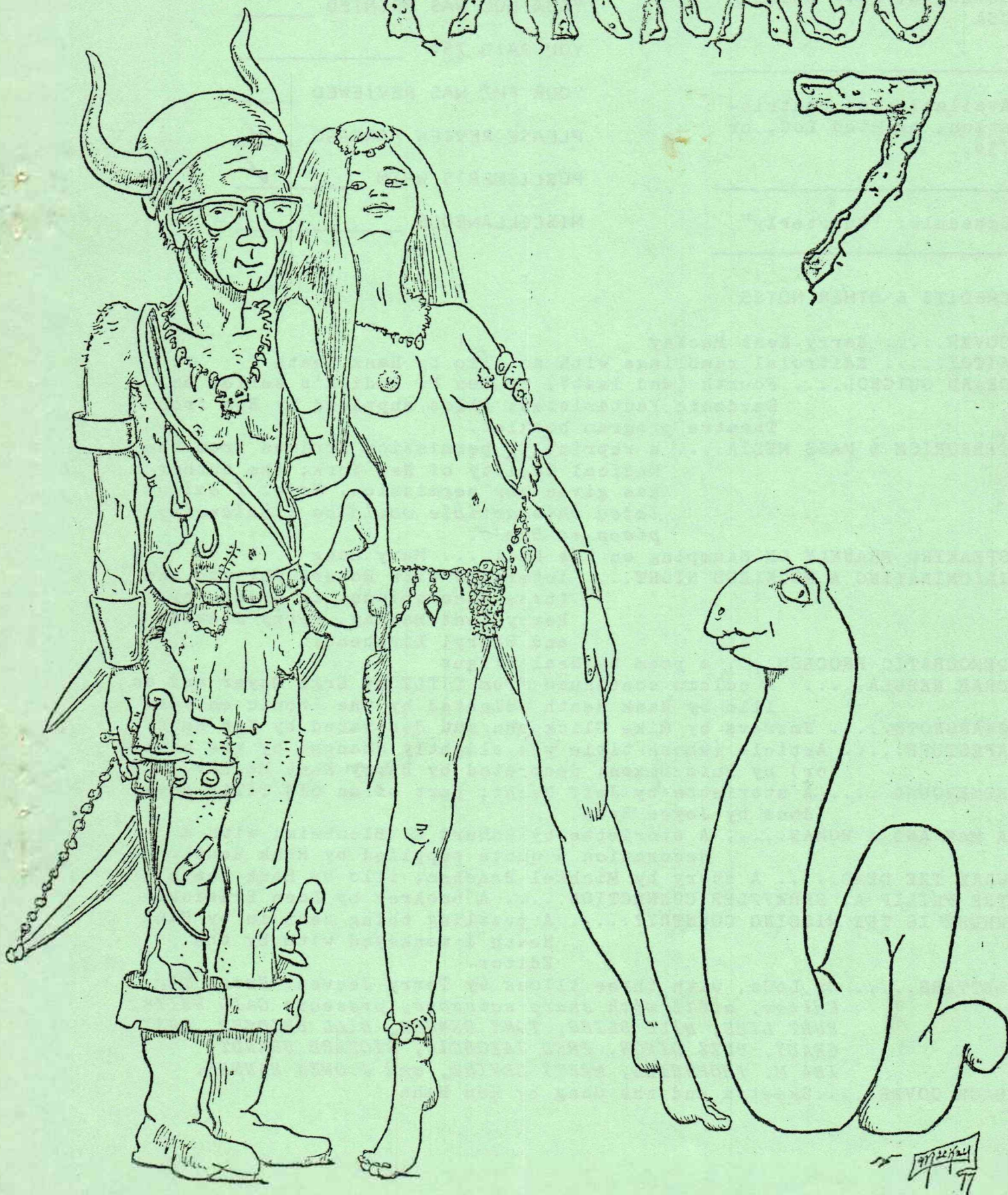


FARRAGO

7



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CREDITS & OTHER NOTES

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AITOI..... Editroial ramblings with an illo by Hank Heath

GRAND GUIGNOL..... Fourth (and last?) of Ben P. Indick's series on
Sardonic Fantasistes; illos supplied by Ben from
Theatre program booklet.

TERRORISM & MASS MEDIA.... a reprint *if* permission arrives from the
Medical Society of New York; the author
has given her permission. *Note: I calculated this article would be a balancing
piece to Ben's.*

SPEAKING FRANKLY OR Stamping on the Mail.... Mary Long

ILLUMINATING A MOONLESS NIGHT.... interview with Robert Chilson and
three decorations, in order, by
Barry Kent MacKay, Terry Jeeves,
and Sheryl Birkhead.

DEMOCRATIC PROCESS.... a poem by Neal Wilgus

CRAB NEBULA..... A column continued from TITLE by Eric Mayer and an
illo by Hank Heath selected by the ironic editor.

SNAPSHOTS..... Fmzrevs by Mike Glicksohn and decorated by Ken Hahn.

APESTUFF..... Article (whose title was slightly changed by the edit-
or) by Buzz Dixon; decorated by Barry Kent MacKay.

HOMEBOUND..... A storiette by Jeff Hecht; part of an old TITLE cover
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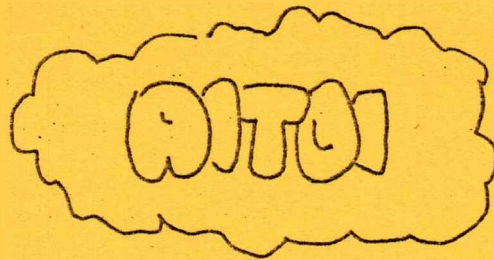
THE PHILIP A. SHREFFLER CONNECTION..... A bookrev by Donn Brazier.

WHERE IS THE MISSING COUNTRY?..... A puzzling thing sent in by Hank
Heath & monkeyed with by the
Editor.

LETTERS..... Or LoCs, with three illoes by Terry Jeeves. *Note: The
Editor, still with sharp scissors, presents GAIL WHITE,
BURT LIBE, BILL BLISS, TONY RENNER, BILL BRIDGET, GARY
GRADY, BUZZ DIXON, FRED JAKOBCIC, RICHARD BRANDT,
IRA M. THORNHILL, MARTY LEVINE, and J. OWEN HANNER.*

BACK COVER..... Skeetra and the Gang by Ken Hahn.

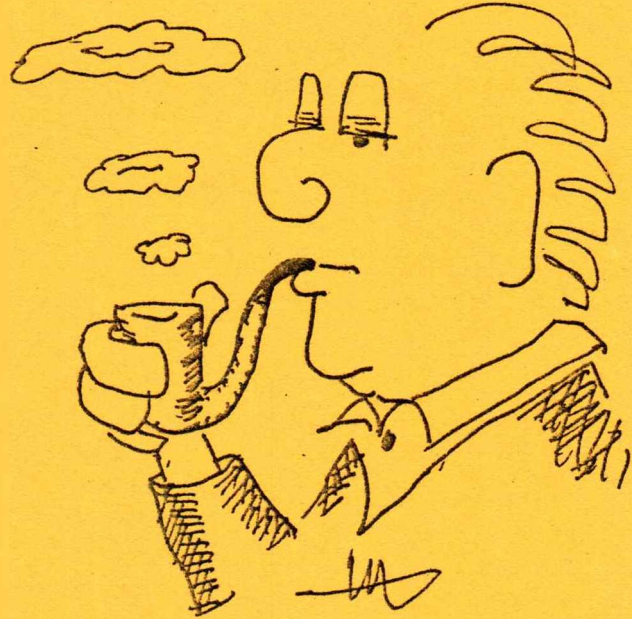
AITOI, as Tittlers know, stands for As-I-Think-Of-It. What am I going to do if I haven't thought of anything? Oh, I've thought of things, but would you be interested? Mike Glicksohn chides editors who ramble on about their fanzine troubles instead of developing an editorial which picks a question and takes a position.



I've thought of stating my stance on some mundane issues like homosexuality, lenient judges, government spending. In fact, I wrote a page and then threw it in the wastebasket. I was sounding like God, and I really don't have the halo for it.

By this time - after 6 years of sending TITTLE your way - there's no use in telling you who I am-- you already know. You know I'm a little nutty for big band jazz, peanut butter, and Fredric Brown.

You know, too, that I like to ask questions-- and get answers. Just yesterday I asked a co-worker how one could identify a living true-genius. Not just your part-time genius, but a full-fledged one. We more or less agreed that almost every characteristic we mentioned might lead us astray; conclusion: we probably couldn't point and say, that person's a genius. Maybe you think differently?



What do you think about the idea of "freeze-death"? Would you personally really want to be frozen for later revival to an immortal life? Does it really bother you to think of your death? And, if so, why? If the world were full of "immortals" would there be a place for and/or need for the young? Will birth & death as a genetic mutative device be replaced by genetic control in the laboratory?

Are parks for people-- or for grass? Well, I see I'm drifting here into some of the mundane issues of the day. Back off, Brazier; get back to SF and fantasy. Okay, why do the classics of imaginative literature seem to lie in the fantasy segment of the genre rather than in science-fiction-- generally? Maybe you won't agree with that premise....?

Can you devise an experiment which will prove that what I call the color blue is perceived in the exact same shade by you?

Now to end with a couple of simple questions that might have answers: why can I see through glass and not wood? Why does glue stick to something?

A 20-year-old St. Louis man was given nine suspended sentences and placed on probation for two years after he pleaded guilty to four burglaries and an attempted burglary at residences in University City and Clayton.

St. Louis County Presiding Circuit Judge Robert G. J. Hoester ordered Larry Reed, of the 4200 block of Fair Avenue, to serve nine concurrent five-year prison terms for four counts of burglary, four counts of stealing and

one count of attempted burglary. He then suspended the sentences and placed Reed on probation for two years.

The charges carried a possible maximum total of 65 years in prison.

The burglaries occurred Oct. 24 and Dec. 1, authorities said. The Clayton break-in was at the residence of a nun, and the items stolen included jewelry and money, police said.

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GLOBE
4-15-78
WHY?



THE SELWYN'S PRESENT
THE GRAND GUIGNOL PLAYERS
TO AMERICA

PREMIERE PERFORMANCE
MONDAY EVENING, OCT. 15TH 1923
AT THE FROLIC THEATRE
IN NEW YORK CITY

"The doctor has found a treatment for curing insanity. Two reporters visit his office, and the doctor begins to explain his cure. The reporters realize quickly that the doctor himself is a madman. Their conclusion is quite correct, for on that very day two madmen have killed Dr. Goudron and Prof. Plume. Now masquerading as their victims they become more and more excited as they describe their cure.... They murder the two reporters."

-- "The System of Dr. Goudron and Prof. Plume", a play presented by the Grand Guignol. 1.

SARDONIC FANTASISTES IV: GRAND GUIGNOL: HORROR AND CRUELTY IN
THEATRE AND FICTION

BY BEN P. INDICK

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I. PRECURSERS

It started with Poe, stories of horror, cruelty, irony and fear. DeSade had already put down on paper his black dreams, clinically detailed nightmares of inhumanity. The Romantic imagination found space for the hidden reaches of the human mind, from a height of love to a depth of depravity. Yet, Man has never escaped from his own concealed instincts -- the dark, barely subjugated pit of his compulsions, revealed in his earliest thoughts as the notion of Evil. It haunts his literature, usually incarnate, as though it were an entity apart from his own consciousness, temporarily inhabiting his body and even his mind to be driven off, perhaps, by spells, devices and prayers. If Man has sought to find Good, he has nevertheless been fascinated by Evil.

In Poe's brilliant imagination, preoccupation with Horror became a literary device which tempted and titillated his readers. Earlier Gothi- cists had reveled in novels of horror, from the more genteel and often rationalized work of Walpole and Radcliffe to the concrete horrors of Monk Lewis. Poe does not employ their spooks or their blood. His is a psychological attack, a subtlety which is all the more effective when the climax is reached. It may be a sudden revelation as in "Cask of Amontillado"; a mounting and hidden crescendo as in "The Fall of the House of Usher"; a symbolic picture rising from what seemed to be a literal scene as in "The Masque of the Red Death" where the emphasis of

1. For the summaries of some of the Grand Guignol Theatre's plays, I am indebted to the 1923 program prepared by the Selwyns, who brought the troupe to America. The booklet is handsomely illustrated and includes a history of the Theatre.

of the red of blood is free of trickery, yet rich in metaphor.

In combining physical fear with tension, Poe produces what would later be termed *Guignol* as in "The Pit and the Pendulum" where he plays with agonizing fear, and most fully in "The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar" where he takes a new science and discovers a frightening potential leading to a visual rather than a psychological horror.

In this last, he tapped a vein that would be elaborated on by later writers. Almost at once, through the mediation as translator by Baudelaire, Poe's work became an influence on French writers, a "prophet of Symbolism"². This movement aimed at "ultra-Romantic effects" going beyond the already triumphant Romanticism. The latter involves revolt against Society and its "rational" strictures; Symbolism is even more a detachment from Society, even to the unreality of pure subjectivism. Personal feelings alone would matter, communicated through metaphor, a "renunciation of the experience of the outside world for the experience of the imagination alone."²

An early pioneer in the Symbolist movement was the French aristocrat, Auguste, Comte de Villiers de l'Isle Adam (1839-89) whose life, rich in pretension, degradation and tragedy, reads like one of his own *Contes Cruels*, (Cruel Tales). He came of an autocratic family, wrote his stories to little acclaim, until, collected in 1883, they brought him fame. Worn by privation, debt, and, finally, cancer, he died wretchedly, although at the height of his fame. The stories are elegantly and even superciliously told, as though mere throw-offs of an idle and cruelly imaginative aristocrat; however, in many cases, the plot lines and characters are based on incidents from his own life.³ An irony underscores many of them, sometimes lightly, more often bitterly. He is a father to the Theatre of Horror.

One of the most characteristic of these tales is "The Torture of Hope." In the time of the Spanish Inquisition, a saintly rabbi has been imprisoned and tortured endlessly in a vain effort to coerce his conversion. Finally, the prior visits his cell. He is kindly and apologizes for all the pain; however, since the Jew has not seen fit to abjure his faith, he must face the *auto de fe* the following day. The monk wishes him peace, sanctimoniously requests forgiveness for the stern measures and leaves. The rabbi, about to collapse into weary sleep, suddenly realizes the jailor has improperly bolted the door, and that it is ajar. Tired, filled with suffering, he suddenly has hope. He slips out of the cell, cautiously makes his way through the dungeon's passages, narrowly avoiding jailors and priests coming by, imagining even that he has been seen, only to realize that the eyes he thought he saw looking at him were reflections of his own. He reaches the door to freedom at last, praying thanks to God for a miracle, and goes through, seeing beyond the beautiful gardens. At that moment he feels himself tightly embraced. It is the Grand Inquisitor himself who is holding him, who has exercised this final torture, of *hope*, upon him. "What, my son!" he murmurs, "On the eve, perchance, of salvation -- you wished to leave us?"

2. For background into Symbolism, as well as a summary of "Axel", I am indebted to "Axel's Castle", a group of essays by Edmund Wilson, Scribners, 1953.

