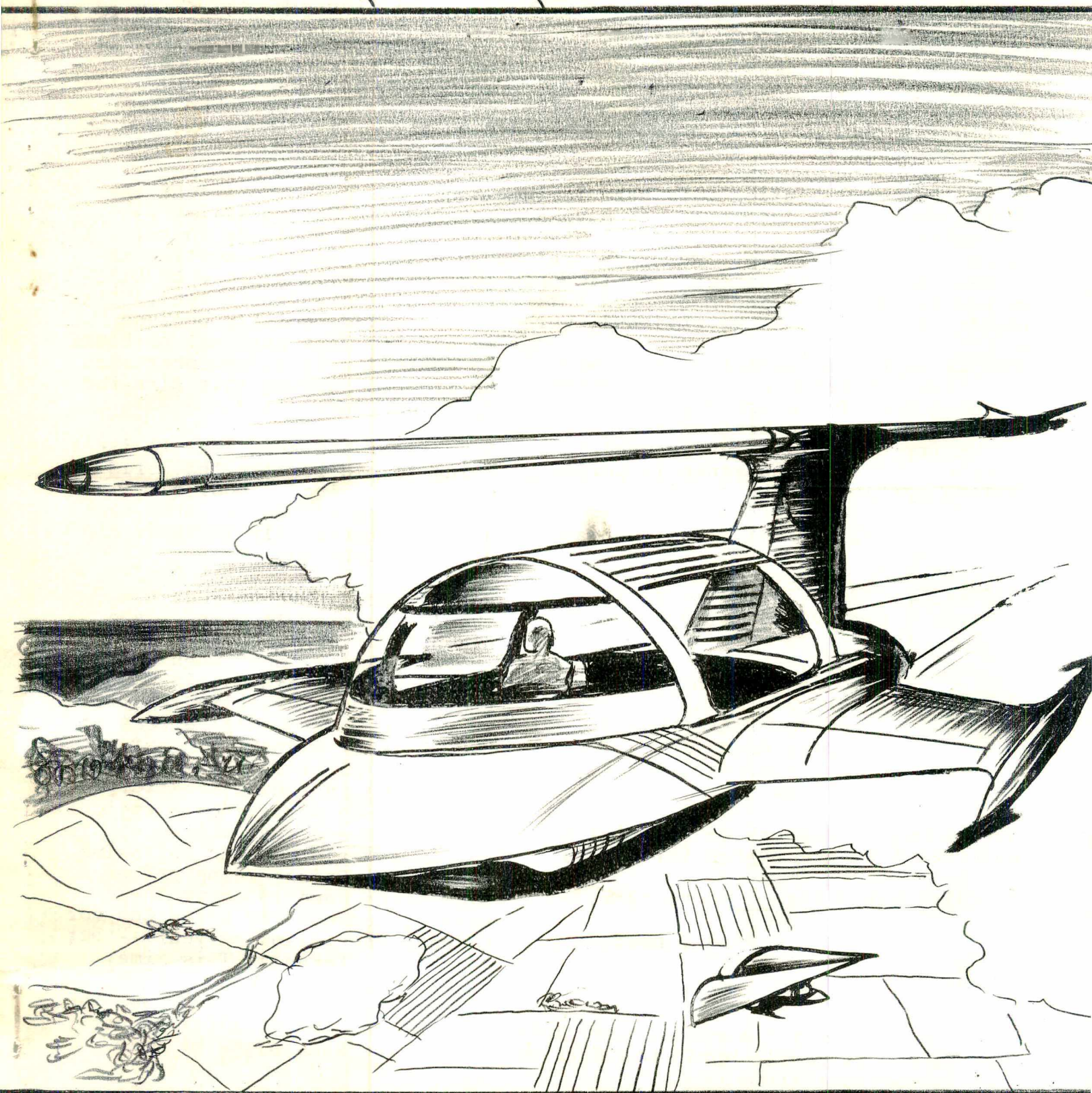


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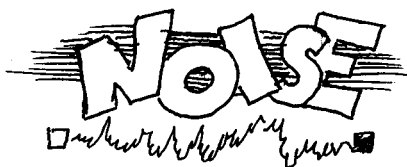
VOL 2 NO 7

