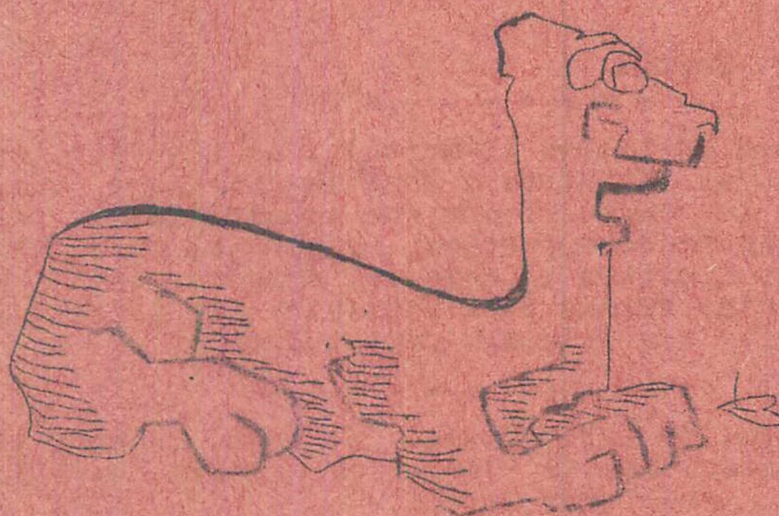


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NUMBER 16



ECLIPSEECLIPSE

Issue 16

Volume III

Number II

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Cover done this issue, by Larry Bourne (At last, he made it!). Interiors by the editor, Marvin Bøer, Jack Harness, Dave Rike, And Terry Carr...

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"X Marks The Spot."

THE PATH OF

TOTALITY

Tonight, friends, I wish to tell you a story. Oh, I know what you're thinking--"Here goes old On Tu Long, with another windy one." Well, I won't keep you long--not this time...

The story, then: Once upon a time there were two brothers. These brothers were arguing and fighting all the time, because one of them had a good home and the other didn't. The homeless one had spent all his life wandering all over the world, and being persecuted by everyone, and he thought his brother's home should be his, too; it had been in the first place, and he had been kicked out by his mean brother.

Anyway, after a big fight, a friend of both brothers said "Now why doesn't one of you live in half the house, and one of you live in the other?" This seemed satisfactory, at first, until they got to arguing over which parts each brother wanted in his half. One brother would want something, and would take it. This would arouse the ire of the other, and he would hit his brother and take it back, and some more, besides. This kept up a good lengthy time, getting worse as it went along. Finally, the neighbors couldn't sleep nights because of the racket, and they went over and said, "Now look here--can't we settle this peacefully?" And they drew a line dividing the house into two almost equal halves. "Now," they said, "When the one brother steps over the line from his half, into the half of the other brother, we shall know who is in the wrong."

This didn't work out too well, either. The ensuing months consisted of raids from one side of the line, to the other, on behalf of both the brothers. A few times, they even moved the line back and forth. This series of raids-and-retaliation continued until the neighbors got disgusted again, and sent a policeman to the house to see if anything could be done to stop the eternal bickering. They finally agreed on a truce, but maintained their right to act against each other, in self-defense. This of course, left them plenty of room to maneuver and so it wasn't long until they were at it again, both claiming self-defense. Finally, public sentiment was so against both brothers, that the neighborhood put up a wall around the house, and left them to their fighting.

The fighting got worse. Months passed, and more months. It was beginning to look like a war would soon be declared. Suddenly, however, all the noise gradually ceased. The neighbors

looked at one another and said, "Well, they've finally finished each other off. Now maybe we can have peace again." And, sure enough, when the finally sent a delegation to investigate, it was found that, like the two cats of Kilkenny, they had...

"...fought and they'd fit, and they'd scratched and they'd bit, 'til excepting their nails and the tips of their tails, 'stead 'o two cats, there weren't any."

In the course of their fighting, a fine house had been virtually destroyed, and much ill will, due to short tempers run wild, had been manufactured, and numerous neighbors had been put on edge--just becuae two peoples couldn't get along in a house in which there was enough room for both. (This story is true: Only the names have been withheld to preclude possibilities of court action...)

* * * * *

My, hasn't this been a busy month on the highways? Huge monsters going back and forth, rushing to and fro, their herds men like some hypnotised automaton, marveling at the 'horses' under the hood of his rolking bedroom.

And so where are they bound? Anyplace really important? Not on your hot little life, infant! Here is a man going down the road like he's in a hurry to get to a funeral--usually his. Kids, with nothing better to do, congesting the highways with ratteltraps loosely termed hot-rods--not realizing, nr not caring, that a true hot-rod is a thing of beauty, a balm to the eye and ear. Women, too befuddled to turn a corkscrew the right way, out gadding about in cars too powerful for anybody; somewhere in this mess, somebody makes a mistake--just one. Listen--Judge Geisler, of Connecticut has this to say: "A man drive 70 miles per at night on a two-lane highway. He sidewwipes another car going around a curve. Both cars spin out of control, four people dead. A group of young people are coming home from a d dance, and the 19-year-old driver decides to show off a bit by pushing the accelerator to the floor. A driver speeds up to beat a changing light at an intersection. All, one mistake. That's all a speeding accident amounts to--just one mistake."

Indeed. One mistake. One momentss--one second's--inattention, and bingo! Mashed cars, mangled bodies. For, the fact is, driving an automobile is a full time job. It demands constant attention to the road ahead. There can be no looking about as if one is sight-seeing in a large city.

So many times, going back and forth in our town, I've seen people old enough to know better, passing on hills, passing on the right, cutting ahead, jackrabbiting away from stoplights, and any number of other discouraging things like that. In these cases, just a moment's glance away from the street could be disastrous.

It makes one wonder how we've managed to keep alive this long...

A SENSE OF WONDER= AND SOME OTHER

NON SENSE

PART ONE OF A COMMENTARY--

BY

WM. F.

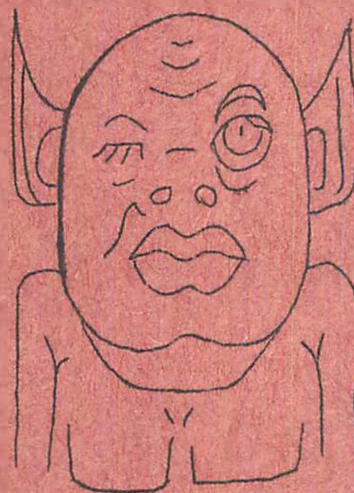
DEECK

Being bandied about in prozines and fanzines these days are comments of "wonderfullness" in science fiction. Sundry types describe the "good" old days of AMAZING, WEIRD TALES, et al. The magazines and the stories contained therein are spoken of with reverence. Novels in those days were invariably masterpieces; works of art unequalled in the annals of other literatures. They were masterpieces--as judged by readers whose craving for adventure couldn't be satiated even by throwing rocks at policemen. It's too damned bad those readers couldn't have faded out as gracefully and quickly as their literature.

When I was twelve or thirteen--about six or seven years ago--I bought AMAZING and the others. I could not, after a few trials, read them. I was then, if not now, a fairly imaginative fellow. But when given a choice between AMAZING and the Bobbsey Twins, I invariably chose the latter. Then I felt that the Bobbsey Twins were much more plausible than the "heroes" of AMAZING; now, if confronted with the same choice, I should still take the latter. Certainly they were, and are infantile. But it is better to read about seven-year-old kids acting their age, than a twenty-five or thirty year old man, acting like a seven-year-old.