3. "Cruel Tales", intro & translation by Robert Baldick, Oxford Press, 1963

THE LABORATORY OF HALLUCINATIONS

(Le Laboratoire des
Hallucinations)



In "The Bienfilatre Sisters" the irony is in an inversion of mores. Thus, the sin of a prostitute is not her profession, but her love for a penniless student. Dying, she sees money in his hand; not knowing it is meant for his examination, she dies happily, thinking "He's shelled out!" The cruelty here is to the reader's notions of romantic and faithful love.

In "Vera", a beloved young wife has suddenly died. In an atmosphere reminiscent of Poe, the bereaved husband, a nobleman, shuts himself into the mausoleum with her coffin all day. Leaving, he throws the key into the tomb, and retires to her death-chamber at home, preparing to spend his life there, as though she were with him. As time passes, she seems indeed to be there, the room fragrant with her prescence. However, when he recalls unhappily that she is dead, his ecstasy vanishes, and the room is suddenly dull. He pleads to her memory to tell him how to reach her, and then a shining object falls from the bed. It is the key to the tomb.

Another nobleman, "The Duke of Portland", in a moment's bravado and generosity is doomed to a life of privacy -- and leprosy.

A genuine satirist, he also writes with ironic humor. In "Two Augurs" he demonstrates that only a literary nincompoop can gain success, when a writer sells his manuscript, insisting on and solely on the basis of his own incompetence, since everyone else is "known" already, and he is therefore valuable. Thus, it takes incompetence to be printed. "The Glory Machine" and "Celestial Publicity" approach science fiction. In the former, a machine stirs audiences to confer glory upon a playwright, a satire on clagues; in the latter, advertising is projected into the night skies, which would, Villiers wryly points out, otherwise be wasted on poets and lovers.

However, the ultimate message of the writer and the Symbolist movement is best found in his prose-poem, "Axel", a floridly romantic work, and his last. All the devices beloved to melodrama are present, but heightened in intensity and mood. Young Axel, the hero, pale, mysterious, living in an ancient, isolated castle which hides a treasure. A young noblewoman, Sara, the heroine, has just narrowly escaped being forced into the vows of a convent. Within that convent, in a book which had belonged

to Axel's mother, Sara discovers the secret of the treasure, and now she steals into the castle, presses a dagger-point into a heraldic death's-head, and the treasure is revealed. Axel, however, has been watching her. She fires a pistol at him, only wounding him, after which she attacks him with the dagger. He wrests it away, and, in a moment of intimate physical contact, they fall in love. From fighting they quickly turn to discussing breathlessly the great and full life they will lead together.

Then Axel asks why they should try to realize the perfection of such grand dreams; only in dreams themselves is it even possible. "Our existence is full -- and its cup is running over! What hour-glass can count the hours of this night! The future? ... We have exhausted the future.." To complete the perfection they have already known he proposes they kill themselves at once. Sara suggests a single night of rapturous love, but he persuades her to take poison with him, and they perish in intellectual ecstasy.

It is, after all, not an uncommon belief that Reality cannot compare to Imagination and Expectation. Edmund Wilson, whose "Axel's Castle" has provided this synopsis, describes the book as a *fin de siècle* "Faust", and it is indeed the essence of the Symbolist movement; such philosophy would be echoed in Mallarme, Rimbaud, Huysmans, Joyce and Proust. Cruelty, horror, terror and love alike become part of this reaction to rationalism.

Maurice Level was born in 1880. He would eventually become a surgeon, a contented, fulfilled man, sportsman, Chevalier of the Legion of Honor, scarcely a successor in *contes cruels* to Villiers, it might seem. However, in the many short stories he regularly contributed to the Paris newspaper, *Le Journal*, as well as in his novels, he exploited with sharp vision the same irony and sense of the cruel within Man. His sensitivity toward the human mind and his sympathy for the motivations of people are always evident, but most successfully so in the Guignol manner, where they became exercises in terror, with revenge, death and madness roaming their pages. The Grand Guignol itself adapted a number of the stories into plays, and, today, decades later, the brief, terse stories with their wrenching climaxes appropriate to their function as newspaper fillers are still effective shockers. ⁴

The flavor may be realized from a few summaries. In "The Test" a man is confronted by authorities with the body of the woman he has been accused of strangling. Protesting his innocence, he is told to place his hands on the bruise marks. When he does, the mouth of the woman falls open, and a dreadful fly emerges and fastens itself to his lips. He screams out his confession.

Sentiment and irony are part of "Blue Eyes", the name of a prostitute who is sickly and sad since the execution of her lover for murder. Seeking to buy flowers for his grave, turned down by most men and short of money, she finds a man at last. She takes him to her room, hearing jeers behind her from the other women. She uses the money to buy flowers, and tearfully places them on the grave. Later she learns her client was "Le Bingue .. you know, the Executioner."

A farmer is methodically slicing his scythe into the tall wheat in "In the Wheat", tortured by gossip about his wife and the landowner. He hears their voices before him in romantic talk as they lie hidden in the wheat. He swings the scythe forcefully -- and bloodily.

Pure Guignol is "A Last Kiss", with graphic detail the theatre would lovingly recreate

⁴. Maurice Level's stories were published in several collections in English, all long out of print. They may, however, often be found in anthologies. Boris Karloff's "And the Darkness Falls", World Publ.Co., 1946 has several as well as a brief biography. I also used Level's "Tales of Mystery and Horror", McBride Co., 1920.

to the last detail on stage. A woman has blinded and scarred her deserting husband with vitriol. After his generous defense of her during her subsequent trial, she is moved by pity and comes to see him. He is gentle and reminiscent and begs for a last kiss. As he clutches her tightly she grows frightened. It is with good reason, for he has a bottle of vitriol, and as he pours it over her he tells her what it will do to her pretty face.

The terseness of the short stories is not possible in a novel, but the same elements are present. "Those Who Return" concerns an ineffectual young man who lives with his long-widowed father, a cold martinet. Since the son is given to peculiar moods and dreams, the father plans to put him into an institution. Instead, the boy demands to be given a property and house left by his mother. Once there, as though driven by her ghost (no ghost actually appears) he discovers, to his gratification, that he is actually the son of an elderly and gentle lover with whom his mother had lived here, and that the man who would later marry her and act as his father had actually murdered that other man here. He has his father visit him, and confronts him with the evidence he has uncovered. The older man is morally distraught and tries to buy his son off; however, the boy seeks to satisfy his long-smoldering hatred in a drawn-out revenge. It is an unwise decision; the old man, always firm of purpose, regains his self-control, and is about to regain the upper hand when, in a physical struggle, the young man stabs him to death, hacking away at the body in his hatred.

Unlike the short stories, the writing is slow. The constant exclamations, unexceptional in a short piece, are no substitute for characterization needed in a novel. All that goes before is simply buildup for a very bloody climax in the Guignol manner.

Finally, for the pleasure in the perverse which Level at his best can offer, mention must be made of "A Maniac", a gentleman who detests to watch suffering, yet hopes to observe disaster, and "The Kennel", wherein a husband exacts a frightening revenge upon his wife and her lover. The observation is keen and the writing is brilliant, vicious and Gallic. In the game of Irony and Horror, they are matched only by the best of the American writer, Ambrose Bierce.

Like Level, many of Ambrose Bierce's short stories were written for newspapers, where the horrific elements made an immediate impact. The use of madness and death for abrupt shock is the essence of Guignol; however, underlying most of Bierce's work, and particularly his war stories, is his cynicism and even pessimism. They confer on his work his particular flavor.

Bierce was only 18 when he enlisted in an Indiana Union regiment in 1861. He was to remain an active soldier, reconnaissance agent and map-maker until, in 1864, a bullet creased his skull and put him out of action.

What he had seen and done

Dear Donn,

2/8/78

The postman managed to stagger thru the snows today & a nice letter from Roald Dahl arrived- containing an embarrassing rejoinder to me too! I quote:

"Many thanks for sending me FARRAGO No.6, with your really excellent piece on me. The essay was marred only by the fact that my Christain name was spelt wrongly not only in the title, but all the way through. This doesn't worry me too much and as my secretary says, RAOLD is better than RONALD. But I am mystified as to how somebody who has done as much research as you obviously have can let something like that happen. However, as I said, it is a splendid piece of work, and as a matter of fact will be very useful to me when I have to try and answer the numerous requests I get from students who are writing papers or theses about me and want information. I will tell them to write ((to FARRAGO)). Thanks again anyway for paying me the compliment of writing this piece."

Would you believe, in all my double checking, I never checked my assumption of the spelling of his name! I apologize to Mr. Dahl and to you, my editor! Kindly print this belated, red-faced (red-headed) correction.

---Ben Indick

would influence his finest war stories. He followed his old general out West after the war, adventured and made maps, and, when he was unable to gain the full military commission he sought, turned to journalism.

He would spend much of the rest of his life on magazines and newspapers, writing columns and editing, developing his ironic style, as well as selling stories and books. In 1913 he went to Mexico, then in the throes of revolution, and vanished. He has long since become a controversial figure, his sardonic writing being confused with his own life (he was blamed for the death of his son, although this was the result of a gunfight over a girl.) His satiric epigrams in his "Devil's Dictionary" must have made him seem akin to Satan. The stories and rumors concerning his disappearance became permanent legends, which Time has neither proven or disproven. In American letters, he holds a permanent position with others of his period, such as Poe, Melville, Hawthorne and Twain. Within each of these writers, something of the current of the period finds reflection, as they viewed the tensions and grim humor of life.

His many short stories have been categorized as tales of Horror, War and Tall Tales.⁵ While the last are usually humorous, the others are actually less easily differentiated in their essential elements; nearly all involve terror and death. His characters are better acquainted with motives of hate and revenge in the pure horror tales; the Civil War stories depict the blind and insensate evil of war. In all, however, powerful irony is his favorite instrument, and the Guignolesque tactic of springing it at the climax is also his.

Madness as the element of horror is present in "A Watcher by the Dead", an unusual variation of the classic frame wherein a man offers to spend a night in a haunted house, and in "The Man and the Snake", wherein a man is driven insane by his own fears of a supposed snake which is revealed as a toy at the end. Death itself is the horror in "John Mortonson's Funeral" when a coffin is suddenly upset and a cat leaps out from beneath the corpse, and "Moxon's Master", when an automaton chess-player, unable to accept defeat, murders its human opponent. Hypnotism, a new science exploited in straight Guignol fashion by Poe in "The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar", becomes a series of shocks in Bierce's "In the Realm of the Unreal". There is even a further example of reverse Guignol in "A Fruitless Assignment" when the protagonist, a reporter in a haunted house with more than its share of spooks, reports back laconically to his editor that "nothing happened." Mutilations - missing limbs or toes - are utilized to work out the plots in "A Vine on a House" and "The Middle Toe of the Right Foot", although in the discovery of these missing limbs rather than their actual dismembering lies the difference from the theatrics of Grand Guignol, as we shall see later.

War is the most terrible of Man's self-inflicted horrors, and Bierce's war stories, some fantastic, nearly all heavily ironic, exploit and explicate this. The most powerful among them succeed because they emphasize the destruction of the personal and family bonds which are the most meaningful of Man's relationships. In at least three- "The Affair at Coulter's Notch", "A Horseman in the Sky", and "The Mocking Bird" - military duty compels someone to kill a member of his own family. The most moving of his war stories, made unforgettable by the climactic guignol, is "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge", the tragic horror being played against the love a doomed spy holds for his wife and children.

Bierce employs a different type of irony in "Killed at Resaca", wherein the devil-may-care bravery of an officer is finally shown to have been due to an accusation

5. An excellent commentary and biography by Ernest Jerome Hopkins accompanies his excellent edition of "The Complete Short Stories of Ambrose Bierce", Doubleday, 1970.

of cowardice by his sweetheart. After his death, a comrade returns her last letter to the officer, handing it to the woman. Seeing the stain of blood upon it, she flings the letter into the fireplace. "Uh! she says, "I cannot bear the sight of blood! How did he die?" The soldier retrieves the letter, sacred to him, and stares at the woman, who had goaded his friend to his death, thinking he had never seen anyone as beautiful as this "detestable woman." Finally he replies: "He was bitten by a snake." It is a brilliant double entendre, jarring and apt.



Text (c) 1978 Illustrations (c) 1923 Hans Flato Studio

II THE GRAND GUIGNOL THEATRE

There was nothing like it before; there has been nothing like it since. Strangulations, limbs chopped off, eyeballs gouged out, faithless wives and faithless husbands suffering exquisite revenges, rampant madness, all enthusiastically enacted live on stage for the pleasure of the audience, which, like all audiences, had paid for its tickets and was now receiving its entertainment. In front of all the mayhem and violence, it could relax, knowing it was make-believe, that the eyeballs would pop back, that the rivers of blood were merely some red liquid, that, at last, the actors would smilingly take their bows, and, outside, below the charming hills where the Theatre sat, the lights of Paris twinkled on. One could imagine a smug burgher moralizing that while they had merely enjoyed a vicarious thrill, the *real* thing might well be going on behind some of those distant lights.

"Guignol" is the name of a French marionette hailing from Lyons, and corresponding to the English "Punch" of the familiar Punch and Judy shows, with their knockabout, physical comedy. Identification of the puppet with a rough action as well as an innate slyness may have led Oscar Metenier of Paris to inaugurate in 1895 a theatre which would alternate plays of fear with others of laughter. The name may also be a pun: in the French theatre, a "guignol" is also a small room beside the stage, with

a mirror and washbasin, used for quick changes and repairs. When a friend offered Metenier his studio near Montmartre, the artist's quarter, as a theatre, its diminutive size offered the pun on the guignol room. With Gallic irony, it was decided to name the new little theatre Le Grand Guignol.

The public did not immediately respond, but a playlet by Metenier, "Lui" ("He") proved an attractive novelty. However, it was a characteristic shocker, "Le Systeme du Docteur Goudron et du Professor Plume" (described at the beginning of this essay) which was the ice-breaker. It was a great hit and remained part of the repertory, performed abroad in trips by the troupe also. Thereafter the theatre was a success, and would remain one with Parisians and tourists, for whom a visit to the City of Light was incomplete without the grue of its little playhouse in a "gloomy little building that shrinks back into an alley off the dark-shadowed, stubby Rue Chaptal, eight or nine stonethrows from the Montmartre region of Paris."⁶

The earliest plays were taken from police files; indeed, one of the founders was a police official. The format quickly decided upon, and thereafter adhered to, was a program of three or four one-act plays. The piece de resistance would always be a thriller; however, there would be spicy farces, novelty playlets and little dramas as well. For the thriller in particular, the distinguishing characteristic was that the "act of violence was committed in plain view, instead of being faked or done offstage, and the act's attendant characteristics (such as a gush of blood) were all allowed to happen on stage in all their shining gory (sic)."⁷

The prime writer for the theatre was Andre de Lorde, himself an affable, inoffensive individual who demonstrated the essence of fear in over one hundred plays, and was pleased to be known as "The Prince of Terror". In the thousands of scripts which accumulated in the files and repertoire of the Grand Guignol, there were works by, or based on stories by such literati as Jean Cocteau, Michael de Ghelderode, Sacha Guitry, deMaupassant, Oscar Wilde, Strindberg, Beckett, Zola, Poe, Ionesco, Courteline, Pirandello, etc. De Lorde himself is described as having haunted "hospitals that specialize in disorders of the brain, in search of dramatic material." No doubt many of the other scripts dealt with similar esoterica.

