he wrote some of the best Weird Tales of this century. Though some of them were kind of bad, he is still recognized as one of the masters of the horror story. Try reading Derleth's introduction to THE DUNWICH HORROR & OTHERS (Arkham House, July 1963) for an insight into Lovecraft's character. Also, if you really like his APA stuff, SOMETHING ABOUT CATS and MARGINALIA is filled with the stuff.

I will not even attempt to comment on the symposium, until the last installment, and then I'll devote a zine to it, practically. The questions were good and got down to brass tacks right away, no kidding around. Am impatiently awaiting for the next issue.

RICHARD MANN, 131 BELT ROAD, APO 845, NEW YORK, N.Y. 00604

I'll start right out by telling you that D*B#7 was a real fine effort ---by you and all your contributors. 100 pages . . . it must have taken the use of blood instead of mimeo ink to get it all out--and in such a relatively short time! Congrats are certainly in order. {{ We both thank you very much..matter of fact I blesh at all the kind words everyone has said about #7.(You realize of course, that a blesh is just a bemmish blush...)---BEM}}

I wonder what that little piece of photoartistry cost you. {{ Enough to deplete our sub fund to zero---BEM}} One small thing: on the pic of Birdwoman all was well till I tried to look at the face...notice the word"tried!"

Now, this is really something--a contents page deserving of comment. It was quite attractive.

The comment on all the local fans turns me greenish blue in envy, simply because I know of no fans closer about 1200 miles--that'd be right around the new McQuown homestead in Florida. To be a fan in Puerto Rico is a proud and etc. thing. (Say. . . you wouldn't know of any local fans,would you? Please. . . .)

Bob Tucker's little article (?) reminds me somehow of certain newspaper columns I have seen recently. I wonder Why? The bit on Mother Goose brings to mind the recent case in California where the local Birchites & etc. wanted to ban a book called the DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN SLANG. You see, it contained certain "obscene" words--I wonder how long it will be till they want to do away with WEBSTER'S NEW COLLEGIATE or some such. After all, just ask any ten-year-old and he'll tell you in whispers that it contains such unspeakably dirty words as (Shhh!) "sex".

Scott Kutina's SF & F Quiz: III was quite a lot of fun. I didn't know about the cons--dates and such-- but I got quite a thrill out of knowing all the answers to parts A,B, D, & H.

RICHARD MANN, concl:

The future of Clothes? I can see how Grant arrived at his conclusions, but I don't think I agree all around. It ia true that during the Victorian period standards were much stricter than they are today. The turn of the century was quite strict, and today the trend has been toward less and less clothing. However, to continue using history for examples, I can recall several periods when clothing standards were not much stricter than today's standards,but these periods have stopped at a lower limit. So far as I know, since man became "civilized" and started using clothing for the first time, he has kept his taboos and not exposed his sexual regions. The trend he mentions has taken place before, but it has never led to acceptable nudity.

I am not against nudity, as such, but I will be against it as long as it connotes sexual promiscuity, and I fear it will for many years to come. I definitely think more functional clothing will become acceptable, even to the point of using the paper clothing Grant mentions. I am with him in opinion, but not in prediction.

As a neo (admittedly, even) I'd like to know what Harry Warner meant when he talked about the old days when prozines were prozines. Surely they are not fanzines now. Is this the same old, weary bit about the good ol' days when writers had a "sense of wonder?"

I certainly didn't think the dirty pros would spend so much time in deep thought just for you-- and it's their credit (and yours) {{ And Lloyd Biggle's, especially, remember---BEM}} that they did. It looks like all the writers except damon knight tried to answer seriously and at length. Mr. knight rather disgusted me--although if what he says is what he thinks, he should say so when asked. I just hope most of today's SF writers are a little more seriously motivated than he is.

I don't think I'll debate the statements of the authors---obviously they know more than I ever will about the writing game. That doesn't mean I accept the words of the pros as gospel--far from it; they just have their ideas and what I say won't change them. Other fans' comments will most likely prove debatable-- and when the lettercol of D-B 8 is here I'm sure I'll want to take up arms against some of the more ridiculous statements I know that fans will make.

I was glad to see Zelazny included--I was quite impressed with his "Rose for Ecclesiastes" in F&SF recently. (I won't mention his stuff in Amazing.) Quite verbose, wasn't he?

TED WHITE, 339 49TH ST. BROOKLYN 20, N.Y.

Thanks for D-B 7; while in some respects I find it less auspicious than #6, the Symposium certainly makes up for any other shortcomings.

Tucker was minor -- for Tucker -- but still about the most outstanding item in the main body of the zine.

The quiz had some errors which I caught just by skimming: both Cyril Judd and Mark Phillips are dual pseudonyms: it is incorrect to say that Cyril Judd is Judy Merril; Judd was Merril and Kornbluth. Likewise, Mark Phillips was Garrett and Larry Harris /Jannifer. Also, and probably only a typo, it wasn't the "Devention", but the Denvention.

Buck Coulson wonders about early comics fanzines. In the first of my columns to appear in COMIC ART I go into this question in some detail, pinpointing Bhob Stewart's EC Fan Bulletin as the first

TED WHITE, concl:
comics fanzine that I know of. James Taurasi published FANTASY COMICS around the same period as well. My own efforts were concentrated upon the single issue of POTRZEBIE which I published, and co-edited with Bhob Stewart and Larry Stark. Later I contributed to Ron Parker's HOOHAH!, and printed von Bernewitz's EC CHECKLISTS. (The final CHECKLIST was published this summer, by the way, covering all EC comics since the company's formation. Fred still publishes a period checklist to MAD, but this largely for the benefit of Gaines & Feldstein, who buy most of the copies.)

Not only is OUTRE being published by two neos today; it had a fairly important career as a fanzine published in the mid- and late-fifties by George Spencer, and I suspect had one or two incarnations before that.

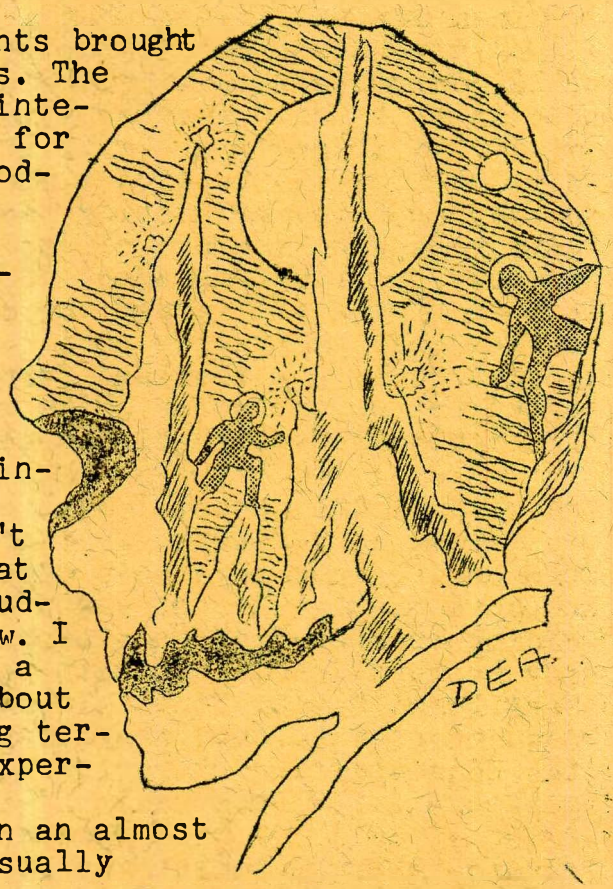
The art folio was minor and uneven. I was most surprised by the crudity of Trend's piece; he's usually far more the craftsman than this. Cawthorn and Jones take top honors.

CHARLES E. SMITH, 61, THE AVENUE, EALING W.13, LONDON, ENGLAND

Goshowowohboy and other type neo-type jazz; your hundred page annish really knocked me for a loop. The appearance of the whole was greatly improved by the photo-cover and the printed (I think) contents page. I really love these photocovers; this is the only way after all that I can ever get an idea of what U.S. fen look like, as there is no likelihood of my ever getting over to meet you in person. How about a photocover with pictures of the two Bill's; I'd like to see what two really dedicated fen look like - worn out, I suppose would be the description at present.

Coulson fine as usual. Nice to see him tackle an apa for a change. Is there any chance of his having a go at some of the others in the near future?

Agreed almost entirely with the points brought out in the article on the future of clothes. The old nudity taboo certainly seems to be disintegrating, especially over in Europe: Sweden for example. In fact, if it were not for our god-awful climate, it might start disappearing over here.



Wasn't overimpressed by The Reunion; it seemed rather a typical and rather dull example of the plotless modern short story. If done well, I can enjoy them. I don't know that I can put my finger onto exactly why I wasn't caught by the story; the theme was fine but I found myself continually reminded that this was a story by little phrases that jarred, that just didn't fit, especially in the dialogue. I felt that no-one would be talking in this rather pseudo-intellectual banter; it's a bit dated now. I can't remember the last time that I sat in a cafe and discussed Orwell; I think I was about sixteen at the time and thought I was being terribly profound. This has gone now, in my experience anyway.

Amazing man Berry; he can turn an almost straight travelogue, a form of writing I usually

CHARLES E. SMITH, concl:
loathe, into something that's a pleasure to read. Not vintage Berry perhaps, but good for all that.

The Art Folio was well received. I'm not sure though that most weren't in fact surpassed by the three small Barr illos to be found amongst the general text.

Finally, and probably most important of all, the D-B Symposium. The whole idea of this is great. It's even a little too much to digest all at once. I'm intending to read every part (or every part that I receive) and then read it all again straight through; then maybe I'll be able to marshall my ideas to the point where I'll be able to comment on various points introduced in the Symposium. Right now I'm too dazed.

{{ I certainly hope that's what everyone else does -- wait until the three installments of the Symposium and then comment on it. If you will notice, there actually aren't too many deep discussions on the first segment in this issue. Could it be everyone is too dazed by it, or too afraid to delve into it more? Let's get some good discussions/arguments going on it, ok, people? I know had I received a zine with such an item in it I'd surely add my two cents worth. §§ OK, we promise the next photocover we have will feature pics of ye editors too, but who knows when that will be? They DO cost money, so it'll be quite a while before we do.---BEM}}

ROY TACKETT, 915 GREEN VALLEY ROAD, NW, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO. 87107

Bowers is right-- there is a name for fans who put out 100 page fanzines: just plain nuts. And there is a great deal of commentable material here but I'm not about to comment on it all else this might turn into a 100 page letter. {{ See what I mean, Chuck, another chicken!---BEM}}

I give Shupp credit for postulating a future in which Earth is still muchly disunited. (Few of the professional writers do this prefering the concept of a world government; I prefer the concept of a world government myself but it seems a highly unlikely event.) On the other hand Shupp needs to bring himself up to date on current conditions. He speaks, in referring to the necessity of keeping the machines simple, and makes the mistake of falling back on the old cliche of the uneducated farm boy for his example. Somebody (me, for instance) should tell Mike that those farm boys--what's left of them-- will grasp the principles of running a spaceship a lot quicker than their city cousins since they are accustomed to the intricacies of today's mechanized farming. Hell, you've got to have a college degree to run a tractor. Mike would have been more correct in mentioning the highly uneducated slum dwellers of our cities.

"The D-B Symposium" is the meat of the issue. I much enjoyed it. It is interesting to compare the attitudes, as reflected in their answers, with the work these writers turn out. Knight says he's never been interested in much of anything else and some of his current yarns seem to indicate he's not much interested in writing science-fiction either. I was particularly interested in the answers to question 11. Conklin is short and to the point. I think most of us agree with him. Simak: Too much emphasis can be put on this human animal. We seem to have reached a stage where the authors spend too much time in attempting characterization and motivation and too little time in keeping up with science.

Porges: The science-fiction writer is not writing for the "average person" so your complaint doesn't wash. The science-fiction writer is writing for a specialized audience which does not suffer

ROY TACKETT, concl:
from the shortcomings you mention. Now what's your explanation?

Brunner's complaint is well-taken and has been mentioned by other writers. The solution here seems to be for the authors to gang up on the editors and demand the return of the letter columns.

And Damon Knight, I think, points the finger in the right direction. The editors are at fault for not demanding more of their authors. The publishers for running scared. The writers for being just plain lazy. The illustrators for half-hearted sloppy hackwork and the readers for not rising up and demanding better quality.

KENT McDANIEL, 620 METROPOLIS ST., METROPOLIS, ILLINOIS

I especially liked your cover; the pictures illustrated all the con-reports I've been reading. I didn't know there were such sexy broads as Joni Stopa and Sylvia Dees lose on fandom. I'm now a converted con-goer.

Regarding Bowers' editorial, or was it Bems; or both? D-B has come far; very far. Almost too far. I know when you started out you said D-B was to cater to both fans and faans. But you didn't say anything about non-fans. I'm not saying I want no faan articles; I don't care how many of them you run, cause I enjoy them. However, what I do mind is running stories like "Reunion" and articles like "No Holds Bard". They had nothing of especial interest to fans at all, and I can't see how they could be of interest to faans either.

My overall impression of D-B #7 was lowered by the inclusion of these two pieces. There was so much good-to-great stuff it was a shame these were included to take down the over-all image. And there are so many other faaanish themes to satiate the faans. Point made?

{{ Well, for one thing, this is OUR mag; we pay for it,work on it, and print in it what WE want to. If someone doesn't like what we use, that's too damn bad. There are many other zines that don't stick strictly to stf & faanish topics, too; Kipple being one of them. But we print what we like, no matter what. Who sez we have to stick to stf only? We would gladly print faanish items -- but so far we have never got any from the faanish segment of fandom. Send it in, faans! If it's good, we'll print it. But this is a genzine, you see, Kent, and is governed a lot by what the readers send to us, too. I'm not that good of a faanish writer to be able to write faanish stuff, myself, and neither is Bowers. And since we're both interested in writing of any kind, we print things of interest to us. But thanks for the comments.To be honest with you, there won't be very many more things like "Reunion" printed in D-B; it was an experiment to see the fans reactions to it.---BEM}}

MIKE McQUOWN, 308 S. FANKLIN BLVD., APT. 7, TALLAHASSEE, FLA. 32301

What has happenedto F&SF? I can't find a copy in this damned town; for the last three months, the places that usually carry it don't seem to have it. Chagrin; frustration; annoyance - downright pissedoffness!
{{ Subscribe to it and end your worries.---BEM}}

Interior: the Art Section was thoroughly enjoyable; would certainly like to see more of this type of thing- suggestion: feature a different artist each issue with a thumbnail bio along with the goodies. Liked Foster's story. It had a ring of something that said to me,'this is real'. I'm glad you're not hewing to a purely SF-Fantasy line.
{{ See what I mean, folks?! Each to his own taste, I guess!---BEM}}

MIKE IRWIN, 1712 TULIP, ARLINGTON, TEXAS. 76010

What with all the talk about virginity in the lettercol, I'm beginning to wonder if "Where have all the virgins gone?" and "Found a virgin", will be adopted as your official songs. Then too, the day appears to be swiftly approaching when a girl will claim to be "a virgin once removed", etc.