The types of protagonists in stf are twofold--manifestly, an either/or choice: The fellow who is buffeted about by events and the fellow who buffets events. They are extremes, of course, but the general rule, in stories. Meet one, and he shall be in all of the stories dealing with his type. It is as in Westerns--you have the same hero in every story, only the setting has been changed to divert the reader. And often times even that is similar.

The protagonist whom circumstances control is depicted quite realistically by Theodore Dreiser in AN AMERICAN TRAGEDY. (Unfortunately, I can't recall the fellow's name.) Dreiser writes of a young man who is born into a poor environment, who comes from somewhat less than happy parents. The kid is taught that money is all. And to be sure, in his environment, money means security, which is naturally much sought after. The boy kills to gain wealth. His environment shaped him to do that, or anything, to gain wealth. Dreiser failed to realize, or rationalized away, the fact that his protagonist was a morally weak young man, and that his weakness was as instrumental in the killing as was his environment. Although Dreiser was mistaken, in a sense, he was only trying to demonstrate how essential environment and society affect the individual. He succeeded; for his protagonist acted only as he should have in given situations. He did not do what he, as he was drawn, would not normally have done. He was pitiable, but real.



This type cannot be found in science fiction. In most stories, the protagonist is shaped by his environment and society; and, as in many stf stories, virtually brainwashed. Usually, from the author's build-up, we surmise that the fellow has been thoroughly indoctrinated--an automaton, as it were. We then view the fellow in action: The least bit of heresy against the prevailing dogma is heard with alarm; he is voluble in his belief that the existing society is the best and most efficacious, and the only society; he is a strict conformist and has a childlike faith that he will be well-treated.

Then, the woman enters the picture. A beautiful wench is she. In her childhood or womanhood, she was convinced, either by her own intuition, or some outside influence, that the society was wrong, and not so benevolent. Naturally, she is always the type who must pass on her less-than-startling information.

According to the SatEvePost, any lovely woman--are there others in fiction?--can convince a man that his most cherished beliefs are wrong. This mind you, does not take long. A few paragraphs, equalling fifteen minutes, is sufficient.

Dreiser's boy, who fell for every pretty and even passable face he saw, would not have been swayed. But neither he, nor Mr. Dreiser, we must assume, was interested in the Saturday Evening Post.

In the yet-to-be-published book, (at least at this writing) THE LOYAL AND THE DISLOYAL, it is claimed that in a democracy, loyalty is essentially to primary groups, face-to-face relationships; and that only this primary loyalty holds the people to the U.S. Conversely, loyalty under a totalitarian regime is owed directly to the state. Consequently, it may then be assumed that it would be difficult for a bevy of lovely maidens to lure anyone away from his state in a totalitarian regime. This postulation is based on the assumption that--and to my knowledge it has never been done differently--the protagonist has a job connected with whatever ruling power exists, and that his job is not too minor. He will, if dependent on The Powers That Be for existence, be more loyal than some wench who lives, as it were, from man to man.

Well, swayed he must be. It is altogether too improbable--and the editors wouldn't allow it--to have the protagonist though sure that his own particular society is both benevolent and beneficial to him and others, destroy it through his ignorance. Such a solution would undoubtedly be more plausible. In David Karp's ONE, the protagonist did it: He loved the state as he would a father. Nevertheless, he was ignorant of his treason. It never occurred to him that his thinking he was one of the best and most loyal members of the state constituted treason.

I repeat: Swayed he must be. It doesn't occur to the revolutionary forces--usually only five or six people--that anyone who has, through his long and reary life had a great faith in his state, might be dumb and a large risk because of his stupidity. A man who is so easily swayed, often by a three or four paragraph speech, is not one readily trusted--or shouldn't be, anyhow. The protagonist in Edson McCann's "Preferred Risk" was such a type. He vacillated with monotonous regularity. Whether his revolutionary friends thought that he just being cute or just didn't give a damn, is a moot point. Suffice it to say that they weren't too disturbed.

Also, this sterling fellow should be watched intently, if not altogether abandoned, for he had given up, so to speak, job, (which undoubtedly supplied his sustenance) family, state, and other trivia. He did all this because of a beautiful woman. What comes to mind--if you have that type--is that the fe

low doesn't want to procreate, but dabble. The foregoing should occur to the revolutionists, though they might be high-minded and think he wants to legalize it. They should ask: If our boy, as much as we like him, was swayed by one lovely woman from the state, could he not, perchance, be swayed to the state again by an even lovelier one. If they asked it, we should give the revolutionists a great hand for being rational. (Of course, it would be difficult for the author.) But they don't; and we are invariably given the picture of an organization striving mightily to free the people--which freeing is magnanimous, but risky--and undertaking to "instruct" our protagonist who, we have seen, is a somewhat doubtful partisan. The only conclusion which can be drawn is that the organization is, like our hero, abysmally stupid--and if they were not in a story, their lives would be terrifically short.

And so on goes our hero. What else could he do? Nature, or the author, has compensated for his stupidity by giving him bountiful good luck. In the end, when right inevitably triumphs, said hero is cheered and designated--by a happy, but more than stupid public--to start life anew under a different government which he must form. You can well imagine the results of that.

There is the feeling of wonder, as has been described: The wonder of how and why the public puts up with such tripe.

wd

A woodchuck sat on a knoll in the field,
Scratched his head in wond'rous contemplation
"I've been over land and been over sea;
And, amongst all the creatures, it seems to me,
Fans are the screwiest in the nation..."

hm

OF
THE

NO. 3374

Ray -
His tracks

The con

The consensus of opinion being that all things are relative, we make an attempt at assimilating the reason for the seven different kinds of Hell that one goes through in the honest pursuit of one's duty. Casting about thusly, we find we are being followed by a monstrous dragon. He is making our planet-suit boil over from his fiery breath. Due to the fact that we have only the one suit, we about-face, jerk out our five-foot recurve, holler our magic phrase--"DALYRIMPLE, DALYRIMPLE!" -- and go forth into battle...

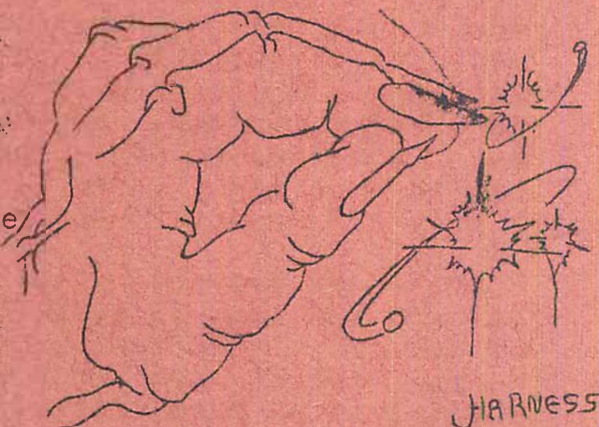
PHLOTSAM: No. 4. P. H. Economou's answer to FAPA, it is billed as "A nihiladrem press production." We have an address of 436 W 20th Street, New York City. We also have a merry conglomeration of fapazine reviews, general commentary on FAPA's last mailing, and a consideration of the term, "meddibemps." Hem. Meddibemps, indeed. Sounds like the name of a new fanzine, to me. Or a foreign car. Better keep an eye on that word. I dunno, it just don't look right to me, that's all...As far as that's concerned, PHEconomou should be watched, too...