Something of the unique flavor of the theatre may be obtained from summaries of several of its plays. These are quoted or paraphrased from a 1923 program¹. The tantalizing climaxes are left unwritten for the reader's imagination:

"The Grip of Death"

The Hardouens, father and son, were country people before attaining their fortunes.

6. Information on Le Grand Guignol Theatre was gleaned primarily from the Theatre Program (see footnote #1). More background was obtained from the Oxford Companion to the Theatre. Thanks also to the splendid collection of the Museum of the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center, N.Y. and its parent library, the great New York Public Library. Here I found not only the scarce books I used, but yellowed newspaper clippings (too often without date or reviewer's name, but nevertheless useful.) Very useful was commentary and plays in Eliot Crawshaw-Williams' FIVE GRAND GUIGNOL PLAYS, Samuel French, 1924.

7. In the Lincoln Center collection, I found a delightful and enlightening letter from Barry Richman, spiritual heir and director of the Theatre, who has permitted my use of several of his lines. He has not given up hopes for a revival here.

1. Refer to footnote #1 on the first page of this essay.

The son, a man of 50, has married against his father's will, Rose, a farm girl, and is madly in love with her. But Rose has a lover. The husband goes away to Paris, and workmen are called in to repair the cellar. The husband returns and starts down the stairs for a bottle of wine. His father, speechless from paralysis, looks on but cannot warn him, and the son goes to his death. As he falls, Rose, who is watching, screams and falls on her knees beside the paralyzed man. Suddenly the old man regains control of his muscles and

"The Dead Rat"

An old Russian general, living a life of dissipation in Paris, has met a girl and is in love with her. As they dine, he is unaware that she is the sister of a revolutionary who had been tortured and killed under the general's regime as governor in Moscow. As he becomes progressively drunk, she reveals who she is -- and quietly and quite awfully

"Anguish"

A sculptor, Datesse, takes a place in Montmartre. The studio has been left precisely as its former owners had left it. Suddenly the lamp blows out for no apparent reason. His model is medium who then conducts a seance which reveals that a woman had been killed in this room. Datesse and an associate break open a large block of plaster and discover

"The Laboratory of Hallucinations"

A great brain specialist and surgeon has lost all his human sensitivities, and his wife is wretched. She steals away with one of her husband's friends. Unfortunately, they have an accident, and the man's skull is fractured. The doctor, meanwhile, has learned of their elopement and has determined, in operating on the man, to leave him insane. The woman, however, learns his plans. Together with her lover, she manages to seize the doctor and place him upon the operating table. In a most terrible manner, they then revenge themselves by

TO OFFSET SUCH GRIM FARE, the evening's program would include light farces. Their quality was often no less hectic and emotional, but they were of a comic nature. Thus, in 1898, in Georges Courteline's "Les Boulingrin"⁸ a man visits a married couple, thinking to gain free dinners. Instead, he becomes an unwilling intermediary to their incessant quarreling, and is variously punched, kicked, slapped, has his clothes torn, is doused with soup, drenched with water, and shot. All of these indignities are intended for one spouse upon the other. Finally, with the house in flames, he still cannot escape, as his hosts offer him champagne. It is a standard slapstick act which is still a part of comedic theatre.

A comic playlet which incorporates that favorite site of the theatre's plays, an insane asylum, is "Bronze Lady and Crystal Gentleman." To escape his shrewish wife, a man feigns insanity, saying that he is made of crystal and that the least jar will break him. Free at last, within the sanatorium, he paints happily. His wife, however, lonely for him, pretends she is a woman of bronze, and she too is accepted as a patient. Realizing that he has been outwitted, he confesses the truth to his doctor. The doctor, considering both, decides they are both truly

8. "Les Boulingrin" is an intentionally silly name chosen for his argumentative couple by Courteline. It translates as "The Bowling-Greens", and in his English adaptation, Eric Bentley used "The Cornfields" as their name. The play appears in his anthology, LET'S GET A DIVORCE, Hill and Wang, 1958, a collection of French farces.



Illustration on this page is descriptive of
THE DEAD RAT, ROOM No. 6

insane, and so both are placed under permanent restraint.

THE THEATRE CAME ON OCCASION to America. In 1923, under the sponsorship of the Selwyns, it played a full season in New York City, in French for the most part. This language may have proven an insuperable handicap for some critics, and in general it did not fare too well. One critic wrote: "The Selwyns have done no service whatsoever in bringing over this little 'theatre of horror'." John Corbin, writing in the New York Times that year, compared the Theatre to Poe, whom it regarded as its spiritual father, and found it did not equal the "mystic soul so potent in 'Fall of the House of Usher'." He decried a "lack of atmospheric illusion, a bare tawdry stage, crude lighting ... emphasis on dialogue that is terse and rapid rather than imaginative, upon acting that is physically emotional rather than spiritually illusive."

In 1927, Alexander Woolcott, a formidable critic, reviewed an attempt to establish an American Guignol with a version of a repertory favorite, "The Last Torture". He wrote: "A noisy, violent sketch of a night in a French Consulate during the Boxer uprising... machine guns firing, shrieks, maniacal laughter are heard with terrible descriptions of torture -- eyes gouged out, breasts torn off, nails plucked from fingers. One even saw one mutilated fellow run in with his hands cut off. Thereafter the play began to be disagreeable..."

Grand Guignol, not a success in America, did, however, catch on in England in the Post-World War I period, although one of its prominent writers, Eliot Crawshaw-

Williams, complained that the censor (the Lord Chamberlain, an office then still effective) would not allow plays with what he considered the true flavor of the French theatre. "Such plays do not demoralize the French," he noted acidly in an introduction to several of his own plays.⁶ Nevertheless, the British theatre had to downplay the gorier aspects. In his own "E. & E.O.", a comedy of a dying man of wealth, his wife and her domineering mother, involving the replacing of the dead man by another, so as to write a new will, the grue is the stuffing of the body into a cabinet; and, after all the chicanery is nearly finished, and an innocent solicitor about to leave, the sudden accidental ejection of the corpse is the climax.

It was played in America as well, but the differences between the British and French styles are quite obvious. The same series, for example, featured "L'Horrible Experience", which fared better than most with New York critics. In this shocker, a noted French physician experimenting with an electrical device to restore life applies it to his daughter, just killed in an accident. With a convulsive jerk, the daughter is galvanized into the semblance of life, her reviving arms reach out -- and choke her father to death.

If performances abroad were rare, the original flourished for many years. In 1962, however, the old doors closed for the final time. Time and the infinite capacity of Man for inhumanity had caught up with it. A critic noted that the "simulated gouged eyes, severed limbs, and blood baths seemed tame after the concentration camps."

III POST-GUIGNOL

The closing of the Theatre is scarcely the end of Guignol. It has always had its literary adherents, those discussed herein as precursors, and in some of the work of the artists we have previously examined in Farrago: Saki, Collier and Dahl. However, simply to list a few is to give some idea of how many others there have been.

For instance, Bram Stoker's "The Squaw", the particularly awful and bloody revenge upon a man who had killed a kitten. Michael Arlen's "A Gentleman from America", with its climax of violence and incurable madness. Lord Dunsany, whose moment of grue, following a ghastly tale, is revealed along with the relevance of his "Two Bottles of Relish." Ray Bradbury's "Small Assassin", whose infant murderer faces Justice in the form of a "shiny scalpel." H.P. Lovecraft's "The Rats in the Walls", whose ending is as grisly an example of cannibalism and madness as exists in the genre. David H. Keller's "A Piece of Linoleum", wherein the dripping blood from a suicide's wrist upon a rug is counterpoint to the whine of his wife that he had not the courtesy to do it over linoleum. Robert Bloch, past master of the art, frequently adding a soupcon of humor, but, in "Yours Truly, Jack the Ripper", revealing the murderer and his latest killing in one shocking denouement.

Guignol of a sort, mostly without humor or elegance, was spread across the pages of various "horror" and "mystery" pulp magazines of the 1930's. It specialized in a sexual sadism invariably featuring helpless females submitting to ludicrous tortures, and nearly as helpless heroes who usually saved them by luck or other deus ex machina happenstance. In Mindret Lord's "The Dinner Cooked in Hell",⁹ guests are served, unknowing to themselves, a dinner consisting of human blood and flesh. They later see the mutilated remains of the (female) corpse, are themselves tortured, and finally saved by the happy explosion of a gas burner.

⁹ Mindret Lord's short story first appeared in STARTLING MYSTERY MAGAZINE, 1940, and I read it in Tony Goodston's anthology, THE PILPS, Chelsea House, 1970.

In Russell Gray's "Burn -- Lovely Lady"¹⁰, a newly married couple is tortured, the wife being forced to agree to two hours of torture to win their freedom, involving insertions of needles, stretching on a windlass, etc. This period of literature, which, because of the whimsical eye of Nostalgia, has recently been revived in reprint editions, is more de Sade than Guignol, but certain aspects are shared. It is, perhaps, the final guignolization of Guignol.

Cinema would obviously be fertile area for Guignol, although there are no curtain calls to reassure the audience that it has been but a game. Thus, until recent years, when more explicit violence has been tolerated, a psychological subtlety conveyed the mood. "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari", first shown in 1920, utilized the site of a madhouse and a shock climax in the genre's style. It remains an effective film. True Guignol was displayed in the staring eyes of a dead man submerged in a bathtub in the French classic "Les Diaboliques" and in Alfred Hitchcock's "Psycho", with the flash of a knife and the swirl of blood into a draining tub-shower. Today the horror is more graphically depicted, in the dead and mutilated man who suddenly appears in "Jaws", the violent and vulgar possession of a child in "The Exorcist", and a veritable bloodbath in "Carrie". With the magical words "The End", the audience arises, shocked, and smiling at their discomfiture, and the dream of Oscar Metenier persists.

If the Theatre itself was finished, it still had, like so many of its characters, a few final gasps. In 1974, there was a revival in Paris of three of its one-act plays. Dr. Guillotine, inventor of that notorious machine, dreams his hands have been chopped off. Awakening with relief, he has his head lopped off by the foot of his bed which has become -- a guillotine. A second play concerns a butcher who eviscerates human derelicts; again, hands are chopped off and the blood flows so freely that first row patrons were provided with large aprons to protect them while they were being spattered! In a final shocker of such a trio as the original Theatre would not have dared to assemble for a single evening's offering, a mad scientist performs a brain operation on his wife who recovers in time to stab her knitting needles into his eyes.

However, it appears that this production was less terrifying than it might have been; the spirit was camp, and spoofs of TV commercials, in a horror vein, were interspersed.

At the First International Fantasy Convention in Providence, R.I., in 1975, a group of Brown University students put on a short play translated from the French, replete with madmen and eye-gouging, bloodied arms, etc. It was staged by Barry Richman, who owns the rights to all Grand Guignol titles and productions, and hopes to establish a genuine American Guignol theatre.

It is true that by this time we are surfeited with real enough horrors on a scale beside which the Guignol theatre pales; nevertheless, one may hope we have not become so blase to horror that we accept a first-rate staging without a sense of shock -- and, finally, amusement at the game. Only in this detachment can we perceive something of the truth which lies within our very selves. To Le Grand Guignol, of yesterday and tomorrow, *voilà!*

10. First appeared in DIME MYSTERY, June 1938; reprint, Jones' THE SHUDDER PULPS, 1975.

THOUGH DR. HILDE L. MOSSE GRACIOUSLY GAVE PERMISSION TO REPRINT HER ARTICLE IN A LETTER OF APRIL 6, 1978, I HAVE NOT AS YET (4/26) RECEIVED A LETTER FROM THE MEDICAL SOCIETY OF NEW YORK. SINCE FARRAGO IS ALL SET TO GO EXCEPT FOR THIS, I SHALL APPLY AN OLD "TITLE" TRICK OF EXTENSIVE CONDENSATION AND LET IT GO AT THAT.

TERRORISM AND MASS MEDIA

HILDE L. MOSSE, M.D.

One cannot understand terrorism without being aware of the role played by the mass media in audiovisual conditioning to violence. True, it is a background role, but still of far-reaching and sometimes crucial importance. The mass media include television, movies, newspapers, magazines, and comic books, particularly when directed to children and adolescents.

FANTASY INTO FACT... The basis for terrorism is human violence. An act of terror consists of killing people or threatening to kill them. Violence (in mass media) has entered homes, in profusion and glorified. This has contributed to the ready acceptance of violence as a means of getting things done. It has moved children in the direction of cynicism, greed, hostility, callousness, and insensitivity. One single television station showed 334 completed or attempted killings in one week. This is the violent intellectual diet of the day.

EFFECT ON YOUTH... Wertham was the first, and, for a long time, the only psychiatrist to point out, as long ago as 1947, that the intellectual and emotional development of millions of children was being endangered by this type of glamorized portrayal of violence, again first in comic books and then on television. I was a member of his Lafargue Clinic group where the original research was done. We used the clinical method because it alone makes possible the study of a person as a whole. When Wertham's classic book appeared in 1954 (Seduction of the Innocent), 100 million comic books were being published each month. This was the greatest publishing success in history. The results of these studies inspired parent organizations to fight against comic books portraying crime and violence. The worst comic books disappeared from the market. Collecting comic books has, however, become a big business, and the worst of them are being reprinted.

Television is potentially the single most important antiviolence device. It makes communication between all people on earth possible as never before. Wertham's research showed that "where communication ends, violence starts." Why is it then that this mass medium fosters violence in such profusion? Fast, gory, and brutal action is much easier to write and portray than are complicated subtleties of genuine and humane human relationships. It takes time, careful reasoning, and emotional restraint to solve a conflict nonviolently. Children are tempted to solve conflicts in real life with fists and weapons.

SPEAKING FRANKLY OR STAMPING ON THE MAIL

BY M A R Y L O N G

At the time of writing, postmarks on letters from my home city (and Gannet stronghold) of Newcastle-upon-Tyne bear the franked notation '*Newcastle Brown Golden Jubilee*' and the famous Blue Star - except it's black. Glancing at this the other day, I thought that whilst many fen collect stamps, probably few even glance at the messages franked over them (the stamps, not the fen) by the post office. After zipping* through such envelopes as are lying around here in Springfield, Illinois, I find that most are from England, so the selection I offer is predominantly from that country.

The post office in York cunningly worked two messages into one statement, with its mention that the WORLD LIFE FUND welcomed the BRITISH WILDLIFE STAMPS which were to be issued on 5 October 1977. Nice one, Posties! And for a change from the ubiquitous, rather brusque, instructions to use the post-codes, Southampton charmingly boasted "SOUTHAMPTON IS A MECHANISED LETTER OFFICE" and then slipped in the plea to "PLEASE USE POSTCODES". Of course in 1977 the Silver Jubilee of H.M. The Queen got into the act all over the country, with postmarks advertising her SILVER JUBILEE APPEAL (to help young people help others) appearing in correspondence from places as far apart as Lancashire, Middlesex and Northumberland - oops, Tyne & Wear!