Despite the many other fine features (except "Space Wars"), the high point of D-B #7 was obviously your symposium. All the questions referred to "SF", none to Fantasy; what's your definition of "SF"?

The results thus far published were for the most part fine; Bradbury and Simak made me proud to be among their readers. Dean McLaughlin seems quite sensible and ethical. But J.W.C. puts himself in a class with comic-book writers by the way he uses exclamation marks and sensational sentences.{{ We included fantasy <u>with</u> sf in our questions.The whole field in general.---BEM}}

CLAY HAMLIN, SOUTHWEST HARBOR, MAINE

Just a small thing, and maybe only personal prejudice in a sense, but I suspect rather strongly that Roger Zelazny has just made himself really noticed, among both writers and editors as well as fans. Beardless he may be, and carry no bombs (can he really say that after A Rose For Ecclesiastes?)but I for one intend to take him seriously as just possibly the next great one.

Perfectly seriously, what other fanzine can boast such a list of contributors in just three issues. And, moreover, all of them saying something really worth saying, as opposed to the trivialities one expects in fanzines. Who knows, you just might be responsible for fandom finally, after all too long, becoming really worthwhile, to science fiction that is. Let's not revive that old nonsense about focal points of fandom, but it is still quite possible that you may have changed the whole direction of fandom, putting science fiction back in front, where it started. For this you get resounding applause from here.

I am probably completely out of line in suggesting this. But this seems an extremely valuable property to have the rights to, stranger things than this have sold well, Amis for instance with his book of criticism.However, if you and the authors do not have any specific plans for book publication of this, and if you can straighten out the rights of ownership in some way, I feel utterly certain that N3F will be only too happy to subsidize the costs of publication. Certainly next years directors (Dave Locke, Howard Devore, Fred Patten, Stan Woolston, and myself) are all strong science fiction fans, and it should be no great problem to appropriate the money needed for a larger circulation publication than you can do on a mimeo.Actually a subsidy may not even be necessary, it is at least within the bounds of probability that some publisher just might want to print it themselves. But heaven only knows it deserves a wider publication than you can possibly give it. Think it over, will you?

{{ We <u>have</u> thought about the possibility of getting the complete version of the Symposium published. We approached Joe Fekete, in Cleveland,(who works for a printer) and a rough estimate (very rough) of the cost was $1000.00 to print it up. Much toosteep for us. But we fear if the N3F <u>would</u> subsidize the cost, the club would place certain restrictions on it. Example: We planned on donating all money made (above cost) to the Cleveland in '66 group's treasury.(They/we are serious re: putting on the Con--and money is needed way <u>before</u> the con for a lot of the bills.) I doubt if the N3F would like to support an individual fan group in that manner. See my editorial for more on this matter.---BEM}}

MARION ZIMMER BRADLEY

Just a note to say that I very much enjoyed the last DOUBLE-BILL, especially Lewis Grant's THE FUTURE OF CLOTHES, and hope that this gives rise to much future speculation. My own feeling has always been that mass nudity is impractical; as I said in one of my novels, discussing the matter,

"Where do you carry your fountain pen? How do you walk around in a cactus field or a rose garden? What about horseback riding? You can talk about 'taboos' until you're blue in the face, but I'll bet, when Adam put on his fig leaf, he was just COLD."

I believe the taboo aspect of clothing will lessen --never disappear, since taboos evidently add to the emotional security of most people, and a strictly rational approach to human problems is a pipe dream; "man is a speck of reason swimming in a sea of emotion," and if taboos help him to manage his tensions and to lessen anxiety, allowing him to give his energy-drives to important matters, so be it. The idea of abolishing ALL irrational human drives is very appealing, but even in science fiction I think it should be realized that it is only a pipe dream; for that matter, only the top 20% of humanity is capable of enough logic even to consider such an idea necessary or even attractive.

However, the practical or decorative aspect of clothing will probably be with us forever. Frankly, I consider dedicated and complusive nudists to be just as sick as the Puritans who carefully covered up table legs and legs of mutton--they are just pouring all their emotional energy into a far-out cause to divert their attention from some serious problem. Conversely, I would appreciate enough sense on the problem so that it's considered proper to swim nude in public, or wear brief and functional clothing, doing such jobs as housepainting--it's easier to wash skin than clothes. I've been attending a college where women students aren't even allowed to wear slacks, let alone shorts, except on the tennis courts. Which is sheer lunacy, of course....

AVRAM DAVIDSON

Many thanks for your kindness in sending us #7. It was appreciated as were its predecessors, with the additional fact that we are now in a foreign country where English conversation and reading is at a premium. Far be it from me to insinuate that I am so pathetically grateful for anything printed in what is after all my native tongue that I would welcome a circular from the Lydia E. Pinkham Vegetable Compound people or a copy of The Gospel Trumpet of the Two Seed In the Spirit Predestinarian Baptist Church with the same degree of warmth and eagerth as I do DOUBLE-BILL, however. No. Got that? {{ Well, umm, errr...howzat, agin?!---BEM}}

Re Lewis Grant and what he calls "the Judeo-Christian* nudity taboo" --Lew, what say about the Chinese, who are completely outside the J-C stream and still are (or anyway, were) "all bedecked from crown to hem"?

Of the Art Section, I preferred the works of Eddie, Jim, & Prosser. Who Jim?

*I'm reminded of the title Ward Moore gave to a book review of a Quo Vadis type novel, viz., "Judeo-Christian Fireman, Save My Child."

{{"Jim"is Jim Cawthorn, from England. Dunno if he sells professionally, like Eddie does, but he sure as hell ought to. How do you like Mexico? When I was there a few years back, I found everything was HOT. The weather, the food, the women.....---BEM}}

-BB-

AND FINALLY.....THE WE ALSO HEARD FROMS:

$1. subs have come in from ART HAYES, ROBERT E. MARGROFF, ALMA HILL, CLAY HAMLIN, LELAND SAPIRO, RICHARD FARRAR, ROBERT A.W. LOWNDES, TOM GILBERT, JACK ELDRIDGE, RON KATZ, BEN JASON, DON & MAGGIE THOMPSON, BILL THAILING, DEA (again?) JIM SCHROEDER, BO STENFORS, FRED SLOCUM, DWAIN KAISER, and ROGER ZELAZNY. Hope I haven't missed anybuddy. Whew, what a list.

ARTHUR C. CLARKE and ALLEN KIM LANG were two pro's who got crowded out of the printed letter section, we're sorry to say. They both got a kick out of Tucker's piece, Grant's article, and the symposium. Thanks, both of you, for writing. We hope you continue to write-in on D-B.

ROBERT E. GILBERT wonders how Barr's illo's were put on stencil. We had them done electronically, REG, as was yours also, on page 34, lastish. §§ REG also sez something that I just have to print: "Why doesn't John W. Campbell think up some of these new ideas himself, that he is always talking about, and give them to the poor authors?" ((Or write the stories himself? §§ Any comments, John? ---BEM))

ART HAYES comments: "Dr. Clarke's Care Clinic brings up a question to mind, as to the 'purpose' (if any) of SF fanzines. Here we are faced with an entertaining article designed to be critical of our society. It is true that SF fans should certainly not close themselves into a little non-realistic world of their own, but is it the purpose of SF fanzines to editorialize at length on the world's ills? A Satire, that is well written, can certainly be entertaining, and if this is the primary purpose of fanzines, then it is something that 'belongs' to this mode of communication. Please note that I certainly do not wish to say that 'entertainment' is questionable as a type of content for fanzines, but the perennial question, "Is it SF?" comes to mind." §§ Do you mean that it HAS to be SF to be printed in fanzines? In that case, you probably wouldn't like the Jazz column in this issue. Comments, fans?

LOU POCHET correctly guesses the object of Tucker's satiric prodding as Dr. Crane's column in the papers. On Integration he says: "It is not only a problem for the south it is a problem for the entire nation. The only way the problem will ever be solved is by mixed blood. I myself am for integration as it is the only thing inevitable."

TERRY JEEVES gives Shupp's SPACE WARS an "honorable mention" this time 'round. But he still says "NUTS" re: a 'blast of braking rockets' being easy: "Remember the astronaut who fired his retro's by hand? He overshot by several hundred miles, and that particular bit of piloting had been planned and rehearsed exhaustively." §§ Incidently, Terry, we're sorry you can't run for TAFF this time. Mebbe later, huh?

OTHER WAHF's are: John Foster, E.J. (Ted) Carnell, Dave Prosser (but Dave, writing on a hand towel?!), Andre Norton, Janie Lamb, Dr. Antonio Dupla, Pat Scott McLean, and Bill Wolfenbarger. There were so many, I hope I didn't miss anyone. If so, it was unintentionable. Thanks, All, for writing. This is the longest lettercol D-B's had yet.

((There were some queries in some letters re: "Why wasn't so-and-so in the symposium?",etc. If there are some you wonder about, after it's over, all we'll be able to tell you is: "We don't know." That is known only to Lloyd Biggle & that particular writer. Some refused to co-operate, as they had the right to do.§§ All letters from the pro's have their addresses witheld. Part of our agreement in pubbing the symposium. I think you can see why. Can't have them bugged by letters from whole of fandom!--Write?--BEM))

"CLEVENTION II" IN 1966!

CHAIRMAN	Ben Jason
CO-CHAIRMAN	Don Thompson
SECRETARY	Maggie Thompson
TREASURER	Bill Thailing
BANQUET & AUCTION ARRANGER	Frank Andrasovsky
PRINTER	B. Joseph Fekete
AND:	Bill Bowers
	George Fergus
	Scott Kutina
	Bill Mallardi
	Roger Zelazny

24th World Science Fiction Convention

JUST PLAIN BILL

editorial by BILL BOWERS

Not being ones to give up a Good Thing when we've got it, you find yourselves in the midst of the January issue of DOUBLE-BILL. We are a bit late (rather), but following a hundred-page issue with one of 76 pages is not conducive to speediness. So we trust that you'll enjoy this belated #8, and will be around in late April (or at least early May) for D-B #9.

We are, and I think quite justly, proud of #7, but one aspect of it and this issue disappoints us a mite; we feel that our reproduction standards have fallen off a bit since #6, which both BEM and I consider to have been our best looking issue overall. But then we are to a large measure reassured when we look at some of the fanzines we receive in trade, so it may only be our imaginations. Perhaps with #10 though, when we go back to a small 40-50 page fanzine, we will have more time to take with each page. We shall hope.

One item which may seem a bit cruel, but which our billfolds protest is only just, is hereby set forth. (I get all these kindly tasks because I'm in charge of the Mailing List and am instructed to keep it in some sort of order.) The bane of all faneds is, you probably realize, the constant turmoil of fans moving and neglecting to send in changes of address. We didn't mind this too much when we only had to fork out 10¢ to mail D-B --but now we Object. The case in point was #7 which cost 18¢ to mail in the States, 18¢ to get back when returned, and 18¢ to remail--which totals up to too damn much when you start working with a 200 plus mailing list. So this be a Ruling set forth until further notice and retroactive to #7: Any issue returned because of a COA of which we were not informed will not be sent to the new address unless we are reimbursed for the last two items above--the return and remail. To be a bit more precise, the person at trial will not receive the particular issue which was returned if we run out of it, but will instead have one more issue added on at the end of his credit. The Moral is: Please send me changes of addresses as soon as possible after a move. There may be some exceptions, but don't count on it.

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THE READER'S DIGEST....the Pabulum of the American masses

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Sometime back, I was batting around the office--out of curiosity for the reactions I might get--those immortal words of one Robert Bloch: "I have the heart of a little boy. I keep it in a jar on my desk." The reactions were varied, but the majority didn't seem to go into any great spasms of joy over the quote. But one incident did occur which prove a suprise to Mr Bloch, unless he once operated under a pseudonym of which I am not aware. Seems as if one of the fellows who did like the statement decided to tell it to his wife. He did get the words right; I'll grant him that. But then he told her who had penned those words. Robert Frost.

As you have probably already noticed from the proceeding page, we are part of a group in the Cleveland area, the main purpose of which is to bring the World Science Fiction Convention to Cleveland in 1966. All

of us are serious about bringing into being the Clevention II and we trust that we'll have your support when the time comes. After the Pacificon II this year and the London Convention in '65, Cleveland's location would provide a chance for many of those who couldn't make the previous two cons to attend. It's never too early to start planning so we hope that you'll start considering attending the Clevention II two and a half years from now. What say?

Two of Ye Olde Cleveland Group will be with us to help collate again this issue--Joe Fekete and Scott Kutina. Thanks again, brave ones.

The American version of "That Was The Week That was" has been quite a disappointment to me, aside from the fact that it was moved into the time-slot opposite "The Twilight Zone". Some of the satire leaves me laughing at the time, but seemingly has no impression on me, so that by Monday morning I usually am wondering what-the-hell happened the previous Friday night. Methinketh that its backers protest a mite too much when they say that there is no network or sponsor restrictions. As far as I can see it must either be something like that, or they're in dire need of a new staff of writers (fans?). Incidently, John Foster has promised us an article on the now defunct British TW3, which we hope to have in either D-B #9 or 10.

A few days ago, I had my first opportunity (via the idiot box) to see "The Thing"--the movie which I believe was based on John Campbell's "Who Goes There". For a movie made some thirteen years ago, it was surprising good, although I haven't been able to figure out the purpose of switching the locale from the South to North Pole. The "monster" was almost scarey (I have a strange complusion to laugh at most of the present-day monsters) and the suspense of the picture built up nicely, even tho marred by the inevitable cutting knife of the TV station. It was nice to finally see something that I've heard about for some time and what's even nicer, I enjoyed it.

On one of the Cleveland radio stations, there is a 10 to Midnight program entitled, I believe, "Contact". A few weeks ago, through the foresight of Mallardi who'd heard about it, I heard Hugo Gernsback and two NASA scientists go forth on the subject of "Your Future" or somesuch. Mr. Gernsback wasn't in Cleveland, but was connected to the station from New York via long distance telephone. The listeners then called into the station to ask questions of the experts. Most of the program, as might be expected, was spent in the rehashing of themes that were old in the '20s, but there were a couple of interesting points. Seems as if one of the scientists had made the mistake of referring to Outer Space as being a "complete" vacuum. The ensuing arguement between him and the old boy who called in to show him up was sort of funny and brought out the very interesting point that there <u>are</u> particles of various natures floating around Out There, but not enough to really matter. Then Gernsback mentioned that by 1972 there would probably be some sort of pill or shot, which if a Negro should take would turn his skin pigment white. (Or maybe it was one of these new soaps...) Anyway, a lady listener called in and started wondering why Gernsback wanted to change the color of these poor people...was he prejudiced? He replied to the effect that the program would be voluntarily--those who wanted to change could, and those who didn't could stay in their rut. It was a fun-type show....