APRIL '63



SCIENCE FICTION VS. FICTITIOUS SCIENCE

+++ We're quietly recovering, this Sunday April 7th, from the all-too-brief visit of Dr. Sidney Coleman of the Dept. of Physics of Harvard University where he is most likely to be offered an Assistant Professorship. We picked him up at the Berkeley Hills abode of a fellow-physicist with whom he'd seminar'd in Istanbul and took him down to the King Pin for a bowl of chili, a glass of buttermilk and much talk; then over to Rog Phillips's to renew old Chicago acquaintances. The good doctor had been summoned to Berkeley at great expense "to not lecture on physics" at the University of California -- they'd scheduled his lecture for 1:00 p.m. on Thursday with- out telling him, and he'd promptly arrived at 1:30 p.m. -- so they didn't mind at all if he spent his time and their money visiting old colleagues. He simply neglected to mention that some of them were fans. (In fact, the house in Berkeley Hills was graced with many empty beer-bottles, more science-fiction books than physics texts, and an autographed "Peanuts" original.) And yes, Bob Briney, Squid did tell the tale about the Turkish urologist.....



Reason I mention this here is that Squid was going to attend the GGFS clubmeeting, last nite, at Alva Rogers' home in Castro Valley -- the point being that we would not have gotten to meet Squidney there, since we weren't going. We haven't attended a local fanclub meeting in years. In fact, it's been some time now that we've even stopped by Bill Donaho's. BayArea fandom stopped notifying us of their fannish get-togethers long ago -- we obviously weren't interested, chiefly because

we had too many personal problems to contend with -- remember when we stopped pubbing this zine for 5 months, last year?

g2 is what we'd rather do than publish a fanzine. This most often is done monthly, which Buck Coulson calls irregular in his fmz reviews, so we try to avoid it every once in awhile. All such nonsense is perpetrated by: Joe & Roberta Gibson
5380 Sobrante Ave.
B1 Sobrante, California

So most of you know that LA isn't going to bid for the '64 World Con -- and since nobody else was considering it, our BayArea bunch have it practically in their hip pocket, right now.

Subscription rates:

Stateside: 3/25¢, 6/50¢ or 12 fr \$1
Europe: 3 for 1/9, 6 for 3/6 and 12 for 7/- to:

Robbie and I have no idea how they've reacted to this -- she did ask Big Bill "who has the silver platter, now" when he'd phoned us that Sid was in town and got a deep, rumbling chortle -- nor do we know what effect it had on their plans. I'm not at all sure, but I think this is the first time in fandom's history that a group putting on a regional con have known that they must also put on a World Con the following year. The Chicago gang put on a Midwestcon once to prove their mettle, and won the World Con for Chicago the following year -- but this is different. This time, the Westercon is being held at the Hyatt House over near the San

Colin Freeman
Ward 3
European Agent: Scotton Banks Hospital
Ripley Road
Knaresborough, Yorks.,
England

No trades, no artwork or material & not even LoCs are begged for here..

() You sub'd for ___ more g2's.

() Your sub has expired, now.

(✓) This is a sample copy.

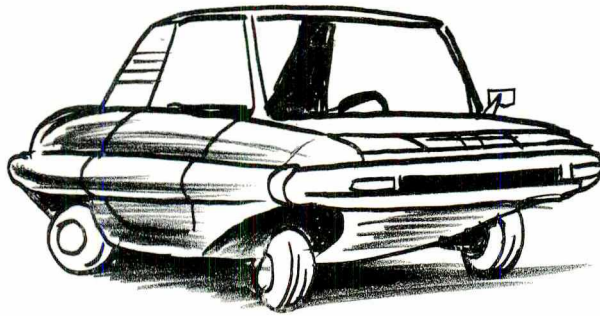
Francisco Internat'l Airport, come July 4th weekend, and it's fairly certain that next year's World Con will be held at the same place by more-or-less the same group.