The Welsh, however, remained enigmatic. For a reason never revealed, West Glamorgan's postmark for a time featured a map of Swansea and the Lliw Valley (at least it looks like the Lliw Valley, the ink is a little smeared there.) But the most famous Welsh postmark would have to be the one which urged us to ship through a certain port, several years back, it being "THE HOME OF THE MOLE WRENCH". And speaking of past postmarks, at one time Banbury featured an illustration of the nursery-rhyme "Lady On A White Horse" whose accompanying message asked us to "RIDE TO BANBURY". A certain fan who shall remain nameless cut this postmark from one of my letters and returned it, suitably altered, suggesting that I "RIDE A BANTH"; he ven amended the horse accordingly!

This year, though, Sunderland asked readers of its postmarks (surely a discerning, somewhat select band, one feels) to invest in that city, whilst the Tyne and Wear County Council wanted us to "LOOK, LOOK, LOOK OUT FOR CHILDREN". Newcastle postal workers must have been busy inventing slogans, since they also came up with a message asking if we had checked the new voters lists to ensure that, if qualified to be, we were included.

America, alas, seems sadly lacking in such gems, apart from the usual zipcode reminders. The sole one I found in this quick survey is Pittsburgh's "NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH WEEK". Canada mysteriously claims that prestamped envelopes are thrifty-conscious (or do they mean the users thereof?) whilst, further afield, Sydney requests us to prevent bush-fires. From New Zealand I have only two examples, but with an economy to be admired, they are on the same envelope: to wit, Wellington and Kilbride. One claims that New Zealand is a "SCENIC VACATION-LAND", and accompanies this statement with a drawing of a kiwi (what, no wombats?) and the other begs us to "SAVE WITH THE POST OFFICE". Two other overseas delights are the Danish heart-drawing with the tantalising message "SLUT OP OM HJERTEFORENINGEN" and the equally mysterious (to me at least) "MUNCHEN STADT WELTBERUHMTER BIERE", which is of course from Germany and looks to be related to the Newcastle Brown postmark, I think.

My favourite, however, is one about which I only heard, but from a very reliable source, years back: "NATIONAL LAMPSHADE WEEK". Getting *that* one would lighten * anyone's day!

**You must know Sam Long!*

ILLUMINATING A MOONLESS NIGHT

an interview with ROBERT CHILSON

+ + + + +

FARRAGO's editor, after reading "Moonless Night" in GALAXY for March, 1978, sent the story's author, Robert Chilson, a series of questions. Some had to do with Rob's general writing habits; others had to do with the particular story. Rather than print the questions dealing with the former, I shall print Rob's remarks as a narrative; and then shift to question/reply format for the specific "Moonless Night" items.

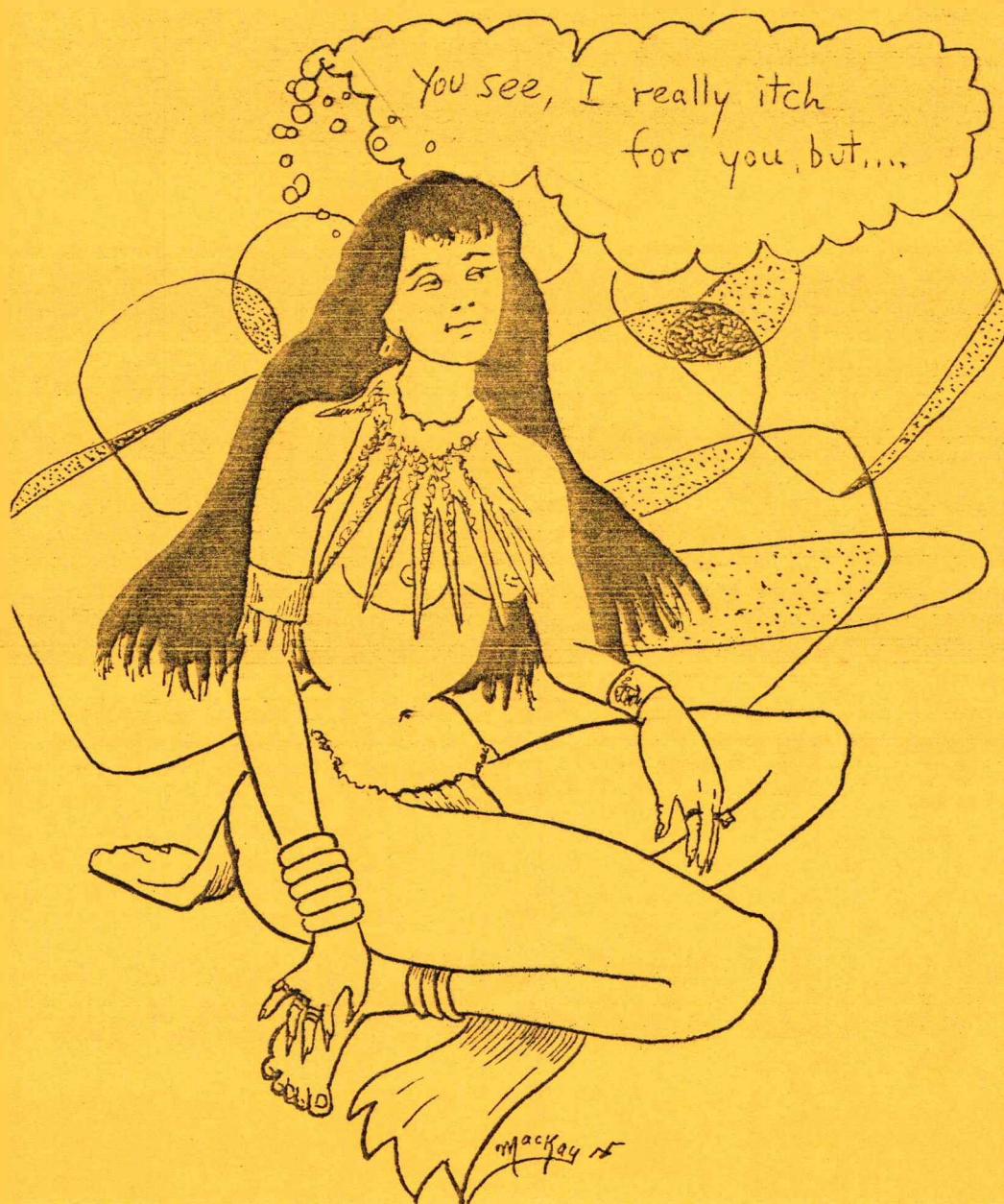
I usually work on one story at a time. Formerly, and occasionally now, I would do a first draft and let it "age", while working on other stories, but I do less of that as my confidence grows. I still like to let some time go by between first & second drafts. Then I write, re-write, and then polish the second draft, which I call a third draft though usually there are few changes in it. And I'm still polishing as I do the clean copy. There may be more drafts in difficult situations; I think "Moonless Night" had more. Let me check... (I note on my calendar what I'm working on each day and how much I did, then save the calendars; also I type up this info on the opus cards.) No; according to my records, "Moonless Night" was begun in March of '76, but for some reason I never completed it till May. (I vaguely recall scrapping the whole first beginning.) Second draft on three days later in May, and I polished it on one day in July, doing no typing (correcting the typescript with a pen), and clean copy in August. I do the roughs on the typewriter; longhand gives me a cramp.

When I was doing my own marketing I would study the finished story and send it to the most likely market (usually ANALOG); I presume my agent does that now. Possibly I would be more successful if I slanted my stories, but, no, I just write the story. Slanted stories would be less successful [*as stories themselves, not the marketing of*]. Before I go anywhere with a story, I have to know what I'm doing. I don't often formally outline, and then only for books. For stories I sometimes jot down a few plot notes, though rarely. But I always know how the story will end, and usually how it begins, before I write it. And I know the *effect* I want to achieve.

FARRAGO: "Moonless Night" obviously hinged on the scientific fact of allergy between alien and human. Did this idea come first? And if it did, did you develop several plots in which the idea might fit?

Chilson: That goes right to the heart of my method for short stories. I have rarely if ever written a story without some intriguing idea in it. Ideas interest me. In the case of "Moonless Night" the idea came first. It's obvious, yet rarely mentioned in SF: that other planets won't necessarily be habitable even if there's life "as we know it" there. Imagine a planet where the goldenrod and ragweed gives you, not runny noses and painful sinuses, but the sort of convulsive shock that penicillin allergy does. One breath and you're dead. I've only seen the problem of protein incompatibility dealt with once, by Frank Herbert, in a story titled "Seed Shock" in ANALOG in '70 Or '71. Larry Niven is aware of it, as he described methods of colonizing new planets in the near future on a panel at MidAmeriCon: they'd have to settled on a large island, he said, big enough for all of them but so small they could hover over it and sterilize it with their fusion rockets. All life would have to be eliminated so earthly life forms could survive there.

Well, that was the basic idea. Any number of things can be done with it. I mused over it for some time. Among other things it made those alien princesses in their scanty harnesses untouchable. And from that reflection it was only a short step to considering the plight of a person who falls in love with someone whose proteins are incompatible.



It seemed to me there were three possibilities: 1) He, and presumably she, could slowly go mad. But that would have given me one of those endless, dull, and meaningless New Wavish things. Furthermore, it wouldn't have been SF. The real interest in it would not be their plight, but their inability to cope with it. A story like that could be set on Earth, now: and that's the definition of space opera: "If a story could be set on Earth (says Damon Knight), it should have been." 2) They could realize the impossibility of their love and part, never to see each other again, lest they go mad. 3) They could realize the difficulties but adjust to them, never touching but frequently seeing and speaking to each other, companions, the Victorian ideal of "pure" love.

The latter solution would not make a story, though. It has little intrinsic drama and no definite ending. IT would be best as a minor plot thread in a novel. In fact, there's a situation very like that in THE STARS MY DESTINATION: one character is so radioactive he can't stay in the same room with anyone for more than five minutes. (How he keeps from spending five minutes in the same room with *himself* I never made out.) His relationship with his woman was difficult, but they made it work -- but not in a short story.

So of course I chose alternative number 2.

Naturally all the cliches of love started tumbling through my mind: June, moon. Lovers' moon. Disappointed love? -- the absence of a moon! A moonless night would obviously be a symbol for disappointed love. Once I had that phrase in mind (and the reflection that there are no moons in interstellar space), I had the ending, Juni staring into the visiplat. That in turn gave me the effect I wanted to achieve, the mood: one of baffled, hopeless yearning. And, too, the realization (as in "The Cold Equations") that the Universe has limits that can't be transcended.

Once I had a title, an ending, and the effect I wanted to achieve, I was in business -- though I did have to scrap that too-lengthy beginning.

(About that discarded beginning-- The beginning as printed began with the "bears" in such a familiar, easy-going way that I asked Rob, exterior to the interview as such, if possibly I had missed an earlier story with the same set of characters. So, finding out now that a "too-lengthy" beginning was discarded, and assuming that the "bears" occupied much of it, I wonder if there's a possibility for a sequel taking place ahead of time with Lalominat before Juni comes on stage & a seed is planted in that episode to make possible a sequel post-time in which Juni can do more than stare into the visiplat? Reason being -- I enjoyed the characters and want to see more of them.)

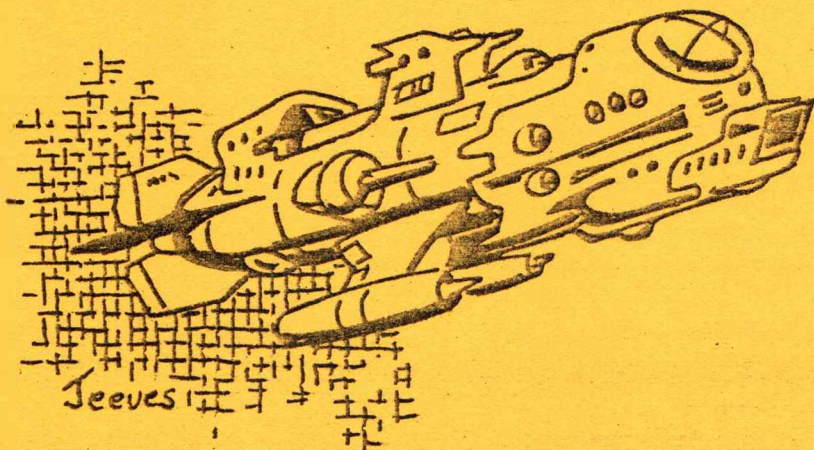
F: In the rather "purple passgae" describing Lalominat's dance you strung a number of images together from nature-- butterflies, fish, leaves, clouds... Is field-and-stream one of your pleasure places?

RC: I was somewhat embarrassed: I don't know anything about dance. An occasional turn on TV, and that isn't anything like ballet, which I suppose her dance must have been. My first attempt was pretty pedestrian, and it was a weakness; this was an important part of Lalominat's personality (as well as an explanation of how they met; such minor details are important). She had to be convincing; more than a mere doll. So I jotted "Bradburyesque" in the margin, and on a later revision I typed up the version that appears here, lifting the good phrases out of the first version and making up others like them. Not that I consciously tried to imitate Bradbury; I didn't imitate his method at all. I wanted the effect he got. My method was to break up the original versions, "She danced like this; her dance was like that.." etc. To get rid of all those "likes",

those comparisons, I broke up the sentences into fragments. That in turn gave a series of flash images in a sort of dance-like rhythm. And of course the images were good in themselves. They came from nature because I'm more familiar with it than with dance; because readers identify with it better (probably more familiar with it). And probably because they are the first things that came into my head. Though obviously I needed images of rippling, rhythmic motion.

F: *I noticed extensive use of words relating to color and images of light and color. Were these purposely written in? Or did they appear subconsciously at first writing?*

RC: If you'll notice, *Firefly* is not described except functionally: mass, number of suites and rooms, speed. Neither is Juni. Lalominat is, and so is Mon-Sil-Mon; so is anything she takes particular interest in.



Many of the usages of color occur in her own speech. Obviously, if the story's point is to be *felt* by the reader, he/she must be a little in love with Lalominat also -- at least, the reader must understand Juni's loving her. So I had to make her charming, vivid, exotic, and both childish and womanly. She's not really strange, you know; she descends from Rima and Rima's sisters in other books, even though I've never read GREEN MANSIONS. So I chose consciously the actual words and phrases, but

the decision to use them was unconscious. It's only now, thinking about it, that I realize the kinship of Rima and Lalominat; a writer hasn't time to ponder these things; he operates by intuition; if it *feels* right, he does it and goes on.

F: *You used two images that seemed to clash, in my estimation, with the story's mood. One, "To hold her would be like gripping a warm-sheathed sword." The other, "She was beginning to drool slightly from the corners of her mouth. She was altogether lovely." Are these, in fact, sly, sexual images. Or what?*

RC: The subconscious takes part in every aspect of creation except -- no, not even except the final polishing -- the choice of this word over that. So these two images could well be sexually based -- certainly the first one. However, both were chosen consciously. Juni is brooding on Lalominat, in the first case. How would it feel to hold her, if only he could. Well, she's slim and small. Presumably she's warm and soft. But she's also a dancer, with muscles like steel -- an athletic woman. The image has to be something strong and steely inside something warm and soft. The iron fist in the velvet glove is quite inappropriate. And her slimness must have suggested the sword. It's a striking sexual image (now that you mention it), made more so when you visualize yourself (as Juni visualized himself) hugging her.