Have fun....<u>Bill Bowers</u>

-B7-

Double-Bill & Lloyd Biggle, Jr. PRESENT:

"A Questionnaire For Professional Science Fiction Writers and Editors"

"THE D-B SYMPOSIUM" PART III

IN THIS ISSUE:

Brian Aldiss	Philip K. Dick	J. Francis McComas
Poul Anderson	Gordon R. Dickson	P. Schuyler Miller
Isaac Asimov	Harlan Ellison	Alan E. Nourse
Robert Bloch	Martin Greenberg	H. Beam Piper
John Christopher	James E. Gunn	Frederik Pohl
Mark Clifton	Zenna Henderson	Fred Saberhagen
Basil Davenport	Allen Kim Lang	Jerry Sohl
Charles De Vet	Fritz Leiber	Theodore Sturgeon
-)(-	Katherine MacLean	Wilson Tucker
	-)(-	-)(-

QUESTION 1) For what reason or reasons do you write (or edit) Science Fiction in preference to other classes of literature?

JOHN CHRISTOPHER — Not so: I write other forms of fiction as well. Why do I write science-fiction at all? Because a certain kind--Olde Englishe Science-Fiction--offers scope for studying the way people might behave under the stress of environments stranger than those we know, yet not utterly incredible.

KATHERINE MacLEAN — To work out ideas, to learn something while I'm working them out, and to spend my time with the conviction that it is possible that what I am doing will make some kind of a difference. That is, will be useful to people and stir up their thinking in the direction of some more ideas and possibilities. Writing strictly to present emotional entertainment is a drag, because I get bored with it, cease to be entertained, and because mere entertainment is interchangable. Lollypops can be had easily anywhere.

Intellectual entertainment is the most lasting kind of exhileration. New ideas are more intoxicating and exhilerating than alcohol.(Although a mixture of alcohol and good company swapping new ideas is hard to top) The nearest approach to the exhileration of a really strenuous wrestling match with an adventure story solid with difficult logical jumps, is an article presenting a genuine breakthrough in science, or the skiing down a fast tree-studded slope.

WILSON TUCKER — Not quite true, here. I prefer mystery and suspense first, but write science fiction as an escape (!) from those; and also when I work up a theme or plot which is not acceptable to the mystery field. Or, more simply, science fiction is a counterpoint.

MARTIN GREENBERG — I think it represents a greater creative challenge than contemporary literature.

FREDERIK POHL — Because I enjoy reading it; because I think I can write it better than I can most other kinds; because there is little opportunity to write candidly of human foibles in most magazines today, except science-fiction magazines. ("Little" does not mean "none": PLAYBOY, NEW YORKER and the "little" magazines do print such stories, at least sometimes.)

H. BEAM PIPER — In my 'teens, which would be in the early '20's, I decided that what I really wanted to do was write; I wasn't quite sure what, but I was going to write something. About the same time, I became aware of science fiction, such as it was then, mostly H.G. Wells, and fantasy, Bram Stoker, H. Rider Haggard, and then I began reading the newer science (more or less) fiction— Burroughs, Merritt, Ralph Milne Farley, Ray Cummings, et al. This was the Neolithic, or Hugo Gernsback, Period of science fiction, and by this time I was a real 200-proof fan.

This first enthusiasm waned slightly after while. I got interested in history and historical fiction, and for some time read little else in the way of fiction, and every historical novel I read started me reading up on the history of the period involved. I wanted to know just who this guy Richelieu was and why D'Artagnan & Co. had such a down on him. Then the Prohibition period was in full swing, and I became interested in Chicago gangsters for a while. All the time, I was scribbling stories, few of which ever got finished, thank God! And gradually, I found myself returning to my first love, science fiction.

Well, along the line somewhere I bought a second-hand typewriter, and for years I squandered my money on paper, ribbons, and two-way postage on manuscripts, and I sent stuff to everything from the American Boy to the American Mercury, and finally, lo and behold, instead of a returned manuscript, I got a check, from Astounding. And then I began getting more checks instead of bounces, all for science fiction stories.

So I found that science fiction was easier to write and easier to sell, and it was simply a matter of knowing what I was best at and doing it. For the last few years, in between science fiction stories, I've been tinkering with a historical novel, and to some extent I am applying science fiction methods to it. After all, the influence of the invention of gunpowder and the development of the arquebus on the politics and warfare of the Sixteenth Century is just as much a science fiction theme as the influence of the development of the space-ship on Twenty Sixth Century society.

ISAAC ASIMOV —
a) Because I enjoy reading it more.
b) Because as a scientist I know more about science than I know about police routine or about the Old West.
c) Because science fiction, in these times, is the most significant literature one can write --- or at least that a person of my limited talent can write.

ROBERT BLOCH — For me, when I do turn to science fiction, it's because of sentiment and nostalgia -- or because I happen to have something to say which is not easily presented in another genre.

J. FRANCIS McCOMAS — For money.

P. SCHUYLER MILLER — When I did, it was because it was fun. I have the usual notebooks full of gimmicks and festering ideas that 'bleeged to be turned into fiction--and I did not have Dr. David H. Keller's drive to write 'em for personal amusement only. As a matter of fact, I read mysteries for fun and would have liked to write them, but haven't enough logic in me to make them hang together, or enough objectivity to tell that they really do when they don't seem to.

BRIAN ALDISS — I am a surrealist at heart; that is, I'm none too sure whether the reality of the world agrees with its appearance. Only in sf, or near-sf, can you express this feeling in words. Also, it is easier to make a worthwhile contribution to sf than to the far larger field of general fiction--and of course if the contribution is good enough, it serves also to enrich general fiction, of which sf is but a part.

I should add that for me there is immense excitement in discovering new facts; and to convey this excitement (rather than the facts, for I don't write that sort of sf) I turn naturally to science fiction.

BASIL DAVENPORT — I shall be happy to answer your questions to the best of my ability, but I always feel that I am at SF gatherings under false pretenses, since I don't write it, on the one hand, and I am not a real autograph-hunting fan on the other. I enjoy reading it, and have written a little criticism on the subject, and that is all.

If you ask why I write criticism of SF (and I don't, much), I can only say that the field appeals to me, that I think the span between good and bad SF is enormous, and it seems to me has not been sufficiently treated by most critics--has, in fact, been ignored, with of course a few exceptions.

FRITZ LEIBER — Because I can sell it more readily. I like to write fantasy and truth-telling "mainstream" fiction just as well. I have a somewhat better background in science and philosophy than in other fields. I like all fiction writing because it teaches me about myself and the world, including of course other people.

PHILIP K. DICK — Its audience is not hamstrung by middle-class prejudices and will listen to genuinely new ideas. There is less of an emphasis on mere style and more on content--as should be. It is a man's field, and hence a happy ending is not required--as in all the fiction fields dominated by women. It is one of the few branches of serious fiction in which humor plays a major role (thereby making s-f more complete, as was Shakespeare's work). Being one of the oldest modes of fiction known to the Western World it embodies some of the most subtle, ancient and far-reaching dreams, ideas and aspirations of which thinking man is capable. In essence, it is the broadest field of fiction, permitting the most far-ranging and advanced concepts of every possible type; no variety of idea can be excluded from s-f; everything is its property.

ZENNA HENDERSON — My stories are more fantasy than Science Fiction--I like it because I can change "reality" to suit myself.

ALLEN KIM LANG — Reading S-F, as I would in any case, allows me to avoid (sometimes) cliches...I really don't care much for mysteries; haven't the genius for poetry, but like the freedom to approach poetic notions through prose that is possible, without cuteness, without genius, only in S-F & fantasy.

GORDON R. DICKSON — I write it because it provides the greater share of the writing income that makes my living. I also write it because I enjoy writing it---as I enjoy reading it. I write poetry, historical and contemporary fiction for the same reason of enjoyment, but the science-fiction, being my bread and butter field, has priority, and will probably continue to do so for the next four or five years. But in any case, science-fiction will still offer a chance to tell certain types of stories better than they could be told in any of the other genre, or in the medium of so-called mainstream (what I prefer to call contemporary) fiction.

JAMES E. GUNN — The dramatization of ideas has always interested me more than the dramatization of the eternal and the commonplace. Change fascinates me. I think that change basically is good, that progress is possible, and that Man is perfectible. I have no urge to return to earlier periods; I much prefer to look forward and go forward. There is a bit of the preacher in every science fiction writer; science fiction is almost the only pulpit around.

POUL ANDERSON — I don't--at least, not from preference, although the larger part of my writing is still sf. However, I got started as a writer in that field because at the time, sf was my favorite kind of popular entertainment, and anyone does best to write about what interests him most. (I still like it!)

JERRY SOHL — The lack of taboos and set standards allows a writer to flex muscles and titillate gray matter that might not otherwise be affected. In addition, it's a hell of a lot more fun, though I have nothing against other classes of literature. I think there are more divergent types of a single genre in s-f than in any other single classification of writing, which is all to the good. Conversely, I don't think s-f will ever be stereotyped (except by idiot TV producers).

MARK CLIFTON — A wider scope for the exploration of new ideas (or new slants on old ideas) and an audience of readers alert enough to appreciate what is done.

HARLAN ELLISON — Sorry gang, but I don't write s-f in preference to anything. It's roughly tantamount to your suggesting that I eat Yorkshire Pudding in preference to any other food. Which takes care of my starches, but what about the scurvy I'll come down with, from lack or fruit, or the absence of calcium in my system from ignoring eggs, or--but you get the point. My talent (and I hasten to add that it is a very erratic, wild sort of talent) is nutured at various founts. There are stories I could no more tell as science fiction than I could stop writing altogether. Along about now, the s-f fan has got to get it through his head, to learn, to be rudely awakened, as I was, that science fiction, while it has some incredibly important areas in which it

functions better than any other literary form, is a terribly restricting form usually, and is constricting to a writer who wants to deal with His Times. And the restrictions are made more unpalatable by the fans--of whom I am one--who know what they like (a faculty, James Abbott McNeil Whistler pointed out, we share with all the higher forms of animal life) and are a tot too quick to put down any writer venturing outside the well-trod compounds they have approved. Vonnegut is a case in point. In a year when his "Sirens of Titan", an unbelievably adroit and inventive book, vastly superior to anything else even attempted that year, was published, the Hugo went to a second-class, inept, paucive, adolescent, hysterical piece of nonsense, strictly on the reputation of the author, who has done infinitely better work in the past. With examples like this to learn from--where the truly imaginative writer is laughed at in his own land--what authentic challenges are left to the s-f writer who desires to shock, awaken and explore? Why do I write s-f in preference to other forms? I don't, gang. It would have been impossible to do stories like my "Final Shtick", "Daniel White For The Greater Good" or "Neither Your Jenny Nor Mine" (upcoming soon in a magazine called KNIGHT) in the field. There is precious little room for human values. A great deal of room for gidgets, gimmicks, gadgets and boffs, but not nearly enough for eternal human values warped by human problems. Sorry to level the charge, but it's the way I see it.

THEODORE STURGEON — It gives me almost complete freedom of speech, and absolute freedom of thought.

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QUESTION 2) What do you consider the raison d'être, the chief value of science fiction?

FRED SABERHAGEN — Ideally, science fiction gives a chance to impose different co-ordinate systems upon the human condition, and to try to see what will change and what will remain the same.

ALAN E. NOURSE — As a sounding-board for ideas and speculations that can't be well advanced in other media because the other media are more rigidly limited (through custom) to demonstrable realities and provable facts. Reality is no speculative, and science as a description of reality doesn't permit speculation. In science fiction any approach to speculation about anything is permissible, even approaches that violate the rules of logic or involve fallacious arguement, as long as the approach used is consistent within its own framework. Thus, science fiction can be the most unrestricted of all fictional media...except that very few people using the media are able to free themselves from the necessity to "obey the rules" long enough to utilize the freedom from restriction that science fiction offers them.

MARTIN GREENBERG — Science Fiction has a base that is so broad that it forces the individual who reads it to think. I believe that the need for children to read is tremendous and contemporary fiction just represents no or very little challenge in competition with the idiot box.

ROBERT BLOCH — As a vehicle for social satire at one extreme--the other extreme being escapist entertainment.

WILSON TUCKER — Sheer entertainment. I don't go for the "sugar coated science pill" line, and only a few science stories by a few intelligent writers are really educational (Examples: Clement, Anderson, Asimov, et al.) Sheer entertainment in a relatively free-thought, free writing field is its chief value. It has novelty value.

PHILIP K. DICK — To present in fiction form new ideas too difficult or too vague as yet to be presented as scientific fact (e.g. Psionics). And ideas which are not scientific fact, never will be, but which are fascinating conjectures--in other words, possible or alternate science-systems. World-views which we can't "believe" in but which interest us (as, for example, we find interesting the Medieval World-view but simply cannot any longer accept it as "true"). So s-f presents to us, in addition to the World-view which we actually adopt, a great range of "as-if" views; the possession of these have the effect of making our minds flexible: we are capable of seeing alternate viewpoints as co-equal with our own.

ISAAC ASIMOV — The chief value of science fiction is that it affords a means by which thoughtful people can consider the possible effects on human beings of changes in the state of science and technology. These changes will come to pass and at such a rate that we must be as prepared as possible for them if we are to avoid discomfort and even disaster.

H. BEAM PIPER — The same as the raison d'être of any other form of fiction; the entertainment of the reader. The term entertainment labels any activity for pleasure rather than necessity. It covers everything people do because it's fun. Science fiction entertains the type of reader who enjoys speculation on different hypothetical, philosophical, scientific, sociological, political, military, economic, technological, etc., possibilities. This type of reader is not inferior nor superior to others, but he is different.

JERRY SOHL — Science fiction examines all aspects of homo sapiens, not just his romantic urges or his criminal tendencies or the inhumanity of man. As a result, we are able to see ourselves as a rational animal being examined clinically and at the same time entertainingly, and I think we learn through the medium. I like the undercurrent of hope and ultimate fulfillment that permeates s-f.

FRITZ LEIBER — It makes readers more aware of the real world and especially of science and technology, elements wrapped in mystery for many people.

KATHERINE MacLEAN — Being geopolitical about it, S.F. comics and kid book translations are major reading matter for kids in all languages around the world. Muy educational. Being personal -- certain kinds of people seem to need it. I couldn't have lived without it as a kid. The boredom that accompanied listening to adults and my kid friends talk about the weather, infantile politics and what brand of chewing gum they preferred gave me a distinct pain in the head. After I discovered s.f. I didn't have to listen. I could speculate about wild

evolutions of custom, alternate possible histories of how we go here, doppler effects, canals, etc., etc. and stay awake. Whenever I wasn't playing games with kids or reading, where someone was mumbling slowly on with some fallacy, such as school, I could mentally retreat to a s.f. puzzle, sit and look interested.

HARLAN ELLISON — I suppose the proper pompous answer is "as a vehicle for social satire, allegory, and parable." But if that's the best we can do, then we ought to pack up our typewriters and silently steal away. Such vehicular qualities should be side-effects, fillips to the main course, which should be portrayal of the human condition. When science fiction does this, it has a reason, when it doesn't, it is precisely what the clods call it: escapist fiction. I love it, but the best I can come up with for a reason is: it is, because it is.

J. FRANCIS McCOMAS — Entertainment.

ALLEN KIM LANG — Pacifism, non-violence, negro equality were accepted in S-F long before NEWSWEEK caught on. It's the outer fringe of liberal thought...the best of it; some (Heinlein) is the best expression of conservative notioning.