For nextish, I hope to drive over and scout out that Hyatt House (remember the BayArea Fandom map we had for a cover illo?) and have a talk with Big Bill, Alva Rogers and the others.

The following ish, mayhap we'll be back on the stf theme.

Joe

PUSHCART FOR STF



In our January issue, Fritz Leiber's letter in LOX made two statements which reflect the general attitude of most professional science-fictionists -- writers, editors&publishers and critics -- today. Unfortunately, I'm afraid it's also the attitude of a good many stf fans.

At the risk of quoting Fritz out of context, I'll repeat his two statements:

(1) "Just by reading Scientific American and Science Service releases any writer can find ample material for fresh speculative scientific thinking."

(2) "There must also be propaganda for the world the writer wants to bring about; he ought to be trying to change the world."

Now, the trouble with this attitude is that it makes a very tough job out of something which ought to be easy, painless and a lot of fun. By this, I don't mean that writing a serial-length stf epic shouldn't be plenty of hard work for a writer, but that it should be so much fun he'd rather do it than macabre short-shorts for Hitchcock. In short, work that's fun isn't work.

The proponents of this attitude have taken the fun out of it. They've made it hard to write stf. Or sell it. A writer might choose his attitude toward stf independently, but it won't pay unless he finds an editor who can agree with him.

Fritz's first statement is erroneous and I'm going to prove it. Once I have, you'll see that his second statement that "there must be propaganda" is equally erroneous. It's just unfortunate that I'm singling out Fritz Leiber about this; after all, he didn't originate this attitude, he was simply acknowledging its existence.

The strongest and most influential proponent of this thing

has been, and still is, John W. Campbell. His editorial decree that the science in stf must be scientific has been primarily responsible for this attitude.

But of course, it had to happen. When Campbell became a stf editor, the pulpzine publishers ruled the field and what little stf we had was science-fantasy, the remainder being pulp westerns disguised as stf with rayguns and rocketships instead of sixguns and horses. When Campbell demanded real science in stf (he even insisted, at one time, that only scientists of people with technical training could write stf) it was revolutionary, and what followed was the Renaissance, culminating in the Golden Age of Astounding Science-Fiction.

So perhaps it was only natural that Campbell's policy was accepted wholeheartedly, by fans and pros alike, without much notice of its basic shortcoming.

The fact is, most scientists and technical people can't read science-fiction. They can only accept it when the "science" is truly and recognizably Science, as Campbell has endeavored to make it -- with only partial success, to hear some of them talk! But he's tried so hard with it that the "science" in today's stf is virtually a Campbellian orthodoxy.

Scientists can read stf so long as it remains "fresh speculative scientific thinking" based on current technological releases. But when carried to this extreme, it's no longer science-fiction. It's as far from anything written by Verne or Wells as the pseudo-stf westerns of the pulpzine era. It's fictional science.

The scientists of the '30s, by and large, couldn't stomach science-fiction at all. They condemned it as "crazy Buck Rogers trash" even more emphatically than the general public did. Rayguns and rocketships not only weren't possible, they weren't Scientific.

Today, those scientists are working on rayguns and rocketships -- but they're still the same pack of idiots they always were. Most of them can't even accept what passes for stf today, with its Campbellian orthodoxy, although it's become almost the only kind of stf today's writers can produce or sell.

I've repeatedly called this modern stf a fake. I've pointed out that its "galactic" stories aren't even good interstellar stories, much less "galactic" -- but I haven't shown how or where this is proof that all modern stf is a fake.

Well, it's a fake because it's based on the fallacy that "by reading Scientific American and Science Service releases any writer can find ample material for fresh speculative scientific thinking." The fact is, this is something any stf writer must do -- but he must never put it into a science-fiction story.

Because this "fresh speculative scientific thinking" isn't science-fiction. It isn't enough.

I can illustrate this most easily by giving a few examples of what I mean, and there is one man in the field who has produced all the examples I'd ever need -- one man and one magazine. Fortunately, many of you probably bought that last digest-sized issue of analog and the first legal-sized issue that followed it (this was at least a New Event in stf, and perhaps an Important one) so you'll probably have read the two examples I've chosen here. The first, in the digest analog, is Rick Raphael's novelette "Code Three"; the second, in the legal analog, is Campbell's article "Natural Resources In Space."