As for the second image, I'm not orally oriented and have little interest in oral sex, so I doubt if this is even subconsciously sexual. Go back to the opening scene. When I wrote that, I had to consider how the allergic reaction would affect a human being: running nose and eyes, rash, burning in the lungs, tendency to cough or sneeze. And a non-human being? Does Lalominat even have sinuses? (Note that her nipples are functionally the same as human's, but structurally quite different. Her "milk" might be colorless and oily, or straw colored; it might contain lumps in suspension. I am always aware that my aliens,

damn it, are *different!*) It was not unreasonable to suppose that her eyes would tear and run. But would she show a red rash? I gave her a yellow flush instead. Itch is also logical. That's a mix of human and non-human reaction; to tip the balance I had her drool instead of having a runny nose. (A human might salivate, but he would swallow.) So this image was chosen consciously long before I wrote that climactic scene.

F: *Is there some subliminal meaning to the name you gave Lalominat's world: Mon-Sil-Mon? Silver world?*

RC: I recall sitting with a piece of paper, trying name after name, built up of monosyllables. I wanted something that sounded right: easy to spell and pronounce, yet distinctive, and definitely euphonious. Remember, Lalominat had to be charming, exotic; everything about her had to fit, including the name of her world. Repetition seemed right, but "Monsilmon" did not. I doubt there's any subconscious meaning here. A better translation of Mon-Sil-Mon might be "Mountain-Forest-Mountain", don't you think? That's at least appropriate for her world, according to her description of it. But it was named before she described it; till I came to write that, I didn't have the foggiest idea what it was like. And when I did, I knew only that I wanted it to be exotic, yet beautiful (remember, we're seeing it *through her eyes*). In describing it, she reveals herself.

F: *Since Juni did not wholly solve the allergy problem, will there be a sequel? Will Juni have adventures on Mon-Sil-Mon?*

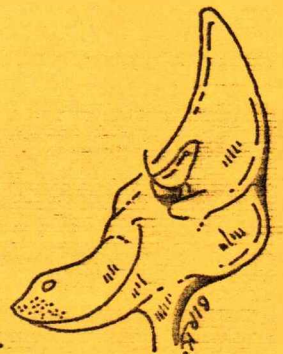
RC: I had, and have, no intention of writing a sequel. The story creates a certain mood, leaves the reader feeling a certain emotion. I don't want to disturb that. Nor can I believe there is an physical solution to their problem. I might some day use such a pair of lovers in a novel, but even if it's set in this universe, it might be incompatible with this. I mean, I'd have fewer problems if I simply used a different couple. So, no, this is it. Don't worry; Juni'll get over it. It took guts to make the decision he did.

F: *Was "Moonless Night" bought by Baen or Pierce?*

RC: Pierce bought this. A tale hangs on that; Paul Walker had been touting me to him for some time before Pierce was tapped for the editor's desk, and Paul immediately suggested he ask for some of my stories. Pierce was agreeable (Paul later told me that he was helping sort through the slush pile, and it was pretty bad), and they called me. I described a few of the stories I had out and twisted my agent's arm to get him to submit "Moonless Night" and, I think, a couple of others.

F: *Thank you, Rob. It was a charming story, and I identified so strongly with Juni's "impossible love" of the dancing Lalominat that I wish you'd said, "Yes, there will be a sequel." Are you sure that the "bear-people" with whom Lalominat is compatible wouldn't be experts in the allergy field, having developed the science in the interests of interstellar trade? Or, damn it, something!*

...now that was
nice.



DEMOCRATIC PROCESS by NEAL WILGUS

President Babbitt faced the TV cameras
and made the announcement
everyone was waiting to hear:

 "My friends,
the time has come when I must make
the ultimate sacrifice
for the good
of our nation.

As you know,
the Congress, the Pentagon,
the major newsmedia
and the heads of our most important
industries
have already made this fateful

decision.

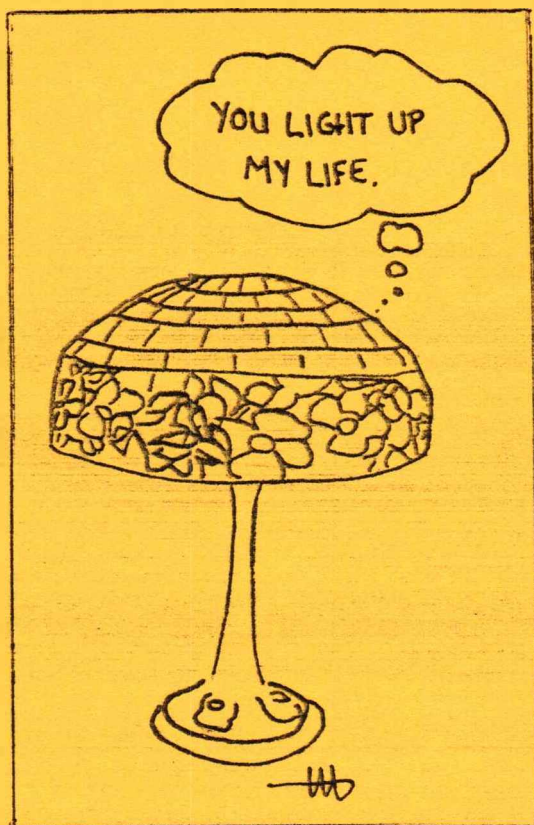
Now I too must join them.

Tonight I say goodbye
to my faithful old body.

Tomorrow my brain will be
transplanted to the control center
here in the White House
which is plugged in
with our far flung bases
all over the world.

I will no longer then be merely a man,
but a Mind guiding the destiny
of the world.

I have no fear, but only regret
that I have but one brain
to give
for my country."



CRAB NEBULA

by

ERIC MAYER

I should've been in court yesterday but I never served the summons. Kathy and I had been sick all month. We were weak. School was starting. We didn't have the energy to drag our landlord through the court system that puts muggers back on the streets before their eighty year old victims can climb out of their hospital beds. What would be the point?

Maybe this city is getting to me.

On New Year's Day, after we'd sent the check for the back rent, we figured it was safe to come home. In Brooklyn Heights the curbs outside the brownstones were lined with discarded Christmas trees.

As usual, no one had bothered to lock the security door in our building. "It's OK," Kathy said when we got up to the fifth floor. "We haven't been robbed this time." Hauling our suitcases up the stairs, we'd both been thinking the same thing.

I turned off the living room light. We'd left it on. Our apartment overlooks a park. It's a gathering spot. You can't be too careful.

Kathy put the Christmas tree lights on. "We're not taking it down yet," she said. "I've hardly seen it." We'd had to leave before Christmas. Now the tree was dry, the branches set in rigor mortis. The birds and animals decorating the limbs hung at odd angles. It still looked good. I've always had a Christmas tree and I always intend to have one, even in New York City with no money and the rent coming due and five foot scotch pines going for twenty bucks. It was nice, sitting together on the love seat watching the blinking lights illuminate the ornaments we'd picked out, taking in the good smell of pine.

The landlord came around after seven. It was late enough so we didn't want visitors. He was probably mad because he hadn't found us home during the holidays. He'd been drinking at his mother-in-law's. When I opened the door a crack I saw him supporting himself against the railing in the hall, glaring like he was ready to kill. His

fists were clenched.

"Well," he said. "May I come in?"

I took the chain off the door and went out into the hall. "No," I told him. "You can't come in. You threatened me last time. You're not getting in again."

"I want my f----- rent," he said.

"It was mailed." He made a face, as if I'd called him a dirty name. He stood up. He was as big as a football lineman. I knew what was coming. He was going to shove up against me and curse in my face at the top of his lungs. It'd never done him any good before. Did he expect I'd grovel? What did other tenants do? Maybe I just don't know how city dwellers are supposed to act. Maybe I don't want to know.

But this time I never got to smell the alcohol on his breath because Kathy had gotten dressed and she shoved past me before I knew what was happening. "Can't you just leave us alone," she said to him. "You've got a lot of gall coming up here all the time. Why don't you spend your time fixing some of the things that are wrong with this place."

I saw the landlord's face get redder than it already was. He started to shake and his fist came up. "Don't threaten me," Kathy said.

Then he hit her.

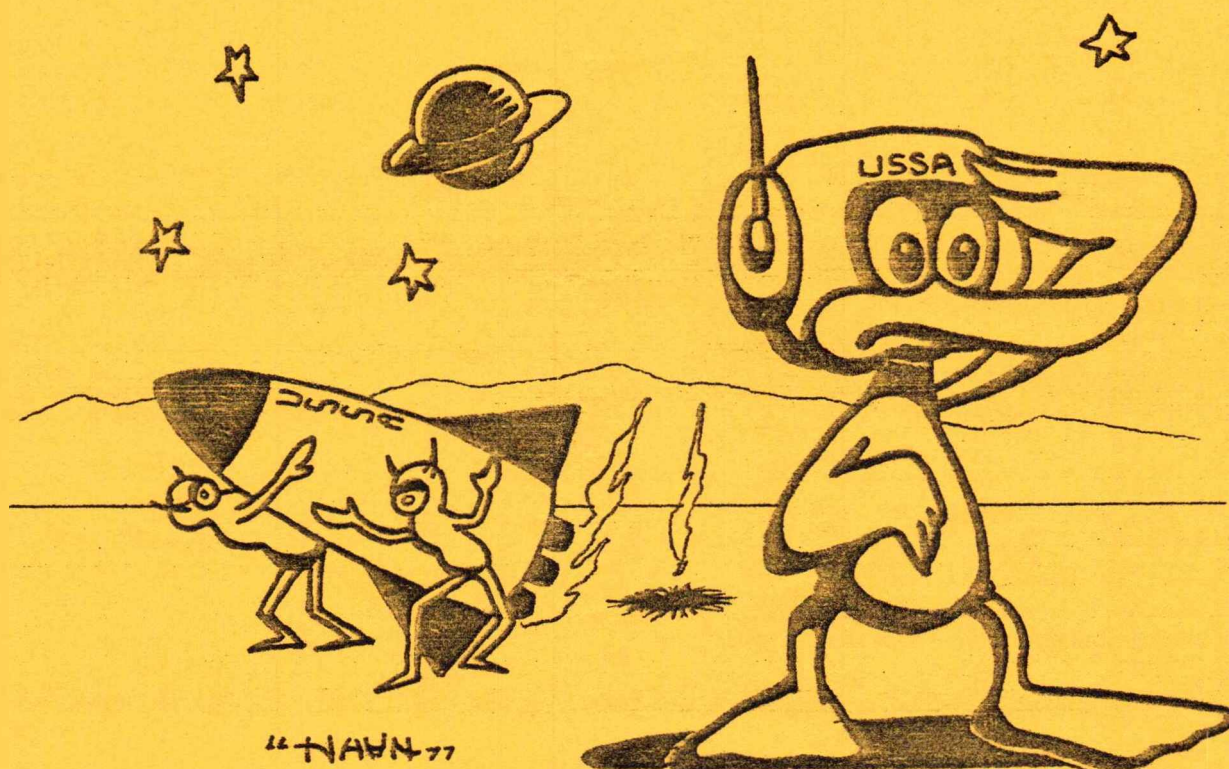
It was lucky he was dead drunk this time. Other times he'd come up a bit more sober. Those times the punch might've landed solid. As soon as he swung he lunged forward and I tried to get in his way. I weigh about 110 pounds and I'm not used to getting in front of 230 pound maniacs. He reached around me and grabbed Kathy's sweater. I tried to push him back. He ignored me. Kathy scratched his face. He wouldn't let go. We bumped into the waist high railing. I could see the dirty tiles on the first floor five stories down. I couldn't believe it was happening. I was yelling at him to get hold of himself but he kept bellowing and pushing and grabbing and shaking his big head like a bull trying to shake off the pict. Even though he was drunk, you could tell by the way he moved that he'd been a street fighter. I was afraid we were all going to go over the railing.

The doors to the other apartments remained closed. It must've sounded too much like a murder in the hallways. Kathy and I had had to report the three burglaries in the building. The other tenants had pretended not to notice the jimmied doors swinging loose in the middle of the day. Now our neighbor turned his stereo up.

We managed to break away. Before I slammed the door shut I saw him lurch down the stairs, looking back over his shoulder, his expression a mixture of hatred and fear at what he'd done and frustration that he had to be afraid of doing what came naturally. You see the same expression on curs you drive away from your garbage cans.

After, we called the police. They were no help. It seemed it wasn't exactly a crime for a landlord to strike a tenant. If we wanted to press charges the justice system would not help us out. A few days later we went over to Manhattan Criminal Court and waited in a cavernous room with a flaking plaster ceiling and plywood partitions, to get the summons we never served. I didn't have the stomach for an empty gesture.

Now I think about our neighbors, too numb and broken to report a burglary, or look out into the hall to check on a disturbance. Too lacking in pride to even lock their own front door. I think about them and hope the city isn't getting to me. Hope that before too long I'll be able to walk out into the woods behind my own home and cut down my Christmas tree for free instead of paying for it out of the rent money.



SNAPSHOTS
BY
MIKE GLICKSOHN

To paraphrase an old cliché, if you don't like the state of fanzine fandom, stick around for a few weeks; it'll change. In my last column in TITLE #73, I mentioned not having enough fanzines to review any but well-known olden goldies. Almost immediately I received more fanzines than I could read and many were either new or new to me. It's almost enough to make me believe that someone reads this column: except that I don't believe in fantasy.

RAFFLES #1 from Stu Shiffman and Larry Carmody, both familiar names to fanzine fans, is most impressive of the new issues. A deliberately fabulous fannish fanzine in the old Brooklyn Insurgents mode, this first issue includes editorials by both editors, fannish columns by Hank Davis -- on cats and Greyhound buses -- Larry again -- on bowling -- and Arnie Katz -- on fannish nostalgia. Two fannish reprints and many superb hand-cut illustrations round out an issue sure to delight the really fannish fanzine fan.

Another dual-edited first issue is NEW MATRIX, from Ira Thornhill and Delmonte, names relatively new to fandom but already quite well established. Number 1 is a small sized offset body inside a larger than usual folder-type cover which makes it somewhat unwieldy if attractively produced.

Editorials, a Wolfenberger ramble, personal thoughts from Pete Presford, well-known English sub-literate who shows here it's mostly a facade, poorly printed pictures from Stven & Don's Con and reviews by C.D. Doyle and Jon Gustafson are included. It's not a memorable first issue, but neither is it forgetable. And the artwork is above average, partly thanks to the clear printing of many book covers and professional illustrations. It should improve, and has made a good if not great start.

Also a first issue, Dave Vereschagin's WHITE SPACE is an attractively offset personalzine-cum-genzine which includes FIRST CLASS 4, Dave's definite personalzine. Main feature of this issue is a parody of some film or other called "Fan Wars" which has its moments but didn't quite work for me in toto. There's an interview with Kelly Freas which should interest anyone who hasn't already read six others, and reviews and short critical articles on Asimov and James Bond (?). FIRST CLASS is Dave talking about his life and his art and people writing in their reactions. It's good-looking and generally interesting reading. Should be a fanzine worth watching.

The last of the first issues and the least is GNOMENCLATURE from Al Curry. A personalzine but primarily just an experiment in putting together a magazine, this first issue hasn't a great deal to it. Al natters about himself and fandom in a pleasant enough way but says nothing really earthshaking. Probably fun for Al and good experience but pretty slight right now.