VOID: Greg Benford, %Lt. Col. J.A. Benford, Hq. 594th F. A. Bn, APO 169, New York, N. Y.--or for those in other portions of the globe than the U.S., 5D Chapel Road, Giessen/Lahn, Germany. Lord, I wish you'd try for a little layout, Gred. VOID would look so much better. This business of words clear out to the edges of the page, and clear from the very bottom almost to the very top, is very painful on the eyes.

GRUE: THE fanzine that should need no introduction; however, Dean Grennell, 402 Maple Avenue, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. Mimeographed (please, fellows--Gestetner is merely a type of mimeographing, not a separate process) Blue-on-white, this is for the 74th FAFA mailing, dated February 1956. The preliminaries over, we venture inside, finding, at the outset, an item of somewhat questionable nature by one Robert Bloch, entitled, Children of Blunder. This particular item, I consider the outstanding thing in the issue. An advertisement for a JET ROCK-ET SPACESHIP, "stimulating imagination", starts Bloch off on a tirade directed at the bloodthirsty nature of some toy advertising, meant to be read by kiddies. The note of acute sarcasm is particularly appreciated, although it is entirely possible that some disenchanted individual will come forth with the inept remark, "What kind of man is this, who suggests such horrible "toys" for our darling babies? He should be imprisoned!" And perhaps he should; but take heart, infants--some people have no sense of humor whatsoever...

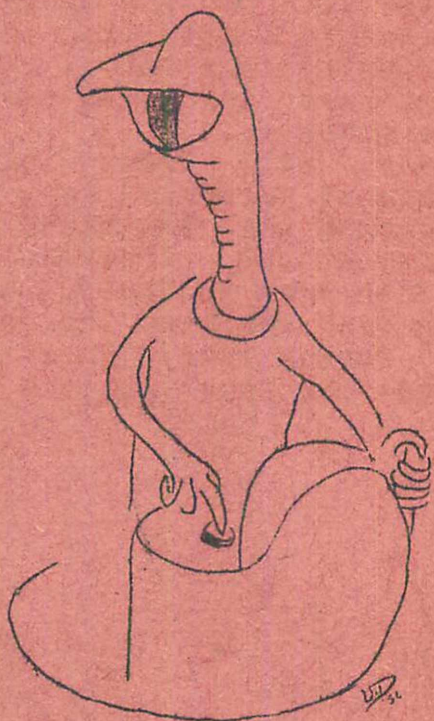
"The Fallen Mighty" comes in for some remarkage by Chuck Derry, among others, who proceeds to assume a reverse attitude toward The Shadow. We are informed that TS was absolutely written by one man and one man only, he being Walt Gibson. This, to my notion, is somewhat like asserting that all of the nicks in my desk were put there by me only, between August and December...All very interesting, but who the hell cares? I might even go so far as to say, "What place has material of this kind in a fanzine?" However, I shall not, for two reasons: In the first place, I should probably be castigated immmercifully for being anti-fannish. Some might say, "Whatta you, anyway? Grennell ain't tryin' to be serious and constructive, anyway...!" Secondly, GRUE isn't a fanzine, in the strict sense of the word. Rather, I should say that it is an "amateur essay" magazine, which might sound frightfully pithy to you; it shouldn't, anymore than the news that all essays aren't pithy and profound. Whatever it is, at any rate, it would be sorely missed if it folded.

ORION; Paul Enever, 9 Churchill Avenue, Hillingdon, Middlesex England. Having seemingly survived a recent trial in the last issue of BEM, we find Paul Enever and ORION back with us...He opens with a very contradictory editorial on free speech. With one sentence, we are informed that "truly religious men" can be free with their speech, because they have a code of conduct which prevents them from misusing it. In practically the next sentence, we are then informed that "...wooly-minded churchmen /are led/ into pontificating on subjects of which by definition, they can have no real knowledge." Enever further



asserts that free speech is all right for those who know what they are talking about, inferring that most famous statesmen were/are such as these. Now, at the outset, it would be wise to remember that, just because a politician is a statesman, doesn't mean that he's particularly wise; rather, it means that he can use his mouth.

Thus we are instructed by Paul Enever. Free speech is alright for those who know what they're talking about, but the morons should shut up. A few sentences later, he says that free speech is alright in the taproom, where speaker and listener are equally befuddled. He bemoans the narrow limits of learning that even the wisest man today need steer in, inferring that in earlier years, learning was much more widespread. This, as we all know, is false. But, at any rate, when a fool begins talking, he will soon be found out by the wise in his audience. And therefore, it will harm very little to let him prattle, for the other fools in his audience will only be a bit more so at the finish, and the wise will ignore him. And, in view of the fact that, in the discussion of free speech, Enever makes use of quite a large amount of that commodity himself, that is what I suggest we do in this case.



FOR BEMS ONLY! Jerry Merrill, 620 Avenue H, Boulder City, Nevada. A typically neofannish title, a typically neofannish cover, and typically neofannish insides. I wish I could say that, despite its neofannish odor, it had a gleam of things to come, but, being truthful, I can't actually find anything to recommend it. As a prime example, in his editorial, the editor asks us, "...have you caught the latest Flash Gordon on TV? Don't try if you haven't--it stinks!" He then proceeds to give us a short (mercifully) account of an episode. What puzzles me is if it is so cruddy, why is he torturing his audience with it? Tired fiction, and disgusting interpolations in the letter column. A long journey for this one to the near vicinity of the top...

RETRIBUTION: John Berry, 1 Knockeden Cres, Flush Park, Belfast, N. Ireland; and Art Thomson, 17 Brockham House, Brockham Drive, London S.W.2, England. Consists of, in the large part, a report on the Shaw Ghoodminton Matter, by John Berry. It seems that BoSh had been winning a great number of ghoomdinton games, due, it appeared, to the gymnastics of a somewhat amazing shuttlecock. In view of the fact that the Willis-White team was defeated in three or four sets, by the single-handed

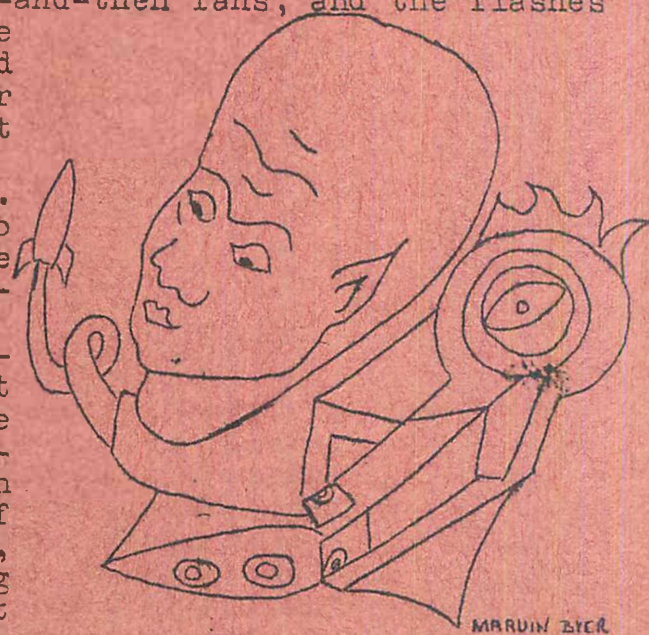
artistry of Bob Shaw--even without the help of George Charters--before the witnessing eyes of three neo-fen--it was decided that Something Must Be Done. Willis therefore called in the renowned Goon Defective Agency. After much investigation by the intrepid team of Art Thomson and John Berry, it was discovered that suspicious mail was delivered from Chuck Harris to BoSh--birdseed for the shuttlecock, which turned out to be a parakeet.