Raphael's story was fun reading. It was certainly based upon "reading. . . Science Service releases" or at least an equivalent amount of research. Raphael's speculation involved a Continental Thruway system spanning the North American continent from end to end, with air-cushion cars skimming along in lanes a half-mile wide at speeds



of three hundred to four hundred miles an hour. So far, so good -- or is it? Well, he's obviously accepted his reading on experimental air-cushion cars as Scientific Fact, then proceeded to postulate his story upon that. He shouldn't have. The people who're writing scientific releases on air-cushion vehicles are apparently blind to some facts, in some cases.

We will never have privately-owned passenger cars riding on air-cushion jets or fanjets. For one thing, it's uneconomical: present experiments have already shown that 100-ton (or even moreso, 1,000-ton) vehicles would require considerably less horsepower-per-pound to ride on air-cushion suspension than any 2-ton vehicle such as a passenger car. For big, commercial freight or passenger-carriers, it's fine. For small craft, it costs like hell.

For another thing -- and here's where the automotive experts have afforded me some wry amusement -- it's dangerous as hell. Today's cars are already at a development stage where possibly one-third of the American public should never be given a driver's license. (But of course, they must -- or U.S. industry would go bankrupt.) Hardly one-tenth of the public could qualify to drive Raphael's air-cushion cars!

I'm not in that one-tenth, either; you'd never catch me trying to pilot any such wingless wondercar at three hundred miles an hour, twelve-or-so inches off the ground! Sure, it's been done in jet-fighters; but like all "hot" military warcraft, jet-fighters can and do kill pilots. And I'm no jet-fighter pilot.

Those automotive experts do fine, mosttimes, so long as they stay on wheels. But any weekend airplane pilot could tell them plenty they don't know, and will have to learn, about riding on air. It gets turbulent at times. It gets especially turbulent, especially when you don't want it to, just off the ground -- which is why, in the fine art of driving an airplane, takeoffs and landings can be all sorts of fun. (Some automotive genius has proposed to overcome this by having air-cushion cars travel along shallow trenches rather than a flat surface -- with no knowledge of the air turbulence you can get over an open ditch!)

Furthermore, any automobile driver has experienced wind-buffetting on a cross-country trip. In any airborne craft, you don't just get buffetting. You get push. I can see a pack of air-cushion cars skimming along a 4-lane highway, each of them crabbing its nose into the crosswind that's threatening to push it over into the oncoming traffic lanes!

And it doesn't matter that such cars aren't riding on wings, but rather on a blast of air trapped beneath them to make a "cushion" -- they'll still be plowing into gusts and wind-currents that push them around, irratically. And at over two hundred miles an hour, a good gust of wind gets felt when you hit it. And just a little deflection, just for a couple seconds, can roll you up into a ball.

This wouldn't be an insurmountable obstacle to a 1,000-ton air-cushion freighter piloted by trained personnel. This alone is good basis for Raphael's Continental Thruways. (It is not sufficient basis for the air-cushion freighter Arthur C. Clarke proposed in "People Of The Sea" (in the first issue of Fred Pohl's zine, Worlds Of Tomorrow); Clarke's freighter "probably only grossed fifteen or twenty thousand tons" which is fine for ships that must unload at a seaport, not for craft that can deliver on your doorstep.)

But this is the research Mr. Raphael should have done before writing a stf story. It is not what he should have put into a story. The only thing that makes his analog novelette remotely science-fictional is its basic theme: private transportation of the future and what it means. He has developed this theme only so far as he found technical reports to substantiate it, but hasn't gone one step further for fear it wouldn't be Scientific. Any such research for a stf story must be taken that "one step further" for the result to be science-fiction.

As it is, he needn't have bothered. Detroit's planners have already realized that we'll have three times as many cars on the highways ten years from now, and they already have their answer to the problem roaring around the Proving Grounds: a Very Small Car. Usually dubbed a "Commuter Special" it's a tiny two-seater designed to be turbine-powered, presumably with some form of electric drive -- probably nothing larger can get through the rush-hour traffic of 1970! (For trips, we may have to rent larger cars which undergo periodic inspection to be licensed for federal highways.) Raphael could have accepted this solution and been no nearer to writing a science-fiction story than he was with "Code Three."