Tim Marion's been around for five years and SO IT GOES is now in its 15th issue. Tim's overcome some of the repro difficulties that plagued early issues and this is an interesting fannish personalzine. In a long editorial Tim talks about movies, music and SunCon, Pghlange and Philcon. Aljo Svoboda, a blast from the past, has a weird piece about obstinacy and there's a meaty lettercolumn. Typical fannish perzine, recommended for con fans.

Of the better-established fanzines to recently produce new issues, Mike Glycer's SCIENTIFRICTION 9 gets a strong recommendation. A thick attractive fannish genzine, #9 includes a lengthy editorial by Mike about a large number of topics including SF (there are those who consider Glycer one of fandom's best writers; I wouldn't argue with them), Harry Warner's explanation of why he's giving up fan history writing, letters from John Campbell to Alan Dean Foster, fannish columns by Dave Locke, Lou Stathis and Carl Bennett, as well as reviews and letters, plus the funniest comparison of cats and dogs I've ever read. STFR is clearly one of the top two or three genzines extant and should be read by all true fanzine enthusiasts.

RAFFLES 1, 880 W.181 ST, NY,NY,
10033. 40PP,MIMED. USUAL OR
\$1 EACH.

NEW MATRIX 1, 1900 PERDIDO ST,
#B97, NEW ORLEANS,LA 70112.
36PP, OFFSET. USUAL OR \$1

WHITE SPACE 1, RR#2, NEW SAREP-
TA, ALBERTA, CAN. 48PP, OFF-
SET. IRREG. USUAL OR \$1.50.

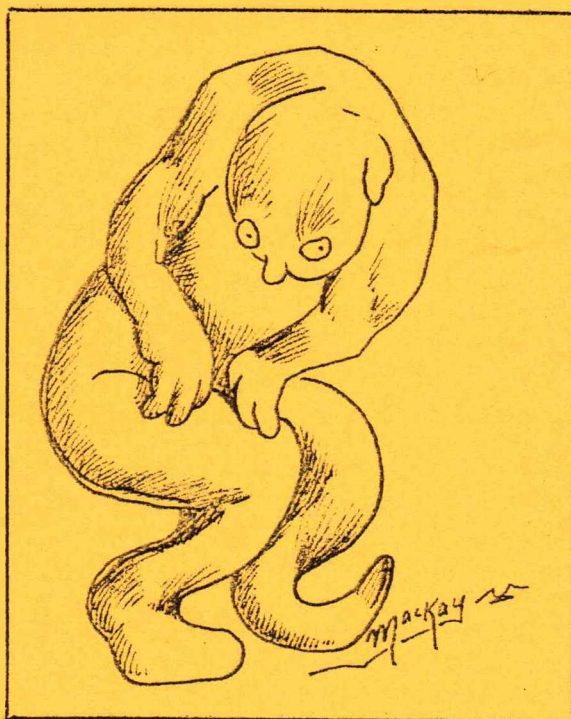
GNOMENCLATURE 1, 3904 W.LIBERTY
ST, CINCINNATI,OH 45205. 20
PP, HALF-SIZED OFFSET. USUAL
OR WHIM.

SO IT GOES 15, 614 72 ST,NEWPORT
NEWS,VA 23605, 38PP MIMED,
USUAL OR 50 CENTS.

STFR 9, 14974 OSCEOLA ST, SYLMAR, CA 91345. 66PP. MIMED.USUAL OR \$1

RUNE 50, 343 E. 19 ST #1B, MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55404. 24PP,MIMED. USL/50 ¢

David Emerson has de-escalated RUNE considerably from the big genzine issues of recent years and it's a shame in a way. RUNE 50 is a slim volume with some good stuff in it but it lacks the punch of the Fred Haskell issues. Main feature of the issue is a two-part look at the last Minicon written by Jackie Causgrove and Mike Blake. Mike really shows how an effective conreport can be crafted. Letters and a good article on Varley by Dave Wixon fill out the issue. Slender issue, but solid. I'd still like to see David do a real genzine sometime.



A P E S T U F F

by

B U Z Z D I X O N

I've often asked myself why these people who claim to have played King Kong or shot him down or any number of other lies do so. Do they fib to bolster a fallen ego? Does fact and fiction blend over the years? Are they expressing a fantasy they've longed to enact?

There has been a great deal of crap written in the popular press concerning KING KONG (all reference to the film are to the original, not the recent pastiche) and I was sorry to see the editor of FARRAGO suckered in by another one. It was evident that Donn loves KING KONG and truly wanted to believe Billy Atwood (who did the piece about shooting down King Kong in FARRAGO #5).

However, most of what Billy said just wasn't so. Forgive me if I sound like I'm trying to demolish him but I love KING KONG too much to let these misconceptions continue.

"They built an exact replica (of the Empire State Building) one-hundred feet high in a big field near Burbank."

According to Orville Goldner and George E. Turner in their book, THE MAKING OF KING KONG, "The four Navy biplanes and their pilots were obtained from Floyd Bennett Field...in flight over New York City." And, "Aerial scenes...were shot from a Curtiss-Wright Travel Air camera plane from Roosevelt Field." Thus the aircraft and their filming were placed in New York not only by Goldner, who was a special effects technician on KING KONG (he's credited in the film along with Willis O'Brien), but by a quote from Navy orders as well!

"There were two Kongs. The one on the building was a man in a suit, but the one in the jungle and the one in the cage on the theatre stage... was a thirty foot model. There were two guys inside it, and they worked it with levers and so forth."

According to THE MAKING OF KING KONG and FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND magazine issues #24-27, Kong was always an animated 18-inch model. There are far too many photos shot behind the scenes to deny animation was used extensively. Frame by frame examination of the film will reveal various clues (strobing, jerky motions,

sudden changes in scenery and fur from frame to frame) indicating animation models. Besides, the anatomy and movements of the various monsters in the film completely rule out any possibility of real animals, men in suits, or hand operated puppets, with the exception of the shots of the brontosaurus overturning the raft -- this was a live-action wire-operated miniature.

Furthermore, Meriam C. Cooper, Ernest B. Schodeschack, Willis O'Brien, and Marcel Delgado have all vehemently denied a man in a suit was ever used. Ray Harryhausen, who worked with O'Brien in two films and was a personal friend (not to mention having seen the film at least 120 times!) claims no man in a monkey-suit was used. I can add visual confirmation to this by stating I have seen several of the dinosaur models and one of the metal skeletons for Kong on display at the fabled Ackermansion.

So where do the claims of having played Kong come from? Several places, actually. A contemporary magazine article claimed this was the case-- the magazine was so ludicrously inaccurate in so many technical details of the film as to make it totally invalid as reference material.

Both Larry Ivie in MONSTERS AND HEROES #4 and Carlos Clarens in AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF THE HORROR FILM state Producer Cooper considered using a real gorilla and Komodo dragons originally but abandoned this tack as impractical. Ivie indicates some test footage was shot but doesn't say where this information comes from.

Charles Gemora is the name most usually associated with Kong-as-monkey-suit. Gemora was a stunt man who specialized in animal roles; usually apes though occasionally a bear or a Martian. Gemora never played Kong but did play a Kong-like ape in an uncompleted musical featurette which parodied KING KONG. In it Gemora played a giant gorilla and a dinosaur. The film's title was THE LOST ISLAND and Goldner provides pictures from the film in his book.

For a long while it was assumed the shots of Kong climbing the Empire State Building and subsequently falling off were done by a man in a monkey suit. Not so. Goldner provides a photo of a technician, Buz Gibson, doing the actual animation of King climbing the building. The scene of Kong falling off was a loose-jointed 18-inch model (in order to have the model fall at the proper speed, the film was speeded up and the set over lit to compensate for the increase; in the film, one can detect a change in print quality at this point). Also, Fay Wray in an interview in the early 1960's on the TODAY show stated the model of the building was 40 feet tall and the model of Kong only 18 inches, thereby confirming Goldner.

There was no 30-foot model of Kong built. A full size bust, right arm, and left foot of Kong were built for close-ups (photos in Goldner's book, as well as photos in FAMOUS MONSTERS and MONSTERS AND HEROES, confirm this). The exact number of men operating the bust of Kong has been stated between 2 and 9, probably there were two actually inside with others operating the lips and eyes from outside the mock-up.

Finally, who actually killed Kong? In reality it was Cooper and Schodeschack as the crewmembers of the fighter-bomber. "We oughta kill the sonofabitch ourselves," they argued and, being the producer and director of KING KONG, who was going to deny them?

I hate sounding so negative, but KING KONG is one of my favorite films and the high-water mark of animation. Credit should be given where credit is due -- not to someone who merely claims he was there.



HOMEBOUND

BY

JEFF HECHT

You are coming home.

After two million years, after two million light years, after seven weeks, you are coming home.

You wanted to be the first to go beyond the galaxy.

There were risks, they told you, and they listed them for days. You listened and you believed, but you wanted it just the same.

They said that you would be a lost molecule, wandering alone in the ultimate vacuum. But you told them that it was not a vacuum, that it was the land between the seas of stars, and that you would be the first fish to breathe the air.

Then they looked at you, and tried to tell you what was and what wasn't. And finally, after due deliberation somewhere in the back rooms, they decided it didn't matter if you were half-crazy.

You had to be half-crazy to want to go, to want to burn two million years in seven weeks, to gamble on a future that might never be.

So they trained you, and built everything they needed to build around you. They chiseled your name in stainless steel

and history books.

They took you out to the edge of the solar system and pointed you in the right direction. Then they wished you good luck and God-speed and sent you out into the night.

In a week....

In nine hundred fifty thousand years....

You were there, a probe, a boomerang launched out into the gulf between the galaxies. You were a lost crab scurrying in a great arc, a flopping fish washed up on the beach. You saw the beach and you remembered how barren beaches always seem, how the empty sand separates the life in the sea from that on the land.

So you looked out on the sands and knew them for what they were. And, as you passed the midpoint, as you started home, you saw far, far in the distance, the trees that hid behind the sand dunes. But you were going so fast that they were only a hint of green on the horizon.

And, on the other horizon, you saw a hint of the full depth, the full being, of the sea.

For when you looked towards the sea -- when you looked towards home -- you saw further than you thought you would, further than you wanted to. You saw beyond home, and there was the sea.

And you knew, then, that you were just a creature of the tidal pools, blooming briefly between the tides. That somehow, inevitably, the sea would rise, that your pool, your home, would be swallowed by the seawater.

And yes, you knew, instinctively, that it was water, and that as a creature of the water, you could live in it. But you knew, too, that it was not home, that it was not yours.

For you are a creature of the shallows, not the depths -- of tidal pools, not ocean bottoms.

And you have turned the midpoint, you are coming home...

To a new world... to an old world.

When you come home, they will listen a moment and call out the distant descendants of psychiatrists. They will write you off as an experiment that failed, and try to loose your vision, for it is a mad vision and they are men of reason. And your vision will lurk in the back of their skulls, simmering with the seed of madness that is in all mankind, laying dormant for a million billion years until the tide rolls in.

And you will live out your days as days, weeks as weeks, and years as years. You will go down to the rocky beach and watch the plants and animals in the catchbasins, watch them as the waves roll in.

A MAN AND A WOMAN
BY
ROBERT E. BLENHEIM

Let me tell you of another time, another place, another soul, another life. Let me tell you while it's fresh in my mind, even if its place in time or its relation to myself is totally unknown. I must tell you now at this particular point in time because it is precisely the moment this entire event exists. Let me tell you now before it is forgotten forever.

Of a sea: let me whisper this for reasons of emphasis, explanation unknown. Water, not blue-green, but of a color denoting a rich innocence that seems unnameable.

Of a beach: sands of warm nobility, sands with outstretched arms toward a life within its beckoning range. Sands trod on only once in all eternity, sands that will always crackle from that Only Once.

Of a girl: a girl of literal fire, of guiltless, glowing, glimmering gold. A girl with an impatient name upon her lips, while her baby-pink eyes still search for the first magnificent return of the gaze of another's. Her head stands rigid, confident, her glassy hair tumbles down covering her fleshy body like a quilt, twisting and turning among the sands.

A lost Lenore? Poe, no; Fini, perhaps.

And not lost; unfound, but not lost.

The day.

Like the return of Atlantis, a dark shape shatters the mirrored surface of the sea and enters this place with a roar. The dark shape's eyes fill with awareness and light. Its feet touch a solid object and its learning begins.

The darkness drops away.

The girl sees the sifting image of the man drift intermittently toward the line separating the sea from the sand, his fingers cutting through the water.

The man, now golden, rises from the sea and his nail-less toes slap the sand before her; at that moment, she is halved, and he has become her other half now being drawn to her like particles of iron to a magnet. His hands pull back on his shoulder-length hair several times, wringing the beads of sweat from their silver strands, and she watches him. He is studying his sleek body, scratching at the perfectly-moulded flesh, stroking his chest and thighs, and reaches his tongue to the roof of his dew-laden mouth. Soon, his attention is directed to the girl, and he gently walks over and slips down on the sand near to her.

They trade looks with each other. Each knows the other is kind of nature and good; each knows that one only exists for the other.

The singing of the sea gently rocks his mind; his eyes expand in order to see the entire horizon, the mesmerizing warmth of the cloudless orange sky burning painfully into his eyes the glory of perfection and peace.

His chin turns to the right and his eyes meet the girl's once more. The scent of her hair seems to brush against him, a scent like cool, crisp nutmeg but a smell he never had the chance to experience before. It was one which he had forever yearned for without realizing it.

She is drooped across a glittering blanket of glassy hair, her skin of pure gold upon it churning with life, dancing with fire, and he feels himself wanting to touch her, wanting their two fleshs to meet for the very first time.

In his limited way, he savors this: the idea of the first contact of their bodies, a first touch that would be lost among an eternity of time, for that was what reached out before them: an eternity of perfection, perfection in every movement, every whisper, every shadow, every sigh, every tear.

Her golden hand slides down into the friendly sands, and sticks there.

A drop of perspiration in his palm? His eyes stare at her unblemished knuckles and he raises his hand in the air and hovers it inches over hers.

So the Moment is here: the First Touch, the beginning of an eternity, the inauguration of an undying flame.

He can feel the heat on his palm and begins to experience her sense of wonder, her innocence, her muted joy.

The man stretches out and his hand drifts down.

"A GREAT TRUTH IS A TRUTH
WHOSE OPPOSITE IS ALSO A
GREAT TRUTH."

- T. Mann



WAKE THE DEAD

BY

MICHAEL BRACKEN

"You're making enough noise to wake the dead," John shouted.

"What?" asked Mark as he silenced the guitar that lay across his lap.

"I said you stink. When are you going to learn to play that thing?"

Mark sat looking up at his roommate and shifted his back against the headstone.
"I'm no professional, but I can play pretty well already."

"Yeah, well, just be glad you've got all these stiffes for an audience. At least they can't boo." John laughed at his own joke and shifted the weight of his chemistry books. "I got to get to class, joker. See you tonight."

Mark watched John disappear across the park, then slowly began to pick out a tune from the open music book that lay in the grass before him. A sudden cold breeze flipped a few pages of the book over and Mark shivered uncomfortably in his university t-shirt. He stopped playing long enough to return the pages to their places, and when he looked up again he found himself facing a very beautiful young woman.