There is obviously a moral, or a lesson, somewhere in there, but it's beyond my mental capacity to discover it. Suffice it to say that Irish Fandom must be a very interesting phenomenon.

CANADIAN FANDOM; William D. Grant, 11 Burton Road, Toronto 10 Ontario, Canada. CanFan has had a most deversified history. Published by five different editors, it has existed now, off and on, for 14 years, and still somehow maintains an antiseptic aura of respectability, a bit like some old and treasured painting, hanging in the same gallery with a group of grade school scribblings, and still maintaining its composure. CanFan is going in a great deal these days, for reprints, indicating--this being substantiated, to a degree, by a remark in a letter from Grant--that good original material, of the type and stature that has come to be expected of CAN FAN, is a bit hard to get. Thus, we are presented with CROUTCH ON UNIONS, a bit by Les Crutch, in which he presents a situation in which, whenever we move, we must pay a royalty to a union. This reminds me somewhat of a story I read not too long ago, whose name, of course, escapes me at the moment...

Not all is reprint material, however. Bill Grant intervenes with an article containing the almost perrenial cry, "What's Becoming of Fandom?" We are informed that ~~the~~ major part of fandom is carried on by about three groups. Interesting--and when hasn't it been? As long as I've been in fandom, the major part of the regularly-appearing work has been the result of labor by none more than ten or twelve fans. There are the semi-regular fans, and the now-and-then fans, and the flashes in the pan. These are of little lasting import, however, and their efforts should be considered with the thought in mind that the perpetrators aren't really interested in what they're doing. And no one can be expected to do his best at something in which he has, at best, very little interest.

Bill's style of writing is singular, and not a little difficult to read. He is somewhat prone to connecting one or two sentences together with commas, which is a bit confusing, especially if one is not expecting it. This, at best, is merely a quibbling point, however, and should not be taken as qualified criticism.



BHANG and OPIUM TRIBUNE, Dave Rike, Box 203, Rodeo, California
BHANG is Fapa, and brings to mind a comment by Bill Grant, in
CANFAN--reviewed elsewhere--to the effect that 60-65% of FAPA
material is "read-onee-and-throw-out" items. These two maga-
zines are prime examples of the proof of this statement. Both
of very little import, they could just as well have gone un-
published, and no one the worse for it. Dave's irritating hab-
bit of using such signs as ¢ for the c in the word cent (¢ent)
and other things of that nature, such as ¢o\$t, "¢a\$h", ad naus-
eum, do nothing for either publication, and could be dispensed
with, as could everything else in both magazines.

ABAS: Boyd Raeburn, 4 Glenvalley Drive, Toronto 9, Ontario,
Canada. God! I was beginning to suspect a mafia-bit on the
part of the noble Boyd; however, he is once again amongst us,
blowing coolly through the radiator cap of his MG, spewing bile
in all directions, puncturing stuffed shirts. As I go through
ABAS, I keep thinking how dull fandom would be without such as
this, for lo! 'twould be no way of getting such gems as "Mas-
ter of the Mille Miglia", other than looking in Road and Track
which is a most unlikely place indeed, I'm sure you'll all
agree. Shades of Grennell! Clod notwithstanding, if ABAS
folded, rather than face a day without Derogations, I'd go out
and hang myself, I would...

"I put out MUZZY for the intelligent reader!" -- Guess Who...

OBLIQUE 6, Clifford Gould, 1559 Cable Street, San Diego 7, Cal-
ifornia. Rather a thick magazine, this. At the outset, one
finds oneself wondering what, exactly, Lee Hoffman had in QUAN-
DRY, that attracted fandom to her/it. Here we have, I Am A
Fan, in which Hoffweman traces her re-entrance to fandom, only
to discover that most of those she knew are no longer amongst
us. She says that fandom lacks something. Of course--the pre-
sence of those whom she was connected in the so-called
"Sixth Fandom." Fandom of course seems somewhat empty, and
thereby leaves nothing of interest to he who tries to make a
comeback. However, who am I, a mere commoner, to be analyzing
the psychotic cycles of a Fannish Ghoddess...
Perhaps the greatest letdown in the whole thing is Ed Cox's
story, How High The Moon? Gould gives Moon a great build-up
saying that anyone who says he didn't read it would automatic-
ally be included in Cliff's 'I hate you' list. Well, I read
it, and I wish I hadn't. Most stories have a build-up to a
climax, or should have, if they're any good--So does this one:
A build-up to a perfectly good climax, and then, just at the
point where the story seems as if it's coming to a head, the
hero changes his mind, like a man working his courage up to a
suicide, and then deciding he won't kill himself after all.
Rather disgusting, really. You keep wondering why all the fuss.
Vernon McCain, although he is not in general fandom, continues
to bend fannish ears with such as HOW TO WIN FRIENDS AND INFLU-
ENCE BNFS, in which, as one progresses, one finds that McCain
talks more and more about how things were done with his fan-
zine, as if his were the only way possible. It's a pity more

time wasn't given this article; more research is needed, to cover a subject as broad as the one McCain tackles. It is impossible to cover such a subject from the viewpoint of one person only.

A letter column follows. Lannish as hell...

UMBRA John Hitchcock, 15 Arbutus Avenue, Baltimore 28, Maryland
It suddenly strikes me that a stranger coming into fandom is like a man going into a bar for a quiet drink, only to find the place enmeshed in a brawl. For we have Hitchcock fighting with Steward, Steward fighting with Wetzal, Wetzal is fighting with Mason, Mason is fighting with everyone in general, and almost everyone is fighting--Steward, myself, Hitchcock, the af-
ore-mentioned Gould, Raeburn, Wetzal, ad infinitum--With Clod
And nobody's got the sense to shut their mouths. Fans are supposed to be broad-minded...
Considering all the bile that's about, I guess I'll get those hip-boots yet...

MUZZY: no. 9. Claude B--er, Hall--2214 San Antonio, Austin, Texas. Taking shovel in hand, we begin a journey through MUZZY. Surprisingly, ~~we~~ find a very nice cover; at least the babe is recognizable as human, which is considerably more than one can say for a number of fanzines printing such as that.... Fanfiction, as usual, is rampant. Of the two stories, No Sport for Spectators seemed to me to be, after a good beginning, mostly pointless. Perhaps that's 'cause I'm not Mature Like Hall. However, Where Angels Fear, I liked--I really did. But Cheer up, Clod--'tain't your fault...Fanzine reviews are by Hall, and consist of nothing so much as a listing of the contents of the magazine in question, and a wisecrack after. Hall reveals his true lack of discriminating critical sense inttesting the value of a fanzine, by giving fanzines higher or lower ratings, decided by whether or not they print fanfiction, as if one that did, is automatically better than one that doesn't. Claude leaves one with the sickening impression that anything that Claudius don't like, ain't no good. Fie. Almost laughed myself silly over a letter by Orville Mosher. 'f it isn't enuf to have one fugghead sounding off, one fugghead sounding off at another is too much!!! Gather 'round the fluttering banner. HAWHAWHAWHAWHAWHAW!!!! For sheer unadulterated--and completely unintentional--comedy, MUZZY is unsurpassed!