POUL ANDERSON — Entertainment. This though,does not necessarily imply triviality. Shakespeare's plays are entertainment too. The best sf, besides having literary value, gives something to think about to readers who enjoy thinking. The second best, if reasonably well written, at least gives relaxation. # To some extent, sf is useful as a vehicle for social analysis and criticism; it's about the only fiction which tries to study the impact of science and technology on society. # Evidently it also arouses an interest in such matters among young people, and so acts as a recruiting agent for science and engineering.

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QUESTION 3) What is your appraisal of the relationship of Science Fiction to the "Mainstream" of literature?

P. SCHUYLER MILLER — It is a minor division of Mainstream literature which split off, became a genre by acquiring enough readers to maintain a corps of magazines, evolved its own discipline and techniques, and may in the end rejoin the main stream while (I hope) impressing its own sophistication about ideas on general writers. Mysteries have done the same thing, but the urge to crime seems to be more prevalent in the average individual than the urge to see Mars or shake hands with a BEM. The way in which most Mainstream writers fumble with SF techniques when they attempt them, and the total lack of comprehension which Mainstream critics show when confronted with almost any SF idea, indicates to me that we are not going to make over the rest of mankind in our image. They just aren't interested in the same things.

MARK CLIFTON — I have long advocated that science fiction should not imitate mainstream, nor adopt its standards, but should remain a distinct art form with its own standards of merit. Each form can learn techniques from the other, but the trend of the past decade of pushing science fiction closer to the standards of mainstream has harmed it greatly.

BRIAN ALDISS — What a hellish question! When a sf novel is really good enough, it transcends the narrow category and becomes a genuine and general contribution to our literature. We saw this happen with 1984. But unlike Orwell, the ordinary sf writer is generally too prone to stay within the conventions of the field; as a result his work remains within the field. Because of this, the rather artificial idea has grown up of sf versus the rest. It is an impoverishing idea, fortunately less strong than it was once.

GORDON R. DICKSON — The word mainstream bothers me. It seems to imply a genre where there is no such thing. In practice the so-called mainstream field is a catch-all from what is left over from easily-identified areas of genre fiction such as sf, mystery, historical and so on. However, people using the word normally use it to connote fiction with a background of the current, theoretically real, world of the present. It's for this reason I prefer the term 'contemporary fiction'. This draws the lines against the loose thinkers who like to sweep into the net of 'mainstream' anything much praised, or successful, or acknowledged to have literary quality, and defend the robbery of these things from other literary areas with the looseness of the 'mainstream' label.

However, if we can restrict 'mainstream' to the area of contemporary fiction, I might say two things about science-fiction in comparison with it. The first is that sf is a speciality field where its very freedom from rule and taboo is bound to bar it from the conservative majority of general readers--as a regular literary diet. Mainstream or contemporary fiction on the other hand, being apparently anchored in current reality, keeps its firm hold on this majority. And this is as it should be. For the very qualities which make sf attractive to the imaginative and experimental fictioneer are the very ones which would have to be sacrificed if the field had to play to the mainstream readership.

The second is that science-fiction, from Verne and Wells to the present, is very much a product of our immediate technical period in history ---in contrast to contemporary fiction which runs back to Fielding's Tom Jones, in its form of the modern novel. Sf, therefore, is restricted not only in the bounds of its own area of speciality, but in the modernity of its appeal. Both these restrictions---and they are not bad restrictions at all---make sf an outlier of the contemporary field. I don't see sf becoming much more important among the other genres of writing than it is now, for these reasons. But I'm glad rather than sorry about it. If we weren't out in the boondocks the laws would be stricter---and there would go most of our pioneer freedoms to explore the yet uncharted areas of theme and subject and character which will eventually richen the whole field of writing.

ROBERT BLOCH — Science fiction is a stepchild, a poor relation. While ardent sf fans tend, by and large, to denigrate fantasy, it is only when science fiction is classified as fantasy that it gains any great critical acceptance or a wider general readership; cf. Bradbury (whom many sf "purists" disavow).

ZENNA HENDERSON — For the last few years I have avoided the "mainstream". Too much sewage in it--insofar as SF resembles 'literature' in this respect--I advoid it, too.

THEODORE STURGEON — Like Moliere's Amateur Gentilhomme, who was astonished to find out he had been speaking prose all his life, the mainstream reader is unaware of the vast quantity of sf he reads and really enjoys, and will heatedly deny that it's sf. Fail Safe, 1984, On The Beach, You Shall Know Them, and hundreds of other books, many of them mediocre, some brillant, have had wide public acceptance. But if a really good sf pro wants to make the classic buck (given that he has a really good book to sell) he'd better change his name and hide his history, because the lay reader is convinced that everything called sf is Buck Rogers from 20,000 Fathoms.

JAMES E. GUNN — Except as "Mainstream" literature is concerned with ideas, it has little relationship to science fiction (and vice versa) in a meaningful sense. Sure, both influence each other, "Mainstream" literature with its experiments in style and its loosening of subject matter restrictions (which is all it has to offer) and science fiction with it content (which is almost all it has to offer). Some "Mainstream" literature approaches science fiction by its dramatization of ideas; some science fiction approaches "Mainstream" literature by subordinating content to style.

HARLAN ELLISON — We are separated from the mainstream by a self-imposed gulf, and too few writers try to bridge that gulf. It is much easier to work where we always have, where the chances of being drowned or stoned are slighter. I find the writing in the mainstream better mechanically, often imaginatively richer, frequently much more thought-provoking. When the mainstream is bad, it is dreadful, but when it is good, it beats the best s-f by a hatful. Bitter, but true.

FRED SABERHAGEN — I see no sharp line between them.

MARTIN GREENBERG — Science Fiction has a definite place in mainstream literature. When doing a satire or critical study, science fiction or fantasy, to use a generic term, must be used. Wells used it to promogulate his sociological theories. Other writers have used it similarly; the recent 'Fail Safe' is an example tho they didn't call it SF.

BASIL DAVENPORT — I don't know to answer that. At the beginning, I don't think there was much. BLEAK HOUSE, or even THE WOMAN IN WHITE, seem to me proto-detective stories which are much closer to mainstream than is THE TIME MACHINE or VOYAGE ROUND THE MOON. That is, I think it may be said that the detective story has been moving away from mainstream, while SF, having exhausted some of its most special material, is moving toward it.

JERRY SOHL — It is the single new facet of writing of the past fifty years, and it should be considered both independent of it, yet as a part of it. The truly great sf stories and novels will live as a part of literature for all time, so it should not be sold short.

PHILIP K. DICK — S-f fails to explore the depths of interpersonal human relationships, and this is its lack; however, on a purely intellectual level it possesses more conceptual ideas as such, and hence in this respect is superior to mainstream or quality fiction. And (supra) it does not need to dwell on mere style as such but can range further in terms of its content. But s-f (excepting Bradbury) is for younger, more optimistic people, who haven't yet truly suffered at the hands of life; quality fiction tends--and rightly so--to deal with the defeated, those who have lost the first bloom...hence quality fiction is more mature than s-f--alas.

FREDERIK POHL — The best sf is a part of the mainstream, in that it affects, and is affected by, the common feedback of good writers on each other. If most sf is not read by the mass "mainstream" audience, this is not a weakness of sf but of the audience, who are not willing, and perhaps are not able, to stretch their imagination enough to enjoy sf.

ALAN E. NOURSE — As stated above {{#2}}..."mainstream" being the restricted medium, science fiction the unrestricted. To the extent that science fiction writers restrict themselves when working in the unrestricted medium, they are wasting their efforts, and science fiction merges with "mainstream"; to the extent that the "unrestrictedness" of science fiction is used, it moves away from the mainstream and becomes more and more a rather awkward, uncomfortable and peculiar variant of idea-propounding and truth-seeking. Personally, I think this is the direction science fiction must take in the future if it is to survive at all: it must become more and more experimental, queerer and queerer, more and more elastic, less and less concerned with its adherence to rules of logic or to reality itself...in other words, farther and farther from "mainstream" writing. The alternatives are for it to remain as it is...a progressively more boring fraud which simply doesn't do what it pretends to do...or to merge closer and closer with restricted "mainstream" writing...in which case, it just gets pretty silly, since there is less and less distinction.

Of course, whether there is a readership which will support greater and greater experiment and elasticity, or an editorship willing to gamble on it, or authours willing (or able) to extend themselves in playing with it, with the resources to do so for little or no financial return, is quite another question. Again personally, I think it is the authors who have the most to gain by pursuing the potential here, yet it is the authors who seem least able and/or willing to get working at it...present company included. It's much easier to turn out pretend-science fiction you know will sell, or turn to money-making writing, and the kind of writing I'm talking about, to the writer, would be both risky and unremunerative as hell.

ISAAC ASIMOV — If by "mainstream" we mean writing of the scope and value and intensity and significance of the material written by a Shakespeare or a Dostoievski, then there is no comparison of course. If, however, we refer to the run of the mill novels being written today, science fiction is incomparably more important since it is the only branch of popular fiction dealing with the really important problems that face Homo sapiens today.

FRITZ LEIBER — SF is part of the Mainstream. The division into "genres" is largely a matter of merchandising. When we say the Mainstream we are talking of A) popular fiction appealing to the widest possible audience; B) books written to please the English professors, the literary quarterlies, and the critics.

ALLEN KIM LANG — ESQUIRE ignored it, so it can have no such relationship.

WILSON TUCKER — I hold it to be a distant cousin. Distant cousins like Arthur C. Clarke are worming their way into the mainstream, whereas writers like Philip Wylie and Nevil Shute occassionally try to ply the far out waters but fail miserably. It would appear to be a one-way river; distant cousins may come in, but those already in cannot journey out--however briefly.

KATHERINE MacLEAN — I don't give a damn about the mainstream of literature. Some of the classics have given me insights I might not have gotten by living and seeing real people, but not many have. When I am in the right receptive mood I can be stirred emotionally to the depth by the purest piece of hack hokum. Every writer has his own slant, his personal philosophy, and when there was something I was ready to learn about human nature, I learned as suddenly and as profoundly from the characters of one of the British popular novels of W.J. Locke; from Tarzan, from a science fiction story, from H.G. Wells, from Arthur Koestler, from the Ill Made Knight, from A Bit of Tapestry, from the Golden Bough, from Young Doctor Kildare, by Max Brand, from SPQR which appeared as a second story in a Doc Savage issue (someone who remembered it recently said it was by Alfred Duggan). Impact does not relate to critics votes.

CHARLES DE VET — Gradually merging.

POUL ANDERSON — I detest these artificial distinctions. All writing belongs to the "mainstream" and should be recognized as such. But to the extent that sf is de facto a separate category, it is derivative in its literary techniques, reserving originality for ideational content.

H. BEAM PIPER — I deplore this term "mainstream". It is currently used, in fiction, to label novels, etc., of psychological characterization, and nothing else. As stated above ((#2)), difference does not imply superiority or inferiority, but only difference. However, a certain clique of critics, pretending to intellectual superiority (Orville Prescott will do as a specimen), prefer fiction of this genre and refuse to give works of any other kind serious consideration. It might be noted that most of this critical clique are themselves non-scientific if not actually anti-scientific in orientation. It might also be noted that most of the characters delineated in such fiction are immature, semantically disoriented, bewildered, complex-ridden, unhappy and often neurotic if not psychotic. (I do not claim this as an original discovery; Reginald Bretnor pointed it out ten years ago.) It might also be noted that "m--------m" writers who experiment with science fiction themes usually butcher them atrociously.

J. FRANCIS McCOMAS — What is the "mainstream" of literature?

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QUESTION 4) Do you believe that participating in fandom, fanzines and conventions would be a benefit or a hindrance to would-be writers?

JOHN CHRISTOPHER — It depends. If they want to become science fiction writers (and presumably they do), probably not. But ones needs more general literary interests in one's formative years if one aspires to writing in the more general field. Science-fiction tends to put blinkers on its adherents.

FREDERIK POHL — Generally speaking, a benefit. I don't think they would learn anything worth knowing about writing; I do think they might receive encouragement and impetus.

GORDON R. DICKSON — To tell you the truth, I believe something like this is a purely individual matter. Some would-be writers will be stimulated by fandom, fanzines, and conventions. Others will find their literary energies being bled off in related fields. I've become rather hard-minded on this topic in the last twenty years. I now think that if anyone is going to write, he will write, irrespective of benefits or hindrances.

ZENNA HENDERSON — Hindrance for me--it's impossible to make a blanket statement covering everyone. If one can listen to the field being cursed and discussed without distorting his own work to some one elses warp--it's okay.

MARK CLIFTON — Young people particularly need the companionship of like minds for full development, but there comes a point where one's intellectual substance is wasted in talking about ideas instead of spent in carrying them out. If we can gain the acclaim of our companions and the reward of their admiration for bright chatter, why go on and do the hard work of turning it into literature? Further, our companions are often too easily satisfied and we never develop our potential to the point we can satisfy an audience which doesn't personally know us. Limited and rationed participation is probably the better course for the would-be writer who really means it.

P. SCHUYLER MILLER — There's no question that such activities are beneficial--though "Cordwainer Smith" told me that a convention, or even a small group of fellow writers, would ruin his writing readiness for months. (He has no such inhibitions in his professional field of political science, apparently.) The SF field is so small and closely knit that it is practically a "family business"--and the better you know the family the better your chance of marrying into it.

FRED SABERHAGEN — Until after my first sale, I never did, so it can't be a necessity. Time and energy put into organized fandom can't very well go into writing; but conventions and clubs can help you learn something about SF as a business.

HARLAN ELLISON — A benefit of inestimable value. I owe it all to fandom. Whatever all may be.

BRIAN ALDISS — To the beginner writer, fanzines etc. are probably great props. But when you have had quite a lot of writing published, you can't help noticing that fanzine critics often have not got sufficient critical equipment to say something really pertinent (though they may well say something really impertinent!) Of course its tempting too for a writer to write for fanzines rather tham for the public; it's easier, gets more immediate egoboo returns perhaps. Cons are a different matter--these a writer should not miss.

ALLEN KIM LANG — A benefit: There you meet writers, and bitch about the fen together over beer. Therapeutic, since we don't discover, so engrossed, that the fen haven't even heard of us.

THEODORE STURGEON — Depends on the writer. I believe that total participation in anything benefits a writer. However, some people are so constituted that they are looking for limitations to obey, and if they took some of the more vociferous "Back to the Thirties" fans seriously they might never recover.

But anyone strong-minded enough to be willing to evolve the field could get nothing but inspiration from fanac.

PHILIP K. DICK — A benefit, but not a very great one. It would be a benefit if the fans allowed the writer to do the talking, instead of trying to instruct him. It is the job of the writer to do the telling; he should not be turned into a listener. But the concepts in s-f writing are not derived from fandom, from within the field anyhow; they are--or at least should be--derived from the wide world itself, its far shores in particular. From everywhere but s-f fandom.

KATHERINE MacLEAN — It's fun.

The only benefit to writers is investing in a good typewriter and glueing ones bottom to the chair. That's work.

Work is not the same as fun. Rationing both is recommended.