"I like your music," she said in a voice that rivaled the tinkling of silver bells. "Even if your friend doesn't."

"Thank you," Mark stammered. "I didn't know I had any listeners. I mean, well, not too many people come down to this end of the park."

"I know," she said as she crossed her legs and sat in the grass facing him.

Without taking his gaze from her, Mark absentmindedly strummed a few chords from a once-popular love song. "Why are you down at this end?" he asked.

"Because it's so..." She paused a moment to flick a long lock of golden hair out of her blue eyes. "Restful, I guess."

"I feel the same way," he said. "Sometimes it's nice to get away from all the screaming kids and their loud-mouthed parents, and just listen to the birds and maybe play a little guitar."

She smiled.

"Don't stop," she said when he let his hand fall into his lap. "Play some more."

He made a quick effort to tune the guitar and then played a few recent rock-and-roll hits from memory. As he played and sang he watched her rock back and forth with the music, her eyes shut and her lips caught in a seemingly perpetual smile.

"I like that," she said when Mark stopped to rub his sweaty palms on his cut-offs. "Could you play for some friends of mine?"

"Now?"

When she nodded, he said, "Yeah, sure. If you really want me to."

He stood and she moved to take his hand. His arm jerked back as the sudden biting coldness of her fingers on his palm startled him. When her eyes questioned him, Mark said, "I, uh, dropped my pick. Just a second."

He bent over and went through the motion of looking through the grass. "Here it is," he said as he stood and stuck his empty hand into his pocket.

When she took his hand again he was prepared. Even so, he couldn't get over the impression that he was clutching a handful of ice, no matter how soft and pretty the woman.

She led him into the cemetery between rows of graves with old and weatherworn marble and granite headstones. Each one, engraved with an unfamiliar name, seemed older than the one beside it. The shadows they cast were long as the late afternoon slipped toward evening. It was unnaturally quiet and it seemed to Mark that the birds had deserted the area.

Finally they stopped in front of a mausoleum and she told him to sit and play.

"Where are your friends?" he asked as he seated himself on the top of three steps.

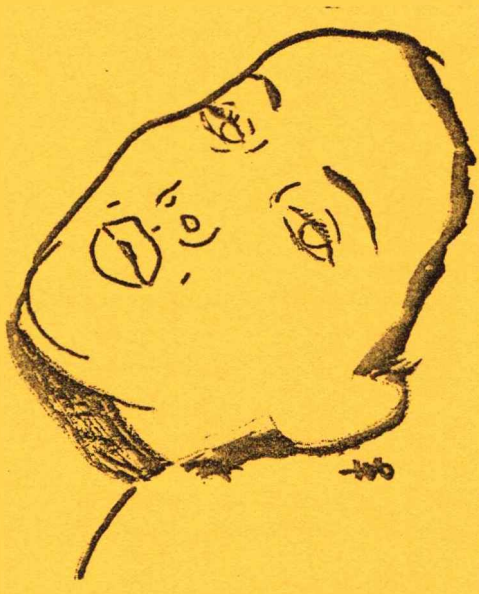
"They'll be here soon," she said, her voice shaking a tiny bit as she glanced at the sky. "Play, now, before it's too late."

Mark positioned the guitar in his lap and asked, "Anything in particular?"

"No. Anything. Just play." She looked quickly around.

He flipped open his music book and began playing the song he'd been practicing earlier, his fingers stumbling over the unfamiliar series of notes.

"Louder."



Mark shrugged his shoulders and slid into a song he already knew.

"Louder!" She was shaking.

He hit the strings a little harder. "How's this?"

"Louder!" She demanded it this time, her voice nearly a scream.

He pounded at the strings, tearing from them every ounce of sound they were capable of producing. "I'm playing as loud as I can," he said. His fingers stumbled over a note. "It's everything I've got to play this loud."

"Then sing!" Her smile was gone, wiped from her face by some unknown force.

He sang, his voice a tin can full of gravel, sometimes using nonsense words when the right ones wouldn't come to his lips, and he beat at the guitar strings with a pick that had already broken in his fingers.

And slowly, as the sun fell from the sky, they came. He couldn't see their faces but as they came they began to dance and clap their hands and sing with him.

Mark laughed and smiled, ignoring the cold chill of dusk. With a quick movement of his arm he was able to wipe away some of the sweat that poured from his forehead and stung his eyes. He licked the sweat away from the corners of his mouth with little jabs of his tongue without breaking the cadence of his words.

And still they came. They came until the crowd had become so large that he could no longer pick out her face. And then he quit looking for her and became caught up in the mad revelry, realizing that they were listening to *him*, singing with *him*, dancing to *his* music. He drifted into an emotional high, forgetting the numbness of his fingers and the ache of his arms. Sometime during the night he passed out, drained of the last of his energy, no longer able to fight off the effects of exhaustion.

"Hey, Mark, wake up."

Someone was violently shaking his shoulder. "Get up, Mark."

He opened his eyes a crack and looked up at the silhouetted form of his roommate, then groaned and sat up.

"What were you doing out here all night?" John asked. "I could hear you clear over at the apartment."

"I was playing for my friends," Mark said as he swung his arm out to indicate the people he meant, but he stopped short when he realized the cemetery was empty and he looked at the gashes and dried blood on his fingertips.

"They must be your friends all right," John said. "Only the dead would listen to you."

"Come on. We've got to get you home."

###

THE PHILIP A. SHREFFLER CONNECTION

OR A REVIEW OF THE H.P.LOVECRAFT COMPANION by P.A.Shreffler, Greenwood Press, 1977
by Donn Brazier 200 pages, illustrated, \$13.95

Too bad this book (or its jacket) does not carry a photograph of the author. A photograph of Shreffler, suitably posed by the photographer, might appear like a saturnine character from a Grand Guignol play. In real life, however, the thick black beard only makes the author handsome and telegraphs the authority he rightly possesses. The twinkling (well, enthusiastic at least) eyes and friendly smile dispel all traces of incipient sardonicism. Even his ironic humor is mellow.

Being a professor of literature at Meramec College, he knows his craft, and has put together a fine essay as part one of the book: "Lovecraft's Literary Theory." This essay, while giving historical and biographical sidelights, emphasizes the influences that caused our beloved HPL to write the way he did, and also why his fiction, on the whole, was so effective in the horror tradition. I was especially taken by this sentence on page 31: *"....strangely, and often against our will, we begin to feel that Lovecraft is not writing fiction, but a hideous version of the truth."* How does a writer achieve this effect? Well, that's part of what the essay is all about; so please buy the book.

The next chapter is a handy reference for the reader who has read Lovecraft and loves his work, yet who is not (like myself) a full-fledged expert. In "The Plots and Sources of the Stories", Shreffler briefly summarizes most of the stories (without giving away the details of the story climaxes) and gives more extended background treatments to some. My first curiosity here was to see if my own favorites were briefly or extendedly treated. In some cases, as with "The Statement of Randolph Carter" and "The Colour out of Space", I was disappointed in finding less than I wanted. Here are the stories with longer backgrounds: "The Call of Cthulhu", "The Case of Charles Dexter Ward", "The Dreams in the Witch-House", "The Dunwich Horror", "The Festival", "The Haunter of the Dark", "Herbert West-Reanimator", "The Hound" (which one would expect, knowing that Shreffler is also "Lord St.Simon" of the BSI and leader of the local Sherlock Holmes group, and all of which gives him the opportunity to draw parallels/influence to "The Hound of the Baskervilles"), "The Shadow over Innsmouth", "The Shunned House", "The Thing on the Doorstep", and "The Whisperer in Darkness".

That chapter is interspersed with many photographs (and maps), taken by the author himself, probably not visible elsewhere and probably taken when Shreffler attended the First Annual World Fantasy Convention in Providence, R.I., in 1975.

Chapter 3 is of use to the Lovecraftian cultist as it lists alphabetically all the characters and monsters identified as to the stories they were in. It reminds me of the remarkably minute detail that the typical BSI knows about Sherlock Holmes.

The last chapter (4) is an essay on "The Mythos Monsters" which I think belongs logically after Chapter One-- but what's the difference!

What else is in the book? Well, a reprint of H.P.Lovecraft's own "The History and Chronology of the *Necronomicon*" - a book I searched the library for about 1940 before I discovered that Milwaukee, despite being the home of Robert Bloch, was not one of the few libraries owning this rare and terrible book. There's also a brief history of "The Order of the Golden Dawn", and a selected bibliography and index.

In my copy, I boast a comic & ironic message in ink (4/8/78) written for me by the author. It ends: *"...who may, in his secret life, be closer to Lovecraft's monsters than any of us suspect."* That's what Shreffler thinks of me. And I treasure his wise perception!

WHERE IS THE MISSING COUNTRY?

HANK HEATH RAN ACROSS THIS
EXERCISE IN MAINSTREAMS IN
MATHEMATICS BY JOHN B. FRALEIGH
AND DONN BRAZIER HAS ADAPTED
HANK'S ADAPTATION.

A continent is going to be split
up into countries according to
the following rules:

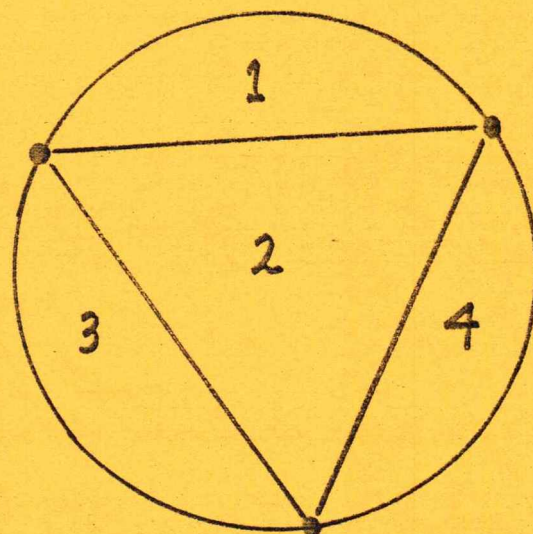
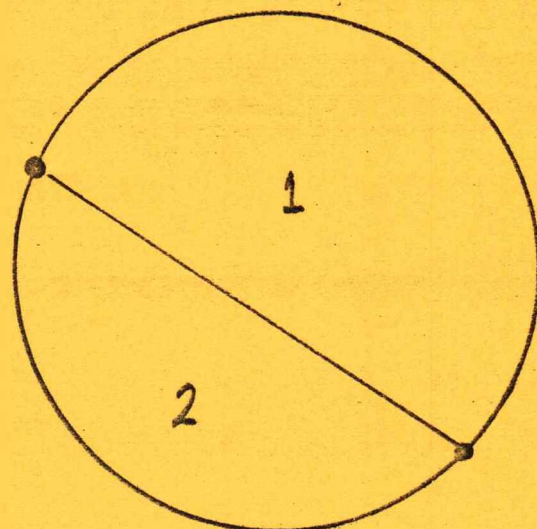
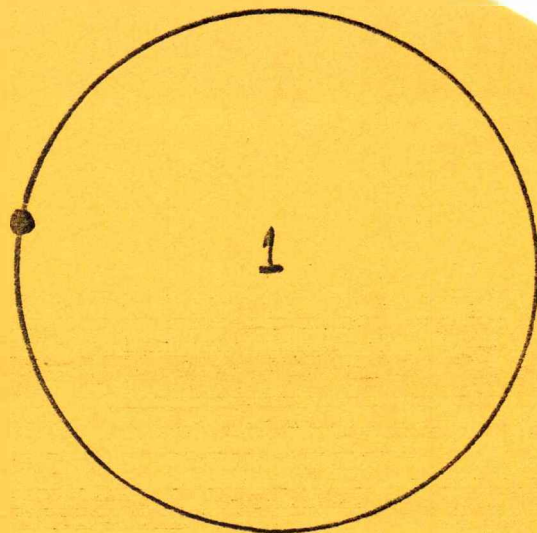
1. *Start with one point on the edge of the continent; connect it to any other point with a chord.*
2. *Add one more point and join by all possible chords.*
3. *Keep adding points and connecting with chords until six such points are joined.*
4. *Be careful that each chord crosses only one other chord; i.e. three or more do not intersect at one place.*

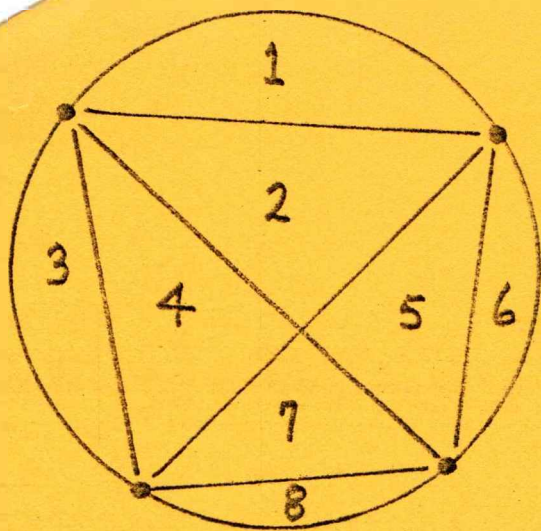
On this page the first three steps are shown:

One point	=	One country
Two points	=	Two countries
Three	=	Four countries

Seems obvious that we are beginning the series:

1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32,





As we would expect, four points gives us eight countries.

Moving down to the next division of the continent of CORFLU, we see that five points gives us sixteen countries.

Exactly as we suspected all along.

Now, Emperor Splrfsk says we have come to our last step. "We will now divide CORFLU into our 32 countries by connecting six points all to each other with chords that intersect each other only one time, okay?"

As a reminder, you see:

One point	=	One country
Two points	=	Two countries
Three	=	Four
Four	=	Eight
Five	=	Sixteen
Six	=	Thirty-two

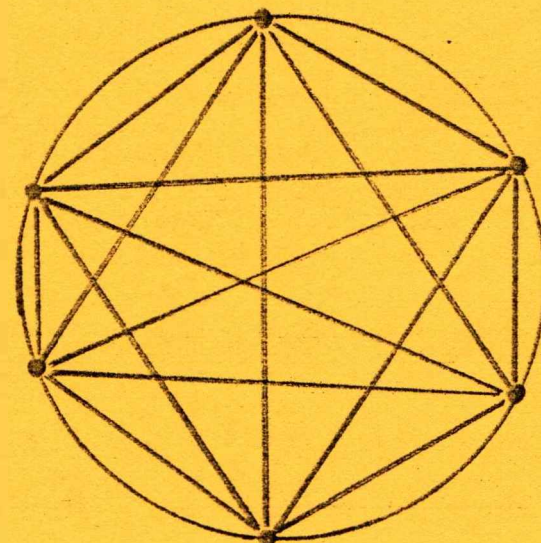
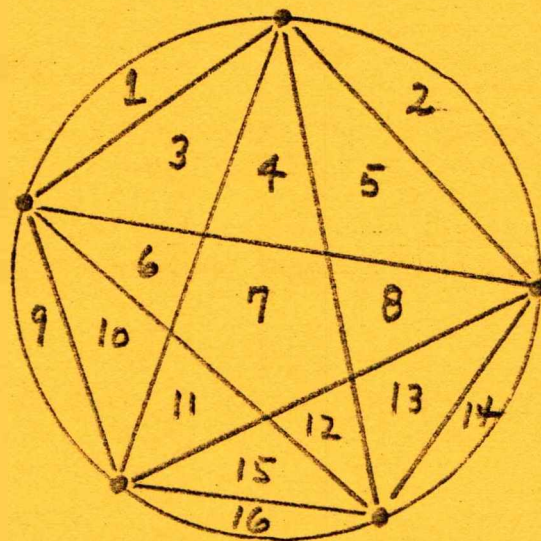
Emperor Splrfsk says: "This series of numbers is given on most intelligence tests. Like this: 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, _____. All but the scullery maids know that the next number is 32. Right?"