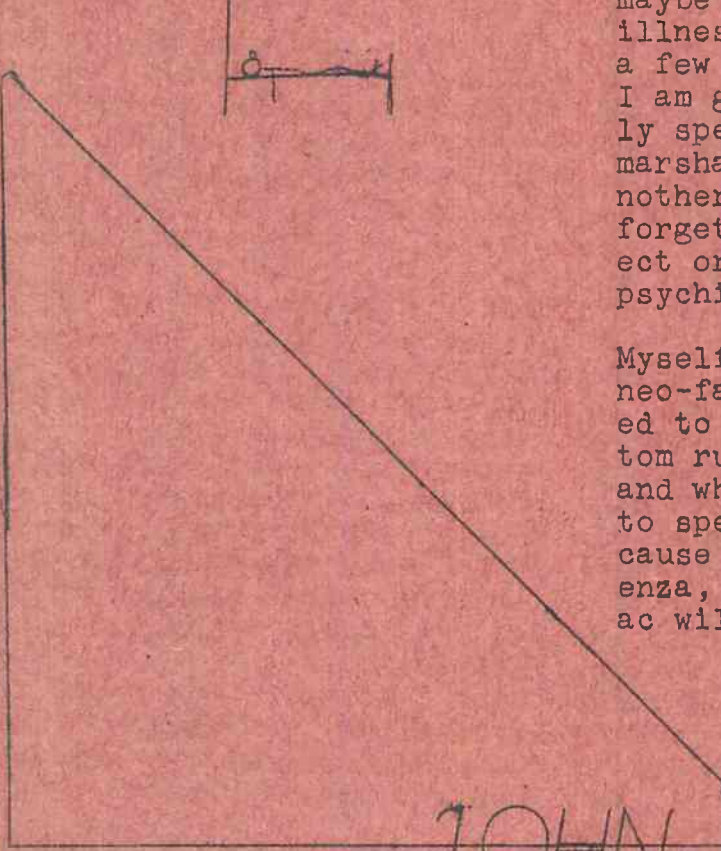
And so, friends, holding our sides painfully, we guffaw our way to the door. Opening it, we find none of the denizens of the night barring our way, which is just as well, as we're too weak with laughter to defend ourselves against onslaught, anyway...As our laughter fades in the distance, a small goonybird is heard to say, "A mighty thing has fallen to dispair!" To which we would add a hearty "AMEN!" had we the breath to do so. However, we see that the dragon is beginning to advance again, and so we hastily withdraw to a gentler climate. It would be sad indeed, if we were to perish before the repeated onslaught of this mad creature, for then it would be impossible for us to come before all of you each issue--and a missed appointment would indeed be a calamity. And so, with that thought in mind, we jerk out the recurve once more, fit it with a cedar shaft, and, just as the beast gets within range, we let fly. The beast, of course, perished...

HORIZONTAL

FANAC

By

I do not wish my fannish brethren any harm at all. In fact, long life and prosperity to you all, say I. But, however well blessed you all are with vibrant health, sometime, maybe tomorrow maybe in ten years, a trifling illness will cause you to spend a few days in bed. Some BNF's, I am given to understand, annually spend a few days in bed, to marshal their resources for a nother giddy twelve months. They forget all about fandom on direct orders from their worried psychiatrists.



Myself, a recent post-graduate neo-fan, and an apprentice fanned to boot, am merely on the bottom rung of the looong BNFladder and when I was told by my doctor to spend a few days in bed because of a bad attack of influenza, I said to myself, "My fanac will continue."

JOHN BERRY

"My fanac will continue."

Those stirring words pounded on my brain as I feebly raised my head above the blanket, and, with difficulty, opened my bloodshot eyes. My head seemed unduly thick, all my bones ached and my wheezing breath was like the Pacific 510 telling a tunnel it was coming. Otherwise, I told my unbelieving self, all was well. I moved into a sitting position, twitched, lay back exhausted, and discovered a new series of stabbing pains. Wherever my posterior came into contact with the sheet-covered mattress, it hurt. I tried turning over on my side--both sides--but each hip radioed back the same urgent message. "Ouch!"

Was this to finish my fanac before it had started?

No.

After some hours of meditation, I solved the problem by stuffing a couple of pillows under the small of my back. I felt rather like a drawn bow. I derived some physical satisfaction from this position, however, and whilst counting my blessing, I had a visit from my maiden aunt. A look of incredulity crossed her face, and she fainted. She brought her own doctor back later for a second opinion, but I don't really know what diagnosis he arrived at, as I understand he has given up his practice and retired to the woods as a hermit.

After spending one day in this position, I began to suffer severe neck strain, so an altered position was indicated. Secretly, I was happy about this, as it is monotonous, looking up at the ceiling for hours on end.

My answer was simplicity itself. I made a search of the other rooms, collected a few pillows and cushions, and made a sort of viaduct of them; pillars for my neck, the small of my back, and my ankles. I was now four feet above the bed level, but so happy. The sensation was most enjoyable.

Strange to say, I began to notice that I was receiving a frequently increasing number of visitors. At one time, my wife was forced to organize a queue. One of her brothers, an anti-medium of some repute, who exposed the notorious Monsieur Bert went into a double shuffle of indignation when he saw my new position, and had to be led away, screaming something about 'accursed levitant' at the top of his voice.

Now that my personal comfort was assured, I was ready for fanac. A most difficult task confronted me; to get the dreaded Shaw-Berry typer into action. The roller worked by gravity, and when normally in use, I utilized two tins of beans suspended on a wire as a gravity feed.

Again, my mechanical mind saved an otherwise unsurmountable problem. What could be simpler than fixing a wire from the typer roller to the pendulum of the cuckoo clock, hanging on the wall? It worked swell, and by simply dividing by 7.5, I could also tell the time, as if that was important.

Satisfied that everything was in position, I climbed onto my pillow structure, balanced the typer on my chest, and started on my first letter.

§ § § § § § § § § § §

The theory about the shortest distance between two points being a straight line, is true. I nearly leapt out of bed shouting "Eureka!" when I discovered it, although my mode of discovery somewhat dampened my enthusiasm. The wire attached to the roller had now pulled the pendulum to its fullest extent toward me, which meant that it was at an angle of 90 degrees from the wall. This, for some reason, also stopped the clock.

Did this daunt me?

Definitely not.

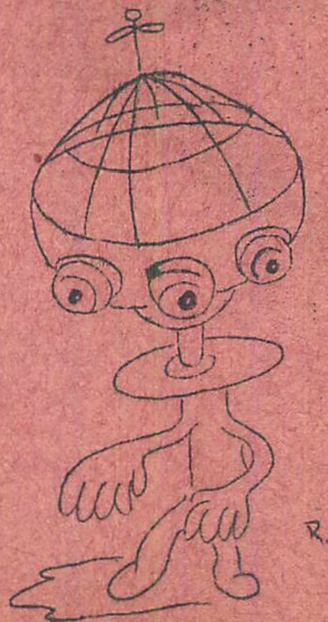
I fixed four small wheels at the four corners of the bed. I stripped my bicycle down, and made an arrangement of cogs and wheels and chains at the far end of the bed, and by a cycling movement which was both relaxing and smooth, the bed slowly moved towards the clock as I typed. I had eradicated all the snags.