H. BEAM PIPER — If nothing else, fan-activities gives the would-be writer an opportunity of learning what his potential customers want, and of familiarizing himself with the medium in which he intends to work. I have heard it argued that fandom tends to make a sort of cult of science fiction, restricted to a narrow circle of the initiated. This I seriously question. The people who contribute to fanzines and attend conventions are merely the most articulate of the class enumerated in (2), and I have never attended a convention at which I did not hear all sorts of opinions, often quite contradictory, vigorously maintained.

CHARLES DE VET — Serves little function other than conviviality.

J. FRANCIS McCOMAS — A hindrance.

POUL ANDERSON — Probably it benefits some, to a small degree, and hinders others by diverting their energies. Most, I suspect, wouldn't be much affected one way or another.

WILSON TUCKER — I cannot deny my own existance, or career. All these definitely helped me, most especially writing for the fanzines. About ten years of fanzine writing preceeded my first sale; I still write for them, sometimes experimentally and then use the results of that experiment in some story or book. The would-be writer could omit the conventions with no real loss, but fandom and fanzines can be a real benefit if he will use them.

ALAN E. NOURSE — Would-be writers only become writers because something drives them to write and write and write. Fandom can do this, if it will. Fanzines provide a medium for would-be writers to see their work in print of one sort or another. Conventions can stimulate excitement, ambition and imagination, and help obliterate that "awesome gulf" between the would-be writer and the established writer that so often just paralyzes early efforts. Participation in all these things can be an enormous benefit to the would-be writer who has it, and a great disappointment to the would-be writer who is really an admirer of writing and writers and doesn't have it. And these things could be a lot more beneficial, too. It's always been a great mystery to me why the annual conventions have never turned up with a Hugo award for the best pro story by an erstwhile fan writer, judged by a panel of fan editors and pro editors and guaranteed publication in that year's Hugo-winning pro magazine as a prize, with 'ho award" made in years when nothing fit for pro magazine publication turns up.

The key to the whole thing, though, is stimulation of the would-be writer to write. I never in the world would have started writing when I did, or in the field I did, if I had not become involved in an active competition-collaboration relationship with Joe Meyer when I was a junior at Rutgers, with several student-members of the editorial staff of the college "literary" magazine prodding us on. We set fire to each other and began to assault John Campbell with stories; I guess John knew when he was licked because he made the grave mistake of buying, and as far as I was concerned the die was cast. But the important point is that that focus of people at that place and time set up a stimulating atmosphere that fired off down-to-business writing from half a dozen people: myself and Joe Meyer in science fiction; Mike Shaara in science fiction and later in slick fiction; S. Leonard Rubinstein in social novels; Will Shapiro in I-don't-know-what-all....I swear, even the English professor we all tormented retired in terror and published a volume of poetry.

I have heard of this sort of chain reaction occurring other places and with other people; I'm interested, and would like to document, if anybody has other examples. Maybe I would have started writing something professionally, sometime, regardless...I had already been writing fiction of one sort or another long before I met Joe...but the stimulus brought vague efforts and ambitions into sharp focus then and there. The fan/fanzine/prowriter/pro editor relationship that exists in science fiction is utterly unique in American letters, to my knowledge, and I think it ought to be firing off far more serious creative sparks than it is.

BASIL DAVENPORT — I think it is always a benefit to exchange ideas with other workers in the same field.

FRITZ LEIBER — Benefit, as are all contacts with reality, provided the would-be writer leaves himself lots of time for the lonely work of writing and studying and practicing writing.

ROBERT BLOCH — Depends on their temperaments. The outgoing personality is apt to suffer--he can get his kicks and ego-gratification rather easily by mingling with fans at fannish occasions as a "big-name pro", and often tends to neglect actual writing in favor of living it up. On the other hand, the introverted writer may well benefit by the reassurance afforded by his reception at such affairs. This is a situation not limited to science fiction writing.

ISAAC ASIMOV — A benefit, by all means. It gives you a feeling of belonging, and that is important. The feeling of isolation that usually besets a science fiction writer because there are usually so few among the people he meets who are "fans" can discourage him to silence.

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QUESTION 5) What source or sources would you recommend to beginning writers as having been, in your experience, the most productive of ideas for Science Fiction stories?

JAMES E. GUNN — Speculative articles of all kinds--in newspapers, magazines, books, and elsewhere have been the major source of ideas for me. TIME magazine has been particularly fruitful. In the beginning the work of a science fiction writer --or any writer--is usually derivative; many stories are reworkings of old themes or variations on old themes. An early source, then, is and probably has to be the science fiction magazines themselves.

ALLEN KIM LANG — 1) Clever thinking being done in my professional (i.e., breadearning) field all unbeknownst to those not banking blood and culturing throat swabs;
2) SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN, NATURE (the bloke, not the Yank), etc.;
3) Conversations with otherwise-literate, but non-s-f-reading people over beer.

FRED SABERHAGEN — Ideas on the deep level must come out of the writer's own mind. For new things and "odd" things in science, one good source is the magazine Scientific American.

JERRY SOHL — A thorough reading of all that he can get his hands on in the field is the most provocative thing, I have found, particularly if the writer does not, in the reader's opinion, make his point well. I could do better is the best thing a beginner could say to himself. Then, having the challenge, he can try to do better. Some do, as the new lists show each year.

THEODORE STURGEON — For the Science part, there's no better source than Science. For the rest, there's no better source than Fiction. The best sf writers are invariably widely read in many fields, in and out of science.

CHARLES DE VET — Introspection.

POUL ANDERSON — Current science (alas, much neglected these days!), as found in books and in journals like Scientific American, Science, Nature, etc. Current events to some extent--though too much present-day sf is merely an exaggeration of some passing phenomenon. History, anthropology, economics, etc., extremely valuable. "Mainstream" literature, not so much the usually shoddy modern product as the great works of the past. Though often silly in themselves, polemics of any kind can be very suggestive of sf-type situations.

P. SCHUYLER MILLER — (1) Reading everything.
(2) Reading science fiction.
(3) Reading science. The general journals such as Scientific American may be all you need, but if you find an interest in some particular field of science (as I have in archeology), then you should dig deeper. Look at the depth of understanding in Poul Anderson's recent appraisal of the possibilities of life on other worlds. I haven't seen a professional astronomer or biologist who came close to him in looking at the whole problem.

MARK CLIFTON — Science fiction stories which didn't do it the way I would have done it, or failed to develop the real potential that was there. Also apply against any basic idea the seven forms of thought I outlined in the fronticepiece of EIGHT KEYS TO EDEN.

H. BEAM PIPER — Now, I won't attempt to answer this. Ideas for science fiction stories, like ideas for anything else, are where you find them, usually in the most unlikely places. The only really reliable source is a mind which asks itself questions like, "What would happen if--?" or, "Now what would this develop into, in a few centuries?" or, "How could so-and-so happen?" Anything, anything at all, can trigger such a question, in your mind if not in mine.

WILSON TUCKER — First, a book designed for mystery writers: MYSTERY FICTION, THEORY & TECHNIQUE by Marie Rodell (Duell, Sloan, 1943). It teaches the halfwit to plot and narrate, and science yarns can be superimposed on the suspense framework. Next, any and all issues of THE SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN. Next, any and all natural history books by Willy Ley. After that, any serious work on a writer's favorite field: mine is archeology, and I've used Ceram and Kramer often. The magazine SKY & TELESCOPE is both an idea springboard and a research tool. Finally, if you can resist the urge to copy, almost any "scientific romance" written by HG Wells.

BRIAN ALDISS — Speaking from personal experience, as if one can profitably do anything else, I get most of my best ideas from current fiction (non sf) and current biographies, travel, Johnson's Lives of the Poets--anything, anywhere. These can all be digested into sf. Of course I also subscribe to and enjoy scientific journals, but unless you blow life into fact, you don't have fiction at all.

J. FRANCIS McCOMAS — The world & the people around them.

ISAAC ASIMOV — Other science fiction stories. Before anyone can hope to write good science fiction--he must read good science fiction--and a lot of it.

ALAN E. NOURSE — Science, philosophy, history...you name it. I've never read anything, nor talked seriously with anybody, who hasn't been productive of ideas for science fiction stories. The problem isn't to dig up ideas, it's to cull the surplus. I think any sf writer will say much the same.

ROBERT BLOCH — The work of other writers. Almost all beginners are unconscious plagiarists, in that they admire certain styles, certain themes. By modelling their own work on that of other, accepted writers, they get a start; gradually, if they persevere, an individual style develops, and an individual outlook --from which ideas emanate.

FREDERIK POHL — Scientific books and periodicals, particularly magazines like SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN and books like those by Gamowm Weiner, Hoyle and Loren Eiseley. Also books on history and particularly theoretical studies in history, like those by Herbert J. Muller.

PHILIP K. DICK — Journals which deal in the most advanced research of clinical psychology , especially the work of the European existenial analysis school. C.G. Jung. Oriential writings such as those on Zen Buddhism, Taoism, etc. Really authoritative--as compared with popularizations--historical works (e.g. "The Brutal Friendship"). Medieval works, especially those dealing with crafts--such as glass blowing--and science, alchemy, religion, etc. Greek philosophy. Roman literature of every sort. Persian religious texts. Renaissance studies on the theory of art. German dramatic writings of the Romantic Period.

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QUESTION 6) Do you feel that a beginning Science Fiction writer should concentrate on short stories as opposed to novels -- or vice versa? Why?

FRITZ LEIBER — The second sf I ever sold to a magazine was GATHER DARKNESS! Yet a short story involves less investment of time, obviously. Though I've known perfectionistwould-be writers waste months on one short story. Yet when the writing bug hits some talented people they want to put everything they know and feel into one yarn--so the novel's right for them. On the whole, SHORT STORIES, simply on the same basis that if a new driver asked me, "Should I take a 20 mile trip or a 2,000 one?"

MARTIN GREENBERG — I have no feelings on this....short stories are much more difficult to write but the novel requires special handling and there are some writers who just will never become novelists, tho they may be fine short story writers.

HARLAN ELLISON — Short stories by all means. Learn to walk before you run. Common sense dictates this.

KATHERINE MacLEAN — It depends on who's supporting you and how much ego you have in reserve. Novels sell well now, bring in more money and egoboo. B U T -- With the usual small or non-existant amount of money in the bank and the usual inferiority complex alternating with moments of confidence, few people can stand the suspense and tremendous investment of time, confidence, backache, weight of paper and expense of typewriter ribbons, sceptism of friends waiting to see it in print and wanting your spare time, sceptism of landlords waiting to be paid, etc. Most people can't stand the course.

JERRY SOHL — Novels are easier for me. Actually they are less work than short stories, for the short form is much more disciplined. But I think it depends on the writer; the novel looks difficult from a distance.

FRED SABERHAGEN — A short story is fininished with less investment of time and effort, so less is lost if it's a dead end. Editorial decision and comment comes back faster on a short story. But if you really want to write a novel, by all means get at it.

BRIAN ALDISS — Oh, yes. For one thing, it's so much easier to write a short story than a novel. When you begin, 3,000 words can seem an intolerable length. I remember when I first wrote a 6,000 word story I was exhausted, and thought, "If they don't buy this, I'm sticking to the short story"! From short stories you get the idea of planning, and from then you should get interested in the particular problems of the novel, the development of character, the exploration of environment, and so on. Even for a "born novelist", if there is such a thing (does one have "born engineers"?) this should be so; a short teaches one to make points concisely.

WILSON TUCKER — No rule should be imposed. The beginner should try both and then concentrate on whichever serves him best, whichever sells more readily, with good results. Generally speaking, the short story takes far less time but the field is more crowded, competitive; the novel may take a year or two: the reward is greater if it clicks, the failure worse if it does not. Some writers will discover that they simply cannot write one, or the other.

JOHN CHRISTOPHER — Short stories. The short story is in no way inferior to the novel as a form, but it is undeniably less exhausting. No one should mind getting a 3,000 word story back with a rejection slip. An 80,000 word book, which may have taken months to write, is a different thing. And in the process of writing bad short stories, the young writer can be learning <u>how</u> to write: dialogue, narrative style, the means of organizing the simpler episodic plot of the short story.

J. FRANCIS McCOMAS — This is like asking if a beginning medical student should concentrate on ophthalmology or urology. It's all determined by talent and inclination.

ALLEN KIM LANG — Short stories: Do as I do, that's why.

CHARLES DE VET — Learn the trade with short stories. Vast time and effort spent on unsuccessful novels tends to discourage a beginner.

ISAAC ASIMOV — Of course, concentrate on short stories. One's first stories are training, apprenticeship, schooling, whatever you wish; and it is foolish to invest the time and effort necessary for a novel. After you have learned to write fairly well in the hard school of the short story (and it is a hard school) there will be time enough for a more ambitious effort.

GORDON R. DICKSON — Though this, again, is an individual matter--I think I would recommend short stories first, for most beginning writers. The short story is a stricter form and the beginner, feeling his way, has less chance to go astray, without catching himself at it. The chance to learn by repetition is better than in the case of novels which take much more time to write per unit. The trick of successful writing is not to sell what you write, but to be able to figure out what you did wrong when the inevitable day comes when something you were sure of didn't sell--to anyone. The learning process in writing is unending and short stories are more conducive it. But it's up to the individual--If a writer really wants to write novels, and is in no hurry to get to short stories, he shouldn't ever let himself be persuaded to do the shorts when his heart is elsewhere.

If you are considering the matter solely from the standpoint of necessary income, of course, the answer is obvious. The beginning writer is foolish to gamble on the time-investment required for a novel, when he can spread his gamble in the same period of time over anywhere from half a dozen short stories on up.

PHILIP K. DICK — Short stories first, to master this easier form. Then, very slowly, work toward longer pieces, say up to 25,000 words. Then at last try a full-size (i.e. 60,000 word) novel, based on the structure of some writer who is admired. I, for instance, based my first novels on the structure used by A.E. van Vogt. Later, when I was more sure of myself, I departed from this. Be sure, however, that you select a writer who is skilled in the novel form (for instance, don't select Ray Bradbury).

ALAN E. NOURSE — Short stories fool you because they're short and therefore apparently easy, and then you find out they aren't. Novels, on the other hand, demand a hell of a lot of time and effort that beginning writers hate to kick in for fear the end result will be a mess. It often is...but the end result of a short story is a whale of a lot more likely to be a mess because you can get away with ineptitudes in a novel length that just murder a possibly-good short story. I'd say the beginning author would do best picking the length of story he most delights in reading, whatever it may be, as his best bet.

FREDERIK POHL — As a practical matter, on short stories, because he is more likely to get short stories published than novels. However, it depends on the writer. Some writers simply cannot function well in less than novel length.

MARK CLIFTON — Short stories for several reasons. 1. Less time is invested in what might be a poor idea. 2. Better chance at selling. 3. It costs a lot of money nowdays to publish a book and publishers are wary of investing in an unknown. Best way to build up a name is through shorts in the mags--then expand to novelets--and finally to novels.

THEODORE STURGEON — I think a beginner can learn more about structure from short stories than from novels--as long as he is a beginner. Then, I think he should study, and study hard, the very real structual difference between a novel and a short story, lest he fall into the error of thinking the former is only a longer version of the latter: it is NOT. Finally, he should learn that for most novelists, the short story becomes somewhere between difficult and impossible.