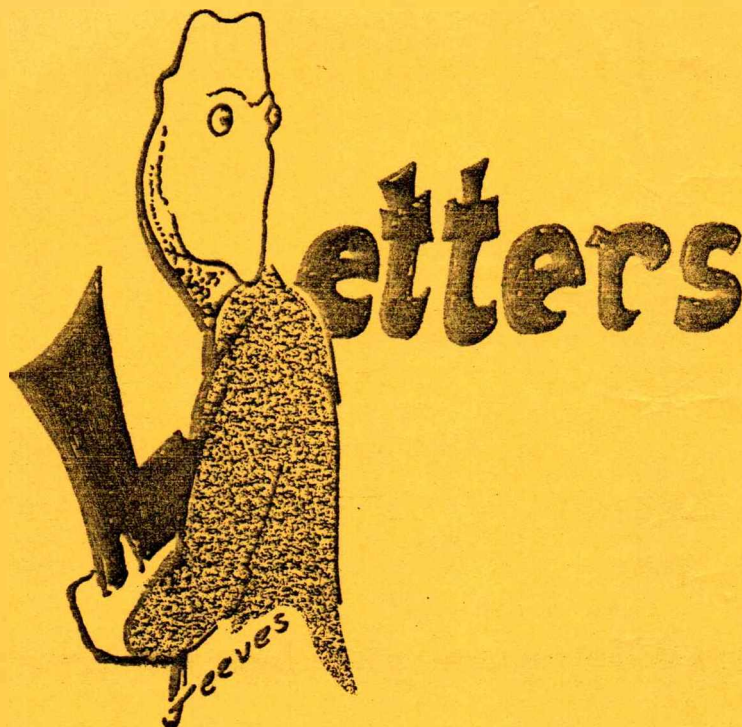
WRONG, OH MIGHTY SPLRFSK ! *(This message came down from a tower inhabited by Elizan, the Magician.)*

That last circle representing the continent CORFLU is unnumbered, BUT ALL THE CHORDS ARE DRAWN.

YOU are left with the actual numbering to prove without any doubt that there are NOT 32 countries, alas. One of the countries is missing. (Don't forget to number that tiny country near the center of CORFLU where three chords almost intersect.)

Hank Heath advises that the series as given on IQ tests is not too valid, for the number following 16 could just as well be 25 as 32 or 31. Can you determine the patterns that give either 31 or 25?





GAIL WHITE
7724 Cohn St.
New Orleans, LA 70118

C.D.'s "rosebud" article was delightful-- what an imagination she must have... I am glad Ben Indick is recovering from his recent sad experiences. He has another good piece in FARRAGO, I'm happy to see...

BURT LIBE
P.O. Box 1196
Los Altos, CA 94022

Ben Indick's article on Dahl is somewhat lengthy, but still interesting... Since I wrote the article [Fairies, Real or Unreal? The Cottingley Photos, printed in FARRAGO #5], I have received cor-

respondences from one of the "girls". Also, I managed to obtain some photo enlargements from the original prints (the present owners won't copy directly from the plates). If I ever get to England again, I hope to examine the original plates in person.

BILL BLISS
422 Wilmot
Chillicothe, IL 61523

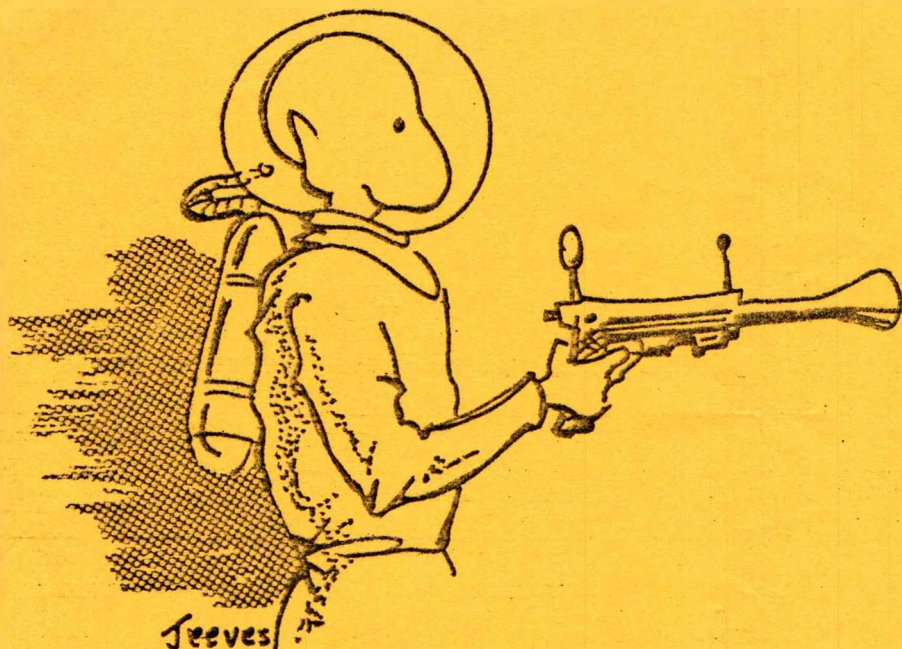
Gosh, Farrago #6 does have the most likable cover I've seen yet on a Brazier zine... Excellent article on Dahl. [That seagull/lighthouse cover was done by Orpha Hodge, my one and only "baby" sister; I have the original water-color framed on my office wall.]

TONY RENNER
P.O.Box 851
Panama, IL 62077

As usual, the weakest part of FARRAGO was the fan fiction. "Love Child" was way over-written. I'm afraid I missed the point of "Still on the Thought" unless it was "Drugs are no good", which tells me nothing new.... I did enjoy both Sardonic Fantastistes III and "The Little Neofan Who Could". Now if I can just get someone to explain 'rosebud' to me. [Takes Bob Tucker to do that!]

BILL BRIDGET
3800 W. Michigan St. Apt 807
Indianapolis, IN 46222

In a recent letter Buck Coulson told me that one of my problems was that I praise too effusively-- what he actually said was that I sound like I am brown-nosing and overdoing it badly. So I'd better not say how much I enjoyed FARRAGO. I seem to see the highly improbable pattern that is Donn Paul Brazier overlayed like a template on this FARRAGO. Your editing technique is to combine the elements to produce a whole that is much more than just the sum of its parts. [Thanks, but if you say so.. I think it's just an accident if it's really true.]



D. GARY GRADY
612 E. Maynard Ave.
Durham, NC 27704

Ben's bit on Dahl was excellent. I had heard of or seen most of the things Ben mentions, but had not connected them with the same man. Hard to believe Willy Wonka and You Only Live Twice were by the same fellow. I consider the latter the third worst of the Bond films... Love Child was good horror, and would fit well into WEIRD TALES were it still with us. How about a story with someone somewhere still

receiving his WT subscriptions, even today? Excuse me while I go turn on the light... Good piece on prime numbers, but could have gone further. [It did, Gary, but I cut it down unmercifully-- much to Burt Libe's dismay; I felt that what I cut was much too technical for general interest, so get in touch with Burt directly. He's sure to send you something.]

BUZZ DIXON
5734 Laurel Canyon Blvd. #9
North Hollywood, CA 91607

Is there more to Burt Libe's article or is it part of a series? Just when it got interesting it stopped. [Guess I was wrong.. do I hear good ol' Burt giving me the horselaugh?] Yea for Ben Indick! Raold Dahl has long been one of my favorite writers of any genre. I was pleased to see that Ben didn't gloss over Dahl's screenwritings. YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE is one of my favorite Bond films, thanks to Dahl's marvelous, satirical script.... I don't know who wasted the most time, Wayne Hooks in writing it, you in pubbing it, or me in reading "Love Child". Running a piece of adolescent twaddle such as LC does no one any good, not even Wayne Hooks.... Gail White's and Paul Walker's poetry was good; I liked both very much.... C.D.'s "little neo" was almost too cute for its own good, but with C.D. all is so easily forgiven.... "Still on the Thought" was forgettable.... What's so unusual about FARRAGO, no page #'s! [This editor does his zines in bits, later assembling the bits after they're xeroxed, and has no idea in the world what the page numbers are. This is referred to in pubbing as planning ahead; others may plan afoot.]

FRED JAKOBCIC
113 W. Ohio Apt 4
Marquette, MI 49855

Ben Indick is doing a good job in his continuing series. [Guess this one on Le Grand Guignol is the last, unfortunately.] I liked "Love Child" even if the ending was telegraphed... Leave the prime numbers to prime time TV; I'm a math nitwit... My compliments to Doyle for a nice piece of writing... There wasn't any point to "Still on the Thought" was there?... A usual FARRAGO, a pinch of salt here, a little pepper there, not too sweet, and easy to digest.... Good Gail White and Paul Walker poetry.... I would be interested in hearing some of that "planet music". The article was very much worth the effort of reading.

RICHARD BRANDT
4013 Sierra Drive
Mobile, AL 36609

Great cover for Farrago #6-- more artistic than most we've seen-- but no explanation of who Orpha Hodge is? She's talented. [And also my sister as I said before; she takes after her mother, and has fits and starts with art and handcraft hobbies.].... How Sheryl Birkhead can turn flowing lines into a blade of grass with character, in beyond me.... Wayne Hooks' LOVE CHILD has the logic of nightmare, not reality, and not my taste in fiction.... Deindorfer: interesting vignette about people reacting to the modern world's apparent chaos, each in his own way.... Let me leave you with a quote from TCU's author, historian, and film buff, Dr. Paul Boller: "Reading is like breathing." A sentiment I echo, particularly for the Wilde Pickle Press.

IRA M. THORNHILL
1900 Perdido St. Apt B97
New Orleans, LA 70112

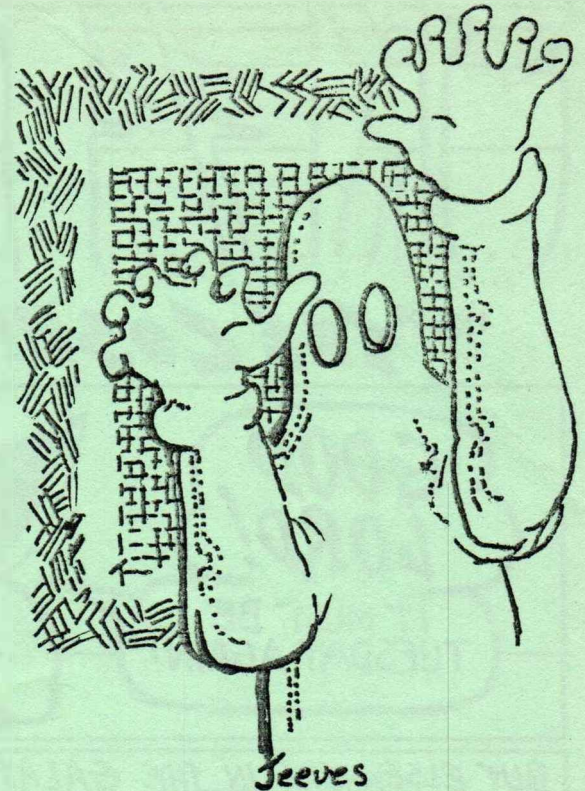
If for no other reason, you should continue FARRAGO so that Ben Indick will continue to write these studies; the article on Dahl was excellent.... "Love Child" is a vicious, mean story that I did not like... I'd love to actually hear the computerized 'Sounds of the Planets', especially as I've just seen "Close Encounters.." and the important role of music as communication in that film. And also I've been listening to my two albums of 'singing' whales more than almost any other music..Gail White is good, love her... Carolyn Doyle is one of my favorite people. What can I say. I laughed and loved 'the little neofan'.. I almost like "Still on the Thought", but the drug connection blew it tho, unnecessary.

MARTY LEVINE
Room 6817 South Quadrangle
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, MI 48109

How grotesque Wayne Hooks' piece was! I found the dead man so disgusting that it's hard to consider the story's worth. The description is awful, that black worm tongue. I guess the story succeeded on that part all right.

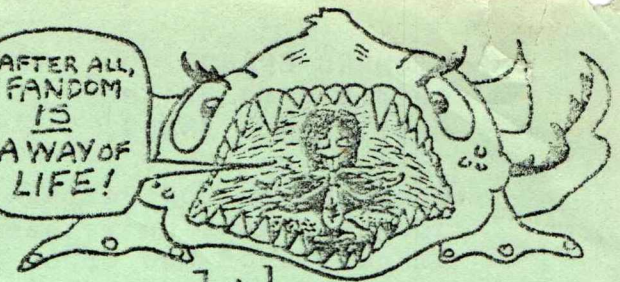
J. OWEN HANNER
211 W. Lake St.
Libertyville, IL 60048

Burt Libe was a tad esoteric for me, but "Love Child" was creepy enough to make me flinch... I'm hoping that Doyle's story "The Little Neofan" will continue; it's a very cute story... And how about an editorial every so often? Don't let us forget ol' Donn's back there directing the whole show.



SKEETRA

AFTER ALL,
FANDOM
IS
AWAY OF
LIFE!



IN: 00

THE COSMIC BATTLE!

...and the gang
HAUN

IF YOU BUY THE ONE, I ALSO HAVE
A FINE COLLECTION OF WATCHES!

GOOD
LORD!

IT MUST BE
TUESDAY AGAIN!



...NOTHING BUT CRAP
ON THE OL' BOOB TUBE

AH WELL...

BIG BUTTON
CLICK
127.5
000
EARTH

GUESS I'LL JUST HAVE TO
DESTROY EARTH!

BUT ELSEWHERE IN THE GALAXY, A CHAMPION IS BORN!

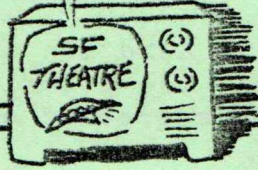
WHAT'S
HAPPENING
TO ME?

I FEEL AS
IF I'VE BECOME
HUMAN!

WELL, ALMOST
HUMAN!



AND WHO WILL WIN
THIS NEVER-ENDING
BATTLE FOR CONTROL
OF THE GALAXY AND
BLAH BLAH BLAH



LIKE,
WHO CARES?
GOTTA DIME?

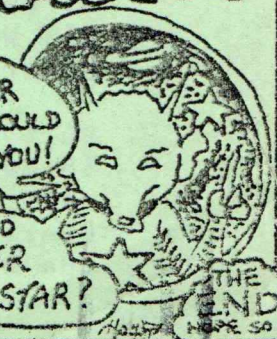
... MIGHT
AS WELL
GRAB SOME
ZINES... SF
ON TV IS SO
DAMN

DEPRESSING!

REMEMBER
FOLKS - IT COULD
HAPPEN TO YOU!

OR WOULD
YOU RATHER
SWING ON A STAR?

NOT
HUGH



THE
END?