When I started typing my third letter, I had to pause and order my wife to control the spectators. Some of them appeared so absorbed in the technicality of my work that they totally disregarded the possibility of being run over.

I completed six letters, and started on my telling article, The Psychology of the Budgerigar.

I was a martyr to fandom. I had made the grade. The ingrained tuition of Willis had borne fruit. Nothing could stop my fanac.

Then I made a miscalculation. I tried to be too clever. I own one of those clever utensils--an electric clock combined with a loudspeaker combined with a kettle. The instrument is in fairly common use; no doubt. A very fannish article, if I may say so. I ~~decided~~ to have some tea in a few moments, so I set the clock, and carried on with my story. I became absorbed with it. I forgot all else.



A sudden racous shout of "WAKEY WAKEY RISE AND SHINE" roared through the room. The shock was so sudden that although I instinctively knew it was the clock, I had turned suddenly on my structure.

Now, the Shaw-Berry typer is heavy, and it fell onto the bed proper. The wire had been fixed firmly, and it dragged the cuckoo clock away from the wall with a ~~thing~~ "ting!" This sudden release of prssure caused the wire and attached pendulum to recoil forward like a spring, and it wrapped tightly around my body as I fell. Swathed like a mummy, I

eventually finished up crosswise over the bed, with my ear about three inches from the loudspeaker. The kettle began to steam, and with no one to control the gadget, it burst onward with renewed vigor. The voice now thundered out at high decibel frequency, and the kettle began to get indignant. My face felt like the end of a piston.

§ § § § § § § § § § § §

I'm still swathed, but by this time, it's with bandages. I am receiving treatment for ruptured eardrums, mottled complexion, suspected fractures of both forearms--and of course, the original influenza.

My fanac?

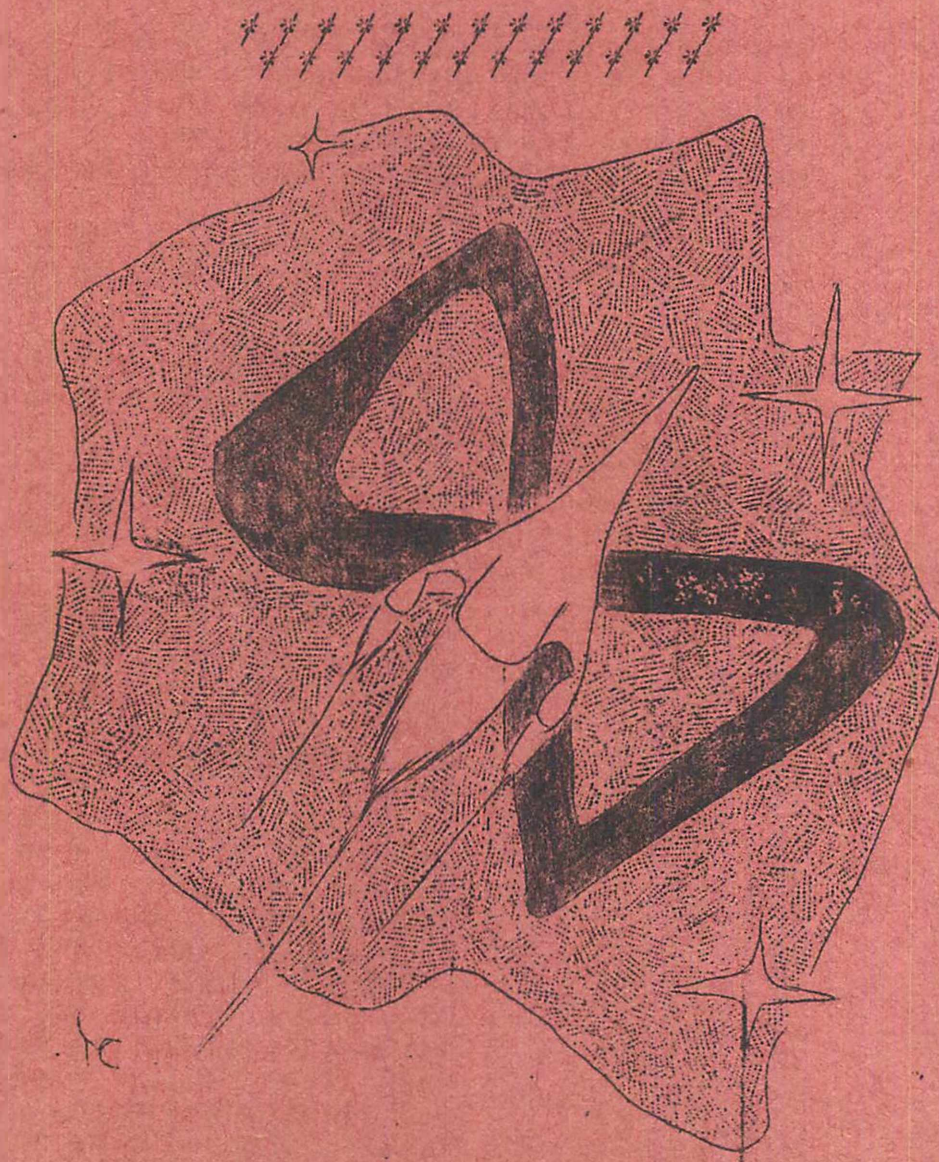
Listen...

Talk about something else, for God's sake.

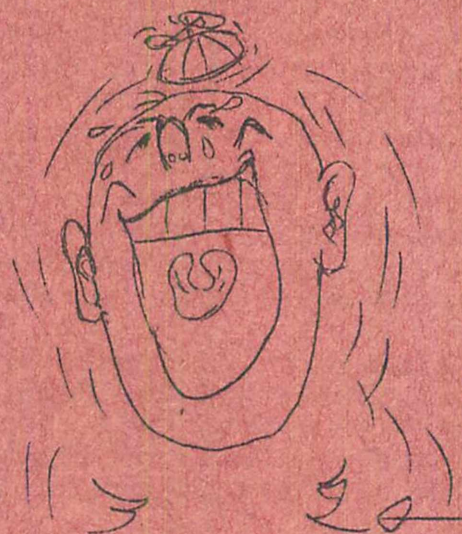
I'm getting better, but am still susceptible to a sudden relapse.

Besides, they have only electric clocks in this hospital.

jb



PILAW



No, friend, your eye does not deceive you--it is us again, wending a weary path through the jungle of indifference. It would seem as if there ~~is~~ a curse on anyone writing a letter ~~to~~ comment to a fanzine. At any rate, the trail we are ~~wend~~ing our way on is rocky and long; many are the rests we must take if we are to find our way to the end of the journey. And because we are weary from the extended journey, we shall cut this short and get right to the letters. To wit:

Claude Hall
2214 San Antonio
Austin, 5, Texas

Actually, I'm not quite in the proper mood for letter writing, but I'd rather pay for my issues of ECLIPSE with letters, which cost only five cents, than a subscription, which would cost me ten cents per issue. # DRAGON'S ISLAND by J. Martin Graetz, was fairly good and well worth reading. I can't say the same for the other material you presented, because it was all trash & not wise, kid. The very thing you stupidly condone ((typo courtesy Clod)) me for, you do yourself. Is it jealousy? ((Jealousy? OF YOU??)) # Both you and Hic-up need someone to dry you behind the ears. # I did not ruin several nice de illos. Dave himself captioned Lost of them. The three I captioned, you CAN'T find. Oh, hell--here I am, defending MUZZY again. I'd promised myself to merely tell you kids to go to Hell.