P. SCHUYLER MILLER — On the surface, start with short stories. You are more likely to sell them. Each one is an experiment, and the more experimenting you do the faster you learn. On the other hand, if you will admit the distinction between "novels" in the literary sense and "book-length stories" in the pb and serial sense, you may well find it easier to write the long ones. For a beginner; I think it is importantto find out what you can write, and write it, rather than spend years, waste energy, and develop ingrained frustration trying to do something you can't do--yet.

QUESTION 7) What suggestions can you offer to the beginning writer concerning the development of "realistic" characters and writing effective dialogue?

POUL ANDERSON — Pay close attention to the people around you. Try to get inside their skins and think as they do, as nearly as you can reconstruct that. Read the great writers for psychological insights they offer. # In actually thinking up a character, especially for a long story or novel, spend some time in getting acquainted with him; give him individualising characteristics, a biography, likes and dislikes, casts of phrase, etc. # Remember that people nearly always speak in short passages, using simple words; avoid long, involved monologues except where they are absolutely essential to the story.

HARLAN ELLISON — Look at people, listen to them talking, go everywhere, do everything, live at the fastest possible rate, don't fear to die or get your hands dirty. Suck air and drink of the night and let it all lie back there till it's needed, but not before. Anything you ever see or hear or taste or feel or know anywhichway becomes the raw material the tools of your talent uses to construct work that matters.

JOHN CHRISTOPHER — Reading other writers is the only way I know. And in the general field of fiction, where the more effective writers operate. (This is not, of course, to say that all general fiction writers are better than all science fiction writers: only that the very best writers are in the general field.)

ROBERT BLOCH — Study films, television, live drama--whic depend on characterization through dialogue. "Realistic" is a tricky term; what is "realistic" to one generation is phoney to the next. Actually, it's all phoney, in the strictest sense; the dramatic unities insure that. But a convincing representation can be found, if the writer knows where to look for it. It's a matter of his judgement and selectivity. I think few science fiction writers work well with "realistic" characters; not many can do a job like THE LONG, LOUD SILENCE. But then, they may not want to--if so, they'd probably gravitate to mainstream fiction instead.

JAMES E. GUNN — Only one suggestion is really helpful: do a great deal of writing. But here are a few others--listen to people talk, try to understand why they act as they do, and learn to be critical of what you write so that you know when something is good and when it is bad. But mostly: write.

H. BEAM PIPER — Know your characters intimately. Plan them just as carefully as you plan the action of the story, and let them develop in your first draft, and by the time you are ready to start on the final draft know their background, past life, education, experiences, etc., and understand how they will react to any situation.

This, of course, is most important with the means-of-perception character, the "viewpoint" character as the old technique writers called him, through whom the reader experiences the story, because not only what he experiences but his reactions and attitudes will be a part of the narrative. You don't include the thoughts, as such, of the other characters, but you have to make their overt behavior plausible and consistent.

And don't break means of perception. Switch it from one character to another in different scenes if you can't get the story across with a single means of perception, but never change means of perception in a single scene or action-sequence.

Name your means of perception character in the first paragraph, if possible, and don't name him thereafter unless someone addresses him by name, or something like that. You're giving his thoughts along with his experiences and actions. You don't think of yourself by name; not often, anyhow.

In dialogue, knowing your character, think how he would express himself. Everybody has individualities of speech; make use of that, but don't overdo it. (Don't overdo anything, of course.) Dialogue, of course, is people talking; they talk to convey information (or misinformation) to one another. In a story, dialogue can also be used to convey information to the reader. This, of course, can be overdone, too. I recall a movie, The Iron Curtain, I believe, in which two Communist spies in America went into a five minute dialogue about basic Communist doctrine and Soviet policy, a terrible false note, because these were fundamentals to which they both subscribed, and would have no business to discuss with each other.

Just have your characters do and say what you think people of their sort would do and say, under the circumstances.

ZENNA HENDERSON — Write characters you can identify with yourself. 'Hear' your dialogue when you write it--use words people use when speaking--not when writing.

FRITZ LEIBER — Use the people you know and the conversation you hear, remembering to fit the former to your story and to prune away the excess verbiage of the latter.

KATHERINE MacLEAN — First I don't know. Developing realistic characters seems to start out as a few mechanical moves and then go over to spontaneous generation by me. Writing dialogue always leaves me shook. Some act of God has to intervene to bring them all the way alive, or they don't talk, I can't hear them.

However anyone who want lessons can join my Creative Writing courses, given through University of Connecticut Tuesday nights at Hartford Conn, $60.00 admission for the term. Advt;

What I tell my audience in these courses, is for God sake, you have to mean it. You can't be cynical about your characters. They have to say what they would say in that spot. Plot mechanics are something which you use to help a live story over the rough spots and speed it up when it slows. They come after you have a real story that means something to you. You can't make a story out of plot mechanics. You can't get grapes out of a trellis.

FREDERIK POHL — He should model his characters after real people, but so disguised that no one, not even the subject, can recognize them. (Otherwise he has legal problems.) When the characters are weak, stories are weak--this is very important. (After all, you are more interested in any event when you know the people it is happening to. You are more interested in any piece of fiction when the author has made you know the characters.) It isn't so much a matter of knowing what the characters look like as knowing what they think like --you don't tell your reader much when you tell him your hero has a beard; it's more important to say why he has a beard.

THEODORE STURGEON — Keep his ears open and his mouth shut, and carry a 'Men's Room' notebook: that is, don't ever let anyone know he has it on him.

PHILIP K. DICK — Read modern "quality" writing, especially the short pieces of Algern, Styron, Herb Gold, the so-called "New School" writers. And the fine left-wing writers of the '30s, such as Dos Passos, Richard Wright, and go back as far as Dreiser and Hawthorne--try to stick to American writers (including of course Hemingway and Gertrude Stein) because it is among the American writers that realistic dialogue has developed. Try the French realistics, such as Flaubert, for plot and characterization. Avoid Proust and other subjective type writers. And by all means intently study James Joyce; everything from his early short stories to "The Wake".

ALLEN KIM LANG — I hope to do so by reading Malamud, Sturgeon, Irwin Shaw, and the others who've learned to have "ears", as the splendid Mark Harris puts it.

MARTIN GREENBERG — Each writer must develop his own technique, based on his own outlook and environment and this comes from just plenty of writing.

ALAN E. NOURSE — I can't offer any suggestions, because I don't have any idea how to "develop realistic characters" or "write effective dialogue". I just write stories the way they seem best, and sometimes they come out fine and sometimes they don't. Only advice here is to read and read analytically so you find out by example how this or that problem was solved. And then try to solve it yourself some other way.

WILSON TUCKER — Books have been written on both problems, in vain. Every man has to learn for himself and suffer criticism when he fails. About the only thing I have learned is that certain dialog actually builds the character, or certain behavior patterns coupled with a definite viewpoint, will build him. I prefer short sentences which push the plot forward, or which reveal character by speech and mental patterns, or which pull the reader deeper into the hero's problem. I detest long, windy speeches--the kind some writers use to promote pet themes, or to explain the background, or to pose the problem like so many piled bricks. I was badly burned by the science fictioneers of the 1930 era, and now detest their styles.

GORDON R. DICKSON — The only way of a writer in achieving realistic characters is to work up the characters in his head to the point where they are as real to him as actual living people he knows. This usually means knowing a great deal more about the character than appears in the story. There are a thousand and one ways to do this--you can write biographies of your characters, rewrite the story a large number of times, or simply sit and think about it or about the characters in it. Every writer has his own way or combination of ways. In my case, my lead character has to come alive, and then the other characters, being forced to measure up in their contact with him, eventually come alive also. —But, however it's done, the rule of thumb remains. The reader cannot be fooled. If the writer has kidded himself that a name, blue eyes, and a habit of grinding his teeth has made the stick-figure of a character into a living representation, the reader will sense it and (though he probably will not identify the cause) will lose interest in the story in proportion.

Dialogue: As with characters, the writer will have to learn to develop an inner ear. If the characters are really alive, they will talk effectively--because words that do not suit them or the situation will ring awkwardly in their mouths. After the writer has developed the inner ear to the point when he can trust it--and only then--he will probably gain by a technical study of dialogue as written by those who are masters of the art. —If he likes that sort of study. If not, he is probably better off sticking with his inner ear.

The reason for this is that dialogue is one of the trickier subjects. Effective dialogue is not realistic dialogue--it only gives the appearance of realism. This is necessary because the written word has a different effect on the man reading it than the same word spoken aloud. One example is the matter of obscenity. The obscene word, spoken, ceases to exist except in the memory of the hearer. The obscene word, written, is printed on the page before him and continues to exist as long as he looks at it. This is why written obscenity is always more shocking than its spoken counterpoint. Another example is the matter of a character in a novel who speaks with an accent. The experienced writer will soften and remove much of the accent from that character's written speeches as the novel progresses until

only a few tag elements of it remain. The reason is, that in life as we become acquainted with someone who speaks with an accent, our ear tends to tune it out with familiarity, so that we hardly or no longer notice it. If the accent is written in with the same value later on in the book as it was to begin with, the reader is continually faced with the shock of discovery and the accent seems overdone.

These are large examples, but the difference between the spoken and written dialogue is unvarying, and results finally in superb examples of writer control like the dialogue of Hemingway's characters, which gives such an effect of realism while actually it is almost completely unspeakable. If you doubt this, try reading the dialogue aloud as you would on a stage. The difference between heard and written dialogue in fiction is just that great.

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QUESTION 8) Do you believe than an effective novel requires a message or moral? Please comment.

ISAAC ASIMOV — I believe an effective novel will have a message or moral, willy-nilly. I don't think it ought to be put in on purpose.

P. SCHUYLER MILLER — Depends on your definition of "novel". The serious literary critic--maybe Damon Knight or Jim Blish--might say that a SF book should meet the same standards as a Mainstream novel. I don't. It can tell a good story very well. It can create or recreate a world or society. It can show a scientific concept in a new light. It can be the farthest-out of "what-if" yarns--maybe Sirens of Titan. And through any of these approaches it can also satisfy the literary criteria of development of character, social commentary, revelation of essential truths, et al, that are supposed to differentiate the "true" novel from ordinary fiction.

BASIL DAVENPORT — Certainly not a "message" or a "moral" in the ordinary sense. To be effective, a novel does require a Weltanschauung, a way of looking at the universe. EMMA has one, and WUTHERING HEIGHTS has another, and that is part of what makes them both great, but I don't think either has a "message". And you cannot a Weltanschauung simply to make novels out of it; it may be something you are born with, as I think Jane Austen and Emily Bronte were; or it may be attained by trying to decide what you do think about life in general, as I think Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky did.

BRIAN ALDISS — A message or a moral implies something rather extrinsic to the book; this generally makes itself obtrusive and is an artistic fault--a case in point, the sort of Victorian novel like Mrs Craik's "John Halifax, Gentleman", that lets you know every chapter that the bad are going to hell. But a didactic novel can be very successful, as most of Graham Greene's novels demonstrate. Better than message or moral, I think, is viewpoint; from a sane viewpoint, you can draw your fictional world clearly without falsifying too much (Thomas Hardy's novels would qualify here); if you're plugging some sort of propaganda, as in "Starship Troopers", you are likely to turn out a false and laughable thing; people will say: "But humans aren't like that, events don't turn out like that."

J. FRANCIS McCOMAS — What is the message or moral in "Treasure Island"?

JERRY SOHL — Any novel that is effective has a built-in message or moral. It may not be apparent, but it is there. In my own novels it is often darkly hidden, but if they are examined one will see that my viewpoint is liberal in all areas, that I am against enslavement, morally or spiritually, and that I believe that man can and will solve his problems if he will only apply himself and the scientific method.

H. BEAM PIPER — Absolutely not. If kept within decent limits, and not advanced with any Hyde Park soapboxery, a "message" or "moral" won't do any particular harm. It is not, however, the business of an author of fiction to improve or inspire or educate his reader, or to save the world from fascism, communism, racism, capitalism, socialism, deros, or anything else. As stated above, his main objective is to purvey entertainment of the sort his readership wants. If he has done this, by writing interestingly about interesting people, human or otherwise, doing interesting things, he has discharged his duty and earned his check.

FRITZ LEIBER — YES!--tho not the sort of message you could put into a sermon or essay or article, else it would be better to write one of those. A novel conveys a message about life that can't be put into simple words. At the least the writer conveys an illusion of experience, which can't be done without giving feelings and insights about same.

FRED SABERHAGEN — I believe it requires a dramatic climax, involving the interior life of the main character. Then some message will likely come through, though reader and writer may not agree on what the message is or what it should be.

HARLAN ELLISON — No.
It's nice if you happen to have something to say, but the dying art of storytelling is the prime requisite. Entertain. Or as Charles Reade put it: "These are the three instructions for the popular novelist: Make 'em laugh.
Make 'em cry.
Make 'em wait."

THEODORE STURGEON — To call it either message or moral is to fall into a veritable gluepot of semantics. Hacking aside, I think a man undertaking a novel makes a moral committment. He has to have something to say or he has no real right to say anything. What he says may not be what he believes or believes in; but what he says is going to harmonize or contrast with that belief, and the reader --even a stupid reader--can tell apallingly soon whether or not this writer has any real convictions. There exists on earth no lasting work which did not spring from it's creator's convictions. Convictions, of course, are not enough; they have to be compounded with validity and with skill.

MARK CLIFTON — Yep. Anybody who knows my work needs no comment. Why bother saying something if you haven't got anything to say?

FREDERIK POHL — No, it doesn't require a message; but it is simply inconceivable to me that any sane man would go to the trouble of writing an effective novel unless he has something he wants to say about life, people, fate, morality--or something. And if there is something he wants to say--that's the message.

PHILIP K. DICK — Absolutely not! The notion that a novel needs a moral or message is a bourgeois concept. In the days of the aristocracy it was recognized that art did not need to instruct or elevate; it could be a success by merely entertaining. One should never look down on entertainment; Mozart string quartets do not instruct--show me a moral or message in say the late Beethoven. Music is pure; literature can be, too; it becomes more pure as it drops its intention of improving and instructing its audience. The writer is not a bit superior in morals than his audience anyway--and frequently he's inferior to them. What moral can he really teach them? What he has to offer is his ideas.

KATHERINE MacLEAN — I enjoy reading novels by intellectual novelists, who are exercised by moral issues. If the man knows something I don't know that clarifies some aspect of life for him that looks difficult for me. If he-she has an attitude that makes life more exciting, comfortable, easier to take, or more clear cut on moral issues and action choice in a crux--he-she has something I might want. It will show up in that persons view of the world, and projected value, (good bad, coloring of it) I'll get it by seeing the writers view of the world in his-her book. People who have something others don't have (in the philosophy-insight line) know they have something to say, but often think it is some moral point that they are conscious of because they are still arguing it with themselves. They labor to write their books to sell that point. So let them. It's an incentive to write. Good thinkers are not fascinated by certainties.