And again...

Nope, I wouldn't lie about the ~~DET~~ ~~ET~~ ~~ONS~~ ~~...~~ ((After I remarked to him that it would do me no good to choose the ones he'd captioned, because he'd deny it anyway.)) I seldom lie. For one

reason, I never put myself in the position necessary for lying and second, because lying reveals a definite weakness. I am Claudius. ((Do I salaam now..?)) It is not necessary forme to lie. # No, I'm not honestly ashamed of MUZZY. But why defend it against you? I'll agree that the fiction in MUZZY#8 wasn't too good, but wotthell--even the fiction I turn out professionally--and which detective eds pay quite well for--I wouldn't use in MUZZY. In fact, if I keep the story around the house for a week, I'm liable to tear the damned thing up. ((Which is definitely what somebody should do with most of the crap you turn out.)) # However, it all boils down to one thing--before you criticize MUZZY with the intent of angering me, I suggest you observe your own writing in EEK. All of us could stand some improvement.

((Indeed we could--so why don't you? My writing stands on its own merit; it has been favorably received in most quarters. If I were you, Clod, I'd not yell so much about other people improving their writing, when it's well-known that you're fandom's outstanding producer of crud.))

William D. Grant
11 Burton Road
Forest Hill Village Ontario
Canada

Kind of looks like this Claude Hall is going to be a number one target before the year is out. Glad to hear that Gerry isn't the only one going after him. I'd hate like hell to get a nickname like "Clod." Frankly, now that the die is cast in what seems to be the makings of a good feud, which is a rare thing in fandom these days, it will probably make good copy before it is all over. I feel sorry for Hall in a way, though because it takes a long time for this kind of thing to wash off, particularly if you're going to stay in fandom for awhile. If Hall had ignored the remarks by Steward, Ellick and Hitchcock he might have been a very smart boy and that would have been the end of the whole thing for him. But he has his back up & as I said before, the outcome will be well worth watching. Hall, of course, will get the worst of it. # Ron Elli's remarks in the letter section are more meat for the fannish minds Strange to say, I agree with him almost 100 percent. Articles like the HPLovecraft he refers to are very scarce, and as you may or may not know, I'm reprinting this article in the June issue of CANFAN. This article has since sparked my way of thinking and I have two very solid items lined up of similar vein, one of them being on Fritz Lang and the other being a long effort about Oak Ridge, as yet untitled. New material is hard come by, so I have reprints lined up, which, if something comes in, are temporarily dropped to make way for new efforts.

((Unfortunately, there are, people in every group, who firmly believe in a policy of irritating as many people at a time as possible. They are those who, seemingly, cannot open their

mouths without jumping in with both feet. They continually find fault where it does not exist, and they are generous at turning innocent remarks into deadly slander, usually at themselves. This enables them to fear back, resulting in more ill will. They cannot be reasoned with, and it is dangerous to engage them in discussions of any kind, because due to the fact that they of course, are always right, such discussions always turn out bad. They are veritable saints, in their own eyes, and go blissfully on, on their campaigns to make everyone else as miserable as possible. Such a person is Claude Hall.))

Mother is the invention of necessity.

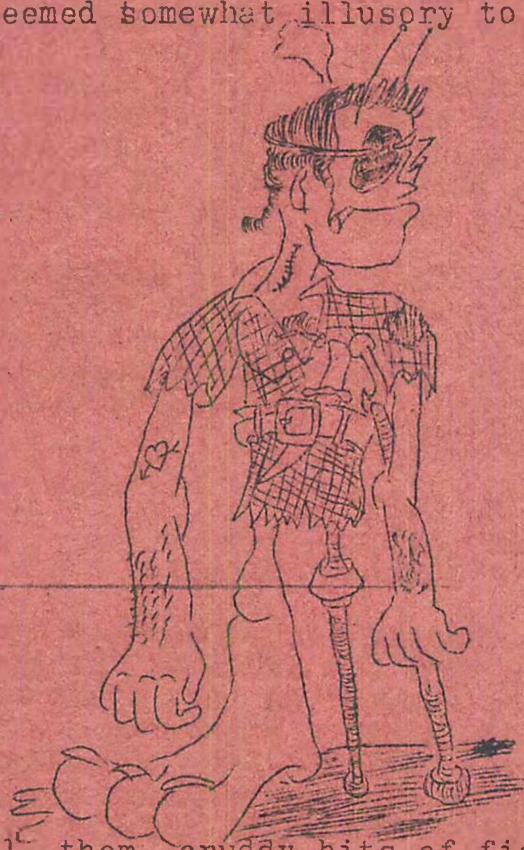
Wm. Deeck
8400 Potomac Avenue
College Park, Maryland

The fanzine reviews in EEK 15, were, as usual, excellent. Ghod knows I enjoy your reviews, but I have not yet been inspired to buy any of the zines, you recommend. I don't have enough time as it is. But don't let that disturb you--as if it would keep 'em up. # Ray, my old, if I had gotten comment like you received from Kent Moomaw on a story you had published in my fanzine, I should never speak to you again--or ask you to contribute again. Even if that was the worst you received, it was too much. # Graetz has another interesting column. It is very interesting to know what editors are outside of their editorials. They have always seemed somewhat illusory to me, something seen only at night, and then, on a dead run. However, Graetz didn't reveal the one thing I want to know about aSF--who is the one who picks the "message" stories? Knowledge of that would make me a very happy man, for I'd know whom to shun in the future...

((Actually, Wm., I don't review fanzines with the thought in mind of selling any particular one. I just do it because I like to, and the rest of the readership seems to go for the idea; then, too, perhaps deep down inside me, I consider myself somewhat of a critic. Who however, knows?))

Thom Perry
4040 Calvert Street
Lincoln 6, Nebraska

Dammit, STOP!! Stop pubbing all them cruddy bits of fiction I sent thee oh-so-many ages ago. Grennell likes them? So he says--I doubt it. But if he does, great; send 'em to Grennell;



he can derive enjoyment therefrom and then burn 'em. The synopsis of REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE was much appreciated. I didn't see it for lack of funds. Several teenfolk hereabout who did, remarked they considered it a trifle farfetched; it sounds it. I didn't miss much. # You fascinate me. Here where you confess to listening to a ten-years-old Lone Ranger program, I mean. I mean, howjaknow, Ray? I suppose you just recognized it? Or mayhap dug out a tape-recording, ala Boggs? I admire your courage anyway, sufferang so, merely to supply us innocents with a few lines of happy reading. # Deeck writ THIS?? ((Warning to Fandom)) Ray, whynttcha say so? Don't he deserve more credit than mere mention on the ToFC?? Gawd: I was tempted to send you a column, but now I dunno... Besides, I got six weeks of history homework to do.

((What's the matter--fame getting you down?))

Martin Graetz
2 Thomas Park
Cambridge 38, Mass.

About the latest, #15. That was a cover? Editorial--good. You do pretty well when you start sounding off. You hawan't been so vitriolic and violent as you once were in the days of the dittoed 'CLIPSE. ((Age, I must admit, has mellowed me.)) Your fanzine reviews were equally good. Do you cut the letters in PILAU? Seems the answers are longer than the letters. In a way, it is pretty nice, tho. So many fan-types shy away from facing issues raised in the letter column, that they wonder why they even bother... Terry Carr is ORFully fannish--I like Linda Perry better. # Suggestion: It would make the cover look a lot neater if you got a lettering guide and made a permanent cut of the title banner. The format is nice--now pick some real professional typeface and dress it up. Biggest complaint this ish: You got in enough typos and misspellings to last a decade. It reached a head when "off-trail" dropped an f twice on page 16. What happened this time?