ROBERT BLOCH — No, I do not. If by "effective" one means entertaining and/or emotionally stimulating, it is possible to cite many so-called mainstream novels which have no message or moral...apart from the attitude taken by the writer (i.e., virtue triumphs, etc., as part and parcel of the adventure novel). The same criterion holds true, I think, for science fiction novels. I'd say that THE DEMOLISHED MAN was an effective novel, but I fail to detect a message or moral in it, per se.

ALLEN KIM LANG — Terry Southern's MAGIC CHRISTIAN has none; Romains' MEN OF GOOD WILL has none; Hemingway's messages are often his only sour note. Preaching belongs in the pulpit. Be there message, it is second to story-telling. ANIMAL FARM & 1984, two great moral-carriers, catch the reader with the story, and let him smell out message as he will.

WILSON TUCKER — Not in so many words, no. The most effective novel I've written (LONG LOUD SILENCE) carries one hell of a message, but it was not intended during the actual writing. If, after a novel is completed, the writer finds that message or moral has snuck in unawares--well and good. But those who set out to write such a novel often wind up dull and unreadable. Omit them, and write entertainment.

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MARTIN GREENBERG — Not necessary....Burroughs never wrote a message or moral in any book.

GORDON R. DICKSON — Not at all. I, myself, happen to like and to write thematic novels. But a Theme, in the sense of a Message or Moral is not at all necessary.

A thematic element, on the other hand, is a part of fiction as we know it. Love's Labor's Lost, for example, is a play with the thematic element enunciated in the title. But the thematic element here is neither a Message nor a Moral. On the other hand, Antigone is a play with a Theme which is both a Message and a Moral. But the writer can please himself and still have quality.

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QUESTION 9) To what extent do you think it possible to detect a writer's viewpoints as to politics, religion or moral problems through examination of his stories?

POUL ANDERSON — Depends on the writer, though I suppose close examination of the whole body of anyone's work would reveal a good bit about his Weltanschauung, and even his tastes in minor matters. Most writers being less preachy than, say, Chesterton, their stands on specific questions are not very obvious. I daresay many have, like me, been accused of advocating the direct opposite of what they really believe--so interpretation is tricky and, in my opinion, an overrated pastime.

ALAN E. NOURSE — Since the "truth" a writer is seeking in his stories is really "the truth as he sees it", the answer has to be: to a very great and embarrassing extent. The writer is washing his dirty laundry in public view, consciously or unconsciously, whether he likes it or not; if he doesn't like the idea, he ought to quit writing.

JAMES E. GUNN — A good writer always puts himself into his work. He writes out of his own interests, his own passions, and his work is a reflection of his viewpoints. Certainly his viewpoints can be detected by a study of his stories, but equally certainly not always on an obvious level of advocacy. Writers--and people --are not as simple as that. On the other hand, the job doesn't demand a great amount of subtlety; I don't recommend Freudian analysis or academic literary criticism of the most abstruse sort.

HARLAN ELLISON — If he's a good writer, you should always be in doubt, because he feels obligated to take many sides of a question at various times, and argue them all equally well, equally brilliantly, for story value, for effectiveness of the story he's telling. It's no contest if one of the combatants is blind and one-armed.

FRITZ LEIBER — This is generally possible. Though of course real writers generally aren't conventional people (conservative or radical) with simple rubber-stamp views on pol, rlig, mrl questions. Pretty clearly Heinlein isn't a pacifist, Bradbury isn't a fascist, etc.

MARK CLIFTON — Can't avoid it. But lifting from context to make a point is like lifting individual letters, spelling a naughty word, then condemning the author for having it in his work.

ZENNA HENDERSON — The 'detecting' is often the imagination of the author gone wrong. As to what an author writes in of himself--he might be able to say--It's much the same as having your conversation reveal your character.

JERRY SOHL — Every writer's words speak volumes about him personally, if his work is examined closely. His choice of words, the way he strings them together makes him bombastic, cold, lovable, arrogant, turgid, evasive--name it. Some writers we hate because we don't like what they write. People I have met thought I was tall, ugly and coldly intellectual when they read my stories; others thought I was young, cute and lovable. Actually, I am just like you. I don't think anyone could not see the Unitarian viewpoint in everything I write, or that I think sex is great, or that I'm not a John Bircher.

BRIAN ALDISS — Depends on the writer. Often his attitude may be ambiguous, even to himself. Take Shepherd Mead's "Big Ball of Wax"; isn't there love mixed with hatred in Mead's description of all those awful gadgets, cathedrals with turnstiles, and so on? Of course, a poor writer will be at pains to obtrude his attitude on the reader; this is where much sf loses necessary subtilty: as soon as you come on a description of someone "thick-lipped and with mean eyes", the writer is signalling to you "I hate this guy, you must too". A better artist will let you make up your own mind, and not only on characters but their morals, politics and so on. There are many exceptions to this; the true satirists en masse are exceptions; they fail if they do not make their targets clear.

H. BEAM PIPER — To a very large extent. The story comes out of the author's mind; it will, inescapably, drag at least some of the author's attitudes out after it. This will be most evident in authors who are most careful to cling to their means-of-perception; they will be much more likely to endow their means-of-perception character with their own attitudes than to take the trouble to adapt themselves to his. Considering the one author about whom I am uniquely qualified to speak, I question if any reader of H. Beam Piper will long labor under the misconception that he is a pious Christian, a left-wing liberal, a Gandhian pacifist, or a teetotaler. Although he really tries to avoid it, there are times when I suspect him of climbing onto a soapbox under the Marble Arch himself.

ROBERT BLOCH — That's up to the author--the extent to which he wishes to reveal himself, or desires to use his work as a polemic. It is possible to "psychoanalyze" a writer through a study of his efforts, but I doubt if the results are necessarily valid...unless the writer is willing to help. In science fiction, of course, with its heavy emphasis on sociological commentary, the writer usually does reveal his viewpoints; cf. Orwell, Huxley, Wylie, Bradbury, Heinlein, etc. But a skilled writer, like a skilled debater, can take both sides when necessary--and fool the audience.

BASIL DAVENPORT — That depends on the stories. THE TIME MACHINE contains a clear indication of Wells' views on the class struggle; I don't think you can detect anything from THE INVISIBLE MAN except a desire to entertain.

THEODORE STURGEON — To a very great extent if you don't mind being wrong. I mean wrong in two very important senses: 1. Incorrect--for it requires a highly concentrated form of ignorance to confuse empathy with sympathy. There are those who think the author of The Lost Weekend is a drunk because he wrote it, and a fairy because he wrote The Fall of Valor; he is neither. 2. Four times in my life I've watched damn fine, sensitive writers dry right up because of being publicly analyzed by their inferiors--not because the analysts were getting close to the mark, whatever that might have been, but purely because thereafter the writer began to wonder, concept by concept, story by story, what he might have to be defending himself against, or silently bearing some outrageous onus because any defense might seem an admission. Such 'detection' is inexcusable, except when an author clearly seeks it, as in non-fiction or fan-pub explication.

FREDERIK POHL — I think it is a fascinating guessing game. I doubt that it is very reliable as a guide. On the other hand, I don't think it should be. In my experience the better I know a writer the less I am able to enjoy his books.

GORDON R. DICKSON — If the writer is relaxed--that is, not grinding the axe of a Message or Moral in his writing--I would think the possibility of detecting his viewpoints would be pretty good, because they will be reflected by the viewpoints of his characters, and his choice of subject and setting and situation.

On the other hand, if having detected these viewpoints you meet the man personally, you might brace yourself for a shock because what you will have been seeing will have been the inner rather than the outer viewpoints--and people can be very complex.

KATHERINE MacLEAN — Why try? What's in it for the detective, or for the writer? As a reader--I go to a story for my own profit, the ideas I get in politics, religion, morality from the stories. The entertainment of the plot as a separate thing is more or less inextricably interwoven with the interest of the ideas. I can get as much kick from thinking of ideas in reaction against some really far out but rationalized viewpoint as in agreement, maybe more. It doesn't profit either me or the writer to psychoanalyze him. Writers take an extreme view and push it all the way for the entertainment of it and to see how far it can be pushed, the same kick that is in reading it. Pinning these ideas on the writer himself as if they were permanent and tatooed on his skin is by me merely a form of attack, rather consciously wrong and probably done just to annoy the writer, by would-be competitors.

ALLEN KIM LANG — If he's any damned good at all, they should show through clearly. I'm sure I grok (if that's the word) Heinlein's political views; I'm surer still he's a moral man, and a strong one. You can't lie to a typewriter. To quote a barroom epigrammatist I overheard last night, "Everytime a fool opens his mouth he shows his ass." Often I feel a chill.

MARTIN GREENBERG — If he is a good writer you would detect nothing, unless he wanted to present a specific point of view on a specific problem.

ISAAC ASIMOV — A good writer should be able to write from all points of view and be capable of "explaining" a character with whose views he is not personally in sympathy. However, I suspect a writer's personal viewpoints probably shine through just the same--provided he has any.

WILSON TUCKER — That will depend upon how consistent a writer is, through how many stories. These days, it appears easy to read between the lines of a Heinlein yarn because his last several books have consistenly epoused certain views reflecting Heinlein's supposed viewpoint. But other writers appear to have no political, religious or moral views at all. Simply put, this is a variable.

PHILIP K. DICK — If the writer is a good one, it's impossible. Only a bad writer details his personal viewpoints in his fiction. However, it is always possible that some good writing may be found in an "instructive" work. But at the moment I can't think of any (e.g. Ray Bradbury. There is no way, in reading his work, to tell really what his personal views are; the writer in this case disappears emtirely, and his story reveals itself on its own. This is the way it ought to be.). It is one of the cardinal errors of literary criticism to believe that the author's own views can be inferred from his writing; Freud, for instance, makes this really ugly error again and again. A successful writer can adopt any viewpoint which his characters must needs possess in order to function; this is the measure of his craft, this ability to free his work of his own prejudices.

FRED SABERHAGEN — To a large extent, if people in his stories are much involved with these problems.

P. SCHUYLER MILLER — Through examination of the whole body of his work, maybe, but it is one of the essences of science fiction that writers are free and bound to approach ideas from all angles, <u>especially</u> the unfamiliar or unpopular. In one fine story he can insist that all extraterrestrials are innately fine people with whom we can get along. In the next he may convince his readers that we and they are necessarily so different that we will annihilate each other at sight. In reviewing Heinlein's "Starship Troopers" I used "Wiswell syndrome" to tag the attitude that what a writer writes, he necessarily is. He may be--but he needn't be, and the more skilful he is, the less likely he is to be what he writes.

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<u>QUESTION 10</u>) During your formative writings, what one author influenced you the most? What other factors, such as background, education, etc., were important influences?

FRITZ LEIBER — H.G. Wells. Only less so: Isben, Lovecraft, Poe, Shakespeare, ERB, Doyle. The theater--as background. College majoring in psych and minoring in physiology and math.

MARK CLIFTON — Can't answer what author. I'd read five books a week for twenty-five years before I sat down to the typewriter.

J. FRANCIS McCOMAS — Theodore Orchards.
A desire for easy money.

JOHN CHRISTOPHER — In science fiction, difficult to say. John Taine, perhaps --I had a great admiration for the cool authority in his writing. ("The Time Stream","White Lily"). Otherwise, beyond a shadow of a doubt, Aldous Huxley. I hope I've grown out of the latter, because I think his influence was bad. As to the general spur to writing, I have a feeling that a miserable early adolescence helps. I could be wrong, though.

JAMES E. GUNN — One strong early influence was Thomas Wolfe. A later, modifying, influence was Ernest Hemingway. The reading of much science fiction undoubtedly was a determining influence. A family environment of many adults interested in books and ideas, willing to discuss them with a youngster, dedicated to the "truth" and the "right" to the point of argument--this no doubt was important. A college education helped broaden the influences at work, particularly graduate study in English. Playwriting may have had a part.

ALLEN KIM LANG — Probably H.G. Wells: half-baked sociology and splendid ideas, though (as Aldous Huxley says) "Like a rice-paddy--acres and acres of shiny water, nowhere over three inches deep". A long time in the army filled me with admiration for American speech, a shallow education in biological science convinced me that nothing is quite what it seems; I most acutely hurt for a weakness in math that I'm working to correct. As it is, I lean heavily on Asimov.

ROBERT BLOCH — H.P. Lovecraft was my mentor. A prosaic background led me to seek out fantasy; a limited formal education caused me to interest myself in general literature to fill obvious gaps.

JERRY SOHL — First it was H.G. Wells, then Hugo Gernsback, Jules Verne and Jack Williamson and A.E. van Vogt. It was Bob Tucker who got me into writing s-f, God bless him; he thought I could do it when I had my own doubts. A firm foundation in the sciences (even to the extent of operating a chemical laboratory once), the Scientific American, and a host of interesting friends who all spoke the way I did helped a lot.

FREDERIK POHL — I really don't know. The first writers I remember reading were Mark Twain, Voltaire, H.G. Wells, Edgar Rice Burroughs and the usual array of children's books--but I swear I can't find any real influence from any of them. Other factors--I don't think any of them were as important as science fiction itself, which I began reading at around ten. And never stopped.

CHARLES DE VET — Van Vogt.
An interest in that type of literature.

ZENNA HENDERSON — I am not conscious of being influenced by any one author any more than I am of being influenced in the development of my character by any one person in my life. The fact that I read omnivorously may have contributed.

POUL ANDERSON — Hard to name any one author. If pinned down, I'd probably say Kipling, but that doesn't mean that others didn't have comparable influence. As for non-literary factors, I'd hesitate to single out anything from the whole body of early experiences. The effects of a strictly scientific college education might perhaps be noticeable.

GORDON R. DICKSON — This is a question I've run into a number of times. And I've got no good answer for it. I can't pick out any one particular author that influenced me. Generally the English authors prior to the 1900s had the heaviest effect, I think. Close beside these the American authors of the twentieth century, and the classic Russian authors. Kipling, Chekov, Thomas Mann...I can't begin to name one or two without naming fifty more. As for other factors, it's impossible to sort out their relative influence. Everything that makes an individual goes into making that individual a writer, if he ends up being one. I will mention one thing--I've served two apprenticeships in writing. The commercial and practical apprenticeship began in the late 1940s when I dived into full time writing on a sink or swim basis. The academic apprenticeship began in 1939 when I went to the University of Minnesota from which (after time out for the war) I graduated in 1948 with a major in creative writing. This has given me a sort of binocular vision. I have sat in seminars of writing taught by Sinclair Lewis, Robert Penn Warren, and such--and I would like to say that what is to be acquired by such methods can be extremely useful to an experienced writer, or highly destructive to an inexperienced writer.

As always, there is no invariant rule. I stick by my principle that those who will write, will write regardless. But there can be helps or hindrances along the way. In my case, the undergraduate and graduate work I did in writing is now proving to be extremely valuable to me. But for the years in which I was trying to learn the practical trade of writing while selling what I wrote, it was a continual conflict and befuddlement to the habits and processes I was evolving.

The reason was, I learned a great many principles of writing before I understood them. This is a somewhat esoteric point, but what I had to say about the inner ear was a point in reference to it. In the final essential the author writes by unconscious creative process. To attempt to examine or analyze that process consciously while it is still in a formative stage can be very destructive to it. However, once the process has developed, and justified itself, by producing successful writing, so that it is beyond hurting--then the writer can gain by comparing it through analysis and study with the principles of writing and the work of other writers. And that study should never cease.

But each writer must, in the final essential, remain his own touchstone. That is where you have to look for help when real difficulty is encountered. Nowhere else.

FRED SABERHAGEN — Question seems impossibly vague. I hope I'm still formative.

ISAAC ASIMOV — The one author who influenced me most was John W. Campbell, Jr.. As for other important influences, the fact that my father owned a news-stand so that I came across all the s.f. magazines at an early age was one; and the fact that I received a thorough education in science was another.

WILSON TUCKER — In mystery, Tiffany Thayer. In science fiction, it was Ray Cummings. I don't believe any particular background or education influenced me--none that I am aware of now, at least. I did not come from a writing family, nor a scientific one in any respect. My education contributed nothing (formal education, that is).

P. SCHUYLER MILLER — Merritt, beyond a doubt--at least, so far as playing with strange words is concerned, though I think not with themes. (Any Merritt story utilizes information about locale, legend, etc., that the average young writer just doesn't have.) Having read anything and everything long before I started grade school helped. Getting a couple of degrees in Chemistry (which I have used only incidentally) may have helped: without them I might never have dared use technical themes or ideas, and would certainly not have known where to look for information to develop a scientific gimmick. On the other hand, if I had wound up a sociologist (unfortunately, we didn't know the Depression was coming, and anyway, I avoid people), I might still be writing.

THEODORE STURGEON — To name 'one' author would be like picking out one tile in a mosaic as most influential. I'd say Wells, Dunsany, Burroughs, Blackwood, W.H. Hudson, Simak, Heinlein, Fletcher Pratt (as a person, never as a writer), Campbell and other editors, and Sturgeon--I mention him because of his overweening conceit that, having soaked himself for years in the field, he finally came to the conclusion that he could write it better. I had a good academic home background coupled with very little schooling. This has its advantages, because living literature concerns living people and you get closest to them by living. I think, though, if I had it to do over again I'd stick with schools a little longer: college at least.

H. BEAM PIPER — My formative writings go back a long time, and one tends to forget. I am sure, however, that their name is legion. In the early days, as soon as I'd discover a new favorite, I'd decide that I was going to write like him. I was going to write like James Branch Cabell, which would have taken a lot of doing. Before that, I was going to write like Rafael Sabatini, and like Talbot Munday, and like Rider Haggard, and even, God help us all, like Edgar Rice Burroughs. I never wanted to write like H.G. Wells; he spent entirely too much of his time on a soapbox. Eventually I decided to write like H. Beam Piper, only a little better. I am still trying.

As my stories all have a political and social slant instead of a physical-science slant, I think the one author who influenced me most was Niccolo Machiavelli, with H.L. Mencken placing and Karl von Clausewitz showing.

PHILIP K. DICK — Van Vogt influenced me the most. Also Tony Boucher (i.e. his critical views, not his fiction). Also my interest in

the Japanese novelists in the French department of Tokyo University, who wrote after World War Two. And my interest in Depth Psychology and drugs. And in "stream of consciousness" writing, as with James Joyce. And--but I wouldn't recommend this for the would-be writer--my own "nervous breakdown", which I experienced at nineteen and then again at twenty-four and at thirty-three. Suffering of this sort educates your viewpoint, but at the expense of your creature-comfort principle; it may make you a better writer but the cost is far too great.

BRIAN ALDISS — I read a lot too much seventeenth and eighteenth century poetry; but one author? Sterne, maybe--"Tristram Shandy"; Hardy, possibly; I still like his wry view of the world. The three years I spent in India, Burma, Sumatra, and Hong Kong at the age of 18-21 have a continuing effect on me, And all the trash I read as a boy, lapping it up hungrily, has taken its toll.

HARLAN ELLISON — No one writer ever did it. I made it a point never to read enough of one man at any one time to influence "my style". Algis Budrys helped me the most, personally, and Lester del Rey was there when I needed help, and mostly it was myself. I suppose I have been influenced by Hardy, Hemingway, Hammett, Steinbeck, Dickens and Twain, but mostly I'm me. And I like it that way. As to background, the best thing that ever happened to me was learning about bigotry first-hand when I was a kid being kicked unconscious in the schoolyard by anti-Semites.

KATHERINE MacLEAN — H.G. Wells. His Science Of Life, an encyclopedia of biology, gave me the trust in his ideas to read his novelized ideas and his science fiction and get a habit of screening the ideas-for-possibility from the ideas-for-kicks from the cooky ideas introduced for the needs of the plot and the real facts from the phony "facts" that the plot had to have. Next year, age ten, I ran into a kid collector with a stack of magazines dating back to 1927 and read all twenty or forty of them in three/four days, and was hooked. But the screening habit and the science basis of the encyclopedia and Book of Knowledge made it a good reliable source of science education too.

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QUESTION 11) What do you consider the greatest weakness of Science Fiction today?

BASIL DAVENPORT — The fact that I am no longer fifteen years old. I am sorry, I don't want to sound flippant, but I find myself reading much less of it than I once did, and I felt that it was just becoming jaded. I haven't read enough of today's SF to generalize.

JERRY SOHL — The weakness isn't in science fiction per se but in the public's lack of information. Most people still think of it in terms of Buck Rogers and Flash Gordon and are pleasantly surprised when they discover the field for themselves. We need to proselyte more, try to reach these would-be readers. But the movies and TV are turning them away from us. I don't know the answer.

ALAN E. NOURSE — The tendency to try to be "popular" and "mainstream".

WILSON TUCKER — Failure of writers to strike off the beaten path, failure of editors to buy those submissions which <u>are</u> off the beaten path. Literary incest is killing us.

(All right, do you want a typical gripe: I am unable to sell an off-beat novelette dealing with a woman whose job it is to revive male corpses and put them to work in factories--let the stiffs work while the masters enjoy themselves. Of course, sooner or later she revives one stiff who won't co-operate and he makes the novelette. It won't sell because "I don't understand this.")

FREDERIK POHL — The laziness of writers. There are any number of honorable exceptions, but most writers find a format they can write with ease--and go on writing it.

ISAAC ASIMOV — An overconcern with the headlines of the moment. To attempt to be topical and to write stories dealing with a one-step advance beyond the present is treason to the whole purpose of science fiction.

JOHN CRISTOPHER — I don't know much about it today. The great weakness of science-fiction seems to me inevitable in its form. Its concern is with ideas rather than people. The writer has to concentrate on background, and while he is doing that the figures in the foreground deteriorate into solid cardboard. The best function of imagination is to provide insight into the human condition, not to toss off mentally tittivating extrapolations on the social or technological scene. Compare, as examples of the highest reaches in both cases, Stapledon with Shakespeare.

JAMES GUNN — Lack of vigor may be science fiction's greatest weakness. The sense of mission seems to be gone. For lack of it, having misplaced it, science fiction turns to style and other amusements. In a misleading effort to be reunited with "Mainstream" literature, science fiction may give up its reason for being--ideas, content--for a concern for "the eternal themes of love and death", as one critic once recommended. Science fiction is sociological fiction primarily, in which the hero is society which changes; mainstream literature is concerned with the eternal themes of love and death--here things happen to people, but not to society. Science fiction cannot achieve "maturity" by sacrificing what makes it science fiction--content.

ALLEN KIM LANG — Poor marketing. The magazines hit the stands in a random pattern (GAMMA has never been seen here); the hardbacks get little advertising and back-of-the-hand reviews. I know, you mean the literary quality. Better, I think, than the economics of S-F writing deserves. What "general" novel of '63 was superior to SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES? Or funnier than CAT'S CRADLE? Campbell demands clear thinking, Davidson is a poet, Pohl has a sense of humor. With such editors (all three have helped me), the field seems broad enough to accomodate any sort of new talent.

MARTIN GREENBERG — The average writer does not work at his trade.

FRED SABERHAGEN — I have pondered long over this one. Think I'll just say we should all pursue excellence more eagerly.

POUL ANDERSON — The lack of good workmanship shown by all too many writers. Not only are the elementary principles of literature neglected, such as characterization, but there isn't enough effort to be original, to explore the implications of an idea, or even to get the science straight. I must admit, though, that the field has improved markedly since it struck a dismal low point a few years ago. I haven't the least notion why this is.

P. SCHUYLER MILLER — I don't know how it can be done--maybe Ted Carnell has the answer--but I feel it isn't catching and holding enough new readers out of the great population pool. Fewer than a hundred thousand readers out of 180 million people just isn't enough for the genre to be really flourishing. The stale old themes and gambits do have to be worked over and over with ever-greater skill and scope and imagination, before neophytes can be led into the special concepts and sterotypes of "advanced" SF.

PHILIP K. DICK — Its inability to explore the subtle, intricate relationships which exist between the sexes. Men, in their relationship with women, get themselves into the most goddamn difficult circumstances, and s-f ignores--or is unable to deal with--this fundamental aspect of adult life. Therefore s-f remains pre-adult, and therefore appeals--more or less--to pre-adults. If s-f explored the man-woman aspect of life it would not lose its readers as those readers reach maturity. S-f simply must learn to do this or it will always be retarded--as it is now. The novel "Player Piano" is an exception to this, and I suggest that every s-f fan and especially every would-be s-f writer study again and again the details of this superb novel which deal specifically with the relationship of the protagonist and his wife.

CHARLES DE VET — Undue stress on writing that will appeal to the technician, with loss of popular appeal.

ROBERT BLOCH — Low rates, in commercial magazines. Few professional writers can hope to make a decent living by devoting their fulltime efforts to the field. I believe economic incentive is important. A young beginner can prate and even practise idealism, but when he assumes adult responsibilities he has to worry about income. As a result, we have many part-time writers of science fiction who do, at times, excellent work. But how much better if they could really immerse themselves in the field!

FRITZ LEIBER — All attempts to turn it into a "genre"--as by filling it with scientific or technical jargon without making those concepts real to the reader, or (2) by writing it as a form of adventure story without interest in the speculations involved, or by avoiding deep feeling, or (4) by making it only tricky and clever, etc.

THEODORE STURGEON — Not enough writers who give a damn about themselves, their work, or their world.

MARK CLIFTON — Lack of idea substance, and development. We haven't exactly tried to take the science out of science fiction but, intent or not, that's what we've nearly done.

GORDON R. DICKSON — I'm not sure that I can identify any weakness. Something I dislike or think is a weakness is too liable to develop in the next few years and turn out to be a factor of strength. I'll have to pass on this question.

J. FRANCIS McCOMAS — It has largely forgotten how to tell a story. It has forsaken entertainment for a dull sort of pseudo-sociology. But then, most writing, save mystery-suspense fiction, has done that of recent years. Science fiction deserves some praise for dealing so little with unhappy suburban marriages.

KATHERINE MacLEAN — The writers don't know enough. They aren't keeping up. And God knows it's not easy to keep up. Part of the reason progress has been accelerating so and it's getting hard to keep up with trends, is that the scientists read science fiction and have the budgets to research anything that seems plausible. It's hard for s.f. writers to stay ahead of that, with the scientists right behind, and the scientists read each others research reports. They usually have subscriptions to technical journals as part of their expense accounts. At twenty dollars a subscription, where's the writer can afford it? It's not part of his expense account. I've dropped out of pro-writing and am teaching and studying to be a Counselor partially as a breather in an attempt to catch up. Also the fans don't know enough. You'd think a fan would at least have a sub to the Reporter or keep up with the world politics as presented in Life before sounding off on politics. Intelligence without enough facts is sort of a waste. For the pure game of thinking, imaginary countries running by the logic of their own history is good as fun and exercise, and has the truth of logic.

HARLAN ELLISON — Oh, shit, the greatest weakness is bad writing, and being behind the times. I'm too tired to go into this in detail, but it angers me, and sometime I'd like to talk to someone about it. Perhaps an analyst.

ZENNA HENDERSON — Sin, sex and sadism--same as most writing today. I get awfully tired of bathroom and bedroom conversations and cruelty and violence. Also most SF stories sound like rather weary ditto marks. We need a new direction--a new emphasis--since space has been taken away, but why such a sick, dreary one?

BRIAN ALDISS — Its writers and readers.

H. BEAM PIPER — Not enough people read it, and there doesn't seem to be much of anything anybody can do about it. I remember years ago, Fletcher Pratt was bemoaning this situation and saying that we must enlarge our readership. I said then that it couldn't be done, and I still think so. It's like the attempt of Charles VII of France to create a French archery to compete with the English longbowman. He found he couldn't grab a lot of peasants out of the fields,

give them bows, and expect them to stand up to the English, who trained an archer by starting with his grandfather. We wouldn't have to go back quite that far to make science fiction readers, but the type of inquisitive and speculative mind needed for the enjoyment of what we know as science fiction must be developed rather early, and our present school system seems to be doing little to help.

When Charles VII found that he couldn't train French longbowmen, he settled for training crossbowmen. They weren't as good on the battlefield, but they were the best he could do. What I'm afraid of is that the publishers who decide which stories will be bought and which bounced back will buy stuff suited to the mentality of a large mass readership, a readership that will accept as science fiction anything that casually mentions a space-ship or a World Government, without any confusing egghead stuff about what the planets the space-ship goes to are really like, or what a World Government would have to do.

Then we'd be back where we started, only it wouldn't be nearly as much fun. Instead of Ol' Space Ranger doubling for Hopalong Cassidy and the cattle-rustlers all in the space-pirate business, we'd have psychological stories with robot pyschologists, and Boy meets Girl--or maybe Boy meets Boy, to judge from some of the recent Mainstream stuff--on a space-ship to Mars instead of a Carribbean cruise, and sagas of the ad-agencies, in which thought transmitters take the place of TV.

And the only real science fiction writing left will be in the fanzines.

I am almost sixty now. It gives me the most inexpressible pleasure to reflect that by the time this has happened, I shall be dead.

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to be Concluded in DOUBLE-BILL #9

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finis notes: Included in Part III of "The D-B Symposium" will be: "Doc" Smith, James Blish, Avram Davidson, Hal Clement, Lester Del Rey, Charles Beaumont, and 23 other professional authors and editors. We have attempted to so divide up the 72 contributors as to have a balance between the "big" names and some of the lesser known contributors in each issue. We'd appreciate knowing how well we have succeeded.

Once again, we would like to reiterate our thanks to all those who have had a part in making this Symposium the success we believe it to be: the contributors; Dean McLaughlin, Howard DeVore, Earl Kemp, and Theodore Cogswell for the essential help they gave to Lloyd Biggle, Jr.

We are at a loss for fitting words to thank Lloyd Biggle, Jr. It was he who conceived this project and carried it through to its completion, at the expense of time which he might have spent on more profitable ventures. We think he deserves an award of some sort from fandom, but of what variety, we're not quite sure.

The news of Mark Clifton's death came as quite a shock as we were about half way through this installment of the Symposium (of which he is a part) when we learned about it. Somehow this made his death more personal to us than if we had just known of him through his writings. Our deepest sympathy (and that, we're sure, of all of fandom and prodom) goes to his daughter and family.

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