((TWICE!!! You're seeing double, Old Top and Bottom. I can't find only once. My trouble with answering letters is, once I get started, I can't shut up, and I ramble on for pages at a time. The tendency frightens me; I'm afraid of crowding out somebody's wept-over article, and--DAMMIT, NOW I'VE STARTED IN AGAIN!!!))

G.M. Carr
5319 Ballard Avenue
Seattle 7 Washington

I enjoyed Terry Carr's comments about each religion springing up from the ashes of the previous one; and civilizations seeding themselves like dying annuals. But I couldn't quite follow your line of reasoning about the 'six tons of granite.' To be sure, studies into sociology and economic trends are somewhat hampered by government inflexibility when it comes to attempting to apply the results of the studies. But I can't see that



it's as crushing as all that. After all, if it were not for the financial support of the government, I doubt very much that any atomic scientific achievements would have been possible. Who else has dough enough for an Oak Ridge or a Richland. To say nothing of satellite basketballs. Your review of SOLIDE brings up an interesting thought. I mean the 'weird-fantasy' type of literature. I have never cared too much for HPL and CASmith because of their oh! so precious style of writing. But I do enjoy weird and humorous fantasy; Ghosts,

elves, werewolves, eldritch-horrors-of-the-deep, vampires, pixies, haunted houses, enchantments, sprites, and just ordinary chain-clanking 'hants'. I liked the way August Derleth used to handle his fantasy--so matter of fact about it all. Also, Sturgeon's early fantasies, with mischievous gnomes and changelings, etc. It is an unfortunate fact that promags featuring this type of fiction seldom live long--in fact, they seem to exist merely to point out the truth of the adage, "The Good die young." It is highly unfortunate that fandom cannot produce one really good, hefty fanzine dedicated to this type of material. If all the fans who enjoy light fantasy could get together and support such a fanzine with subs, material, and encouragement, it would fill a needed gap. But who has energy enough to take on such a job? Or, granted the energy, the maturity of judgement enough to separate the fantasies from the crud? Especially the cruddy imitations of HPLovecraft.

((You confuse me. The ashes-to-ashes bit is mine, not Carr's. Then, somehow, you have me talking about applying sociological studies to unbending governments. I didn't. The granite bit should be regarded as merely an ending bit for the letter section and nothing else.

I fear that a fanzine such as you describe would be hard up for material, if nothing else. It would, as you say, take an editor with judgement enough to separate the crud from the fantasy. It would take a great deal of maturity, also, to be able to write good fantasy, in the first place. I am afraid the material submitted by most fans would be sadly lacking in maturity.))

* * * *

And so it goes. The atmosphere we are forced to breathe is most rarified. This leads us to believe that we are the only ones about, for no living human can be seen for miles across the flat desert floor. The heat bears down on us, and we look in vain for a small patch of shade. Over all is the sun, shining like a baleful yellow eye, determined to wilt us away to nothing. Ever resolute, we tramp onward, until we come upon what appears to be a mirage, for there is cool running water,

and a small group of palm trees. Finding that this is not a mirage, we flop down on the cool grass, just as a green lizard dives into the pool. We find, on closer examination, that he is towing a small boat, in which a sign appears, saying, "An eight-pound sledge-hammer would be more satisfactory." This we cannot deny, however stating that it depends on what one will use the hammer for. This has no bearing on our present position--that being prone, arms outstretched--so we shall ignore it. Looking about us, we suddenly find ourselves confronted with the battered rolltop. Considering that it is somewhat odd finding a rolltop ~~oak~~ in the middle of the Gobi desert, we take the shock quite well. Just as we are about to reach over for the typewriter, it turns into a giant spider, and proceeds to bite us. Just as we are about to die, we find a small bottle of gunk which says, "Take me, and then jump into the water." With our dying breath, we gulp down the bitter liquid, and fall into the shallow pool. Just at this moment, the pool turns into the top floor of the Empire State Building which we have just jumped from. As the street below rushed up to us, we reflect on the basic improbability of all this. Our contemplations are cut off, however, as we pass the second floor windows, and then, just as we are about to crash into the sidewalk head first, we fall out of bed, and wake up. Cursing mightily, we mutter, "What a way to end it all." But end it we must, and so, for now, we say, Sic Semper Ad Astra, even if it hurts.

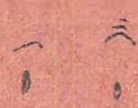
ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE SOCIETY
OF DISGRUNTLED FANEDITORS

My friends--and I address you as such.
Because I feel a certain brotherhood with all of
you, much
As I hate to admit it, for yea, I too have been
a victim of the disease which possesses persons
of fairly healthy minds and bodies to gather
together enormous amounts of crud and stuff
merely to put out a fanzine, and then
Too, the smell of mimeo ink is in all our bloods.
It would seem that the fans who supposedly read
Our fanzines, aren't, and as you all know, we need
Certain amounts of egobbo to withstand the
Ravages of time betwixt one issue and the next,
for, lo! 'tis said that--even by me!--
No fan is an island.
Never is this truer than right after we have put
out each issue
And wait and wait for the letters to start coming
When they don't, we are frantic--what to do?
And so we wait and wait and wait, and still nothing;
Finally, we give up in abject dejection;
Following, is our gradual ejection
From fandom--and another fallen by the wayside; never
more the fun -24-
Of putting out issue of our fanzine--I say--tennis,
anyone?



HEY SAMMY, I GOT AN
IDEA!

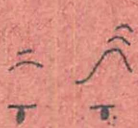
LET'S PUT OUT A FANZINE!



HMMM... WHAT KIND
OF A FANZINE?



A REAL GOOD ONE!
WE'LL GET SOME REAL
BNF'S TO WRITE
FOR US!



LIKE WHO?



LIKE... OH... WELL
WILLIS AND LANFY
AND HOFFMAN AND
BUBBEE...



HMMM... YOU LIKE
THEIR STUFF? IT'S
PRETTY DEEP FOR
A NEO...

TERRY CARR'S
FACE CRITTURS
PLANNING A FANZINE

FAN

WELL, I NEVER
READ ANY OF
IT, BUT I HEAR
THEY WRITE
GOOD STORIES.



SURE - WHAT EESER?

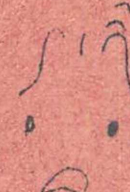
WE'LL CALL IT THE
SPACE MAGAZINE.

AND WE'LL MAKE IT
JUST LIKE A REAL
"PRO" MAGAZINE...

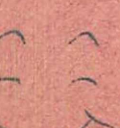
NEO

I'VE GOT A HECTO...

STORY



FOR
FANZINES?



OH, THAT'S EASY...

JUST WRITE THEM
INSULTING LETTERS...
I HEAR THAT
ALWAYS WORKS!

FAN



JUST TELL ME ONE
THING...

HOW DO YOU PROPOSE
TO GET ALL THOSE
BNF'S TO WRITE
FOR YOU?

REC'D 13 JUN 1956

HOWARD PHILLIPS LOVECRAFT: MEMOIRS, CRITICUES
& BIBLIOGRAPHIES

EDITED BY GEORGE WETZEL

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