For science-fiction, he'd have to postulate a Car of the Future the public needs. It must solve tomorrow's problems of private transportation, eliminating the congestion of surface travel--but far more than that, it must be a craft the public can handle. Copters won't do, nor VTOL aircraft. Too tricky. Nor anything so big and cumbersome as lighter-than-air ships.

What could do the trick is the "airboat" or "flyer" that skimmed through stf stories back when all you had to say was that

magic word "antigravity!" -- the craft that "stayed up" no matter what happened, at any speed you cared to name, and that plowed into the ground at the sedate speed of a bicycle in case you should want a real goshwow crash-landing in your plot. This is the vehicle the public needs!

Scientifically, it doesn't matter a damn what you use to hold it up so long as you use something that's not just a catchword (Northrop Aviation's ten years of research in boundary layer airflow suggests a place to start looking) and so long as it won't hit the ground like a stone if there's a power failure. And just as scientifically, it doesn't have to fly at speeds needed by modern automobiles, much less aircraft. A basic rule-of-thumb used in private aviation today is that a car must travel three times as far as an airplane on a trip from one city to another. Thus, any "airboat" with a top speed of forty miles an hour can equal a modern automobile that can do one hundred and twenty miles an hour.

Of course, your "airboat" won't have the least resemblance to any latest Science Service releases. If it were Scientifically Possible then scientists would be doing it -- and we'd have played hell having any science-fiction if this had been the attitude of the '30s. But Campbell has championed this attitude to the point where he, himself, is hooked. He simply had to have those Dean Drive articles presented as Scientific Fact before he'd even think of floating into your living room on a revolving bathroom scale.

Well, if it's made that Scientific, it isn't fun. Our postulated "airboat" is fun, in spades -- next time you see a Chriscraft cruiser or motorboat, just imagine how it'd be if the thing would just float along in the air. Scooting around over the treetops in it would be more fun than Campbell's bathroom scale. And well, the world needs it! The scientists may end up making 'em float for that very reason -- but don't let's hold our breaths waiting for them to do it. And let's not hold back science-fiction for them, either.

It's not a question of whether science-fiction ought to be scientific. It should. But a great deal depends on what you mean by "scientific" -- is it the ratio of mass-mobility given a society with "airboats" vs. a society limited to surface travel? Or is "scientific" to mean simply what's acceptable in Science Service releases?

I have long suspected Campbell's feud with Scientists has been nothing more than a feud he's having with himself. He has shown repeatedly that he, himself, can carry a new postulate only so far as Science will allow -- that he is unable and unwilling to take it that "one step further" where human engineering and human motivations must take precedent over the power of the atom. Inevitably, it seems, old John must have Science a temple instead of a tool.

His article "Natural Resources In Space" is a prime example of a sound, technical postulate carried only so far, with the result being only half as good or important an article as it could have been. He wrote about the accessibility of raw materials in space with such fascination for that accessibility, as a technical concept, that he couldn't proceed from that point. He got lost in the gravity wells between worlds.

So he missed another technical concept far more important than his goshwow accessibility -- one that renders some of his statements invalid and which, ironically, was once mentioned in his own magazine. It was some years back, in aSF, in an article which described the methods used in purifying reactor fuel at Brookhaven. They pulled the "contaminated" fuel slugs, vaporized their contents in a hot arc, then separated the gaseous material with a cooling and spectrograph-triggering apparatus that valved it off in separate containers -- each container getting one atomic element of extremely high purity.

It cost like blazes; vaporizing the slugs took tremendous

amounts of power -- and it didn't work too well; the apparatus had to be evacuated on Earth, and you can't get a really good vacuum in any "sealed" apparatus inside the Earth's atmosphere. Minescule bits of stuff keep leaking into the thing from outside and "unpurifying" your purifying system. They got back their reactor fuel sans contamination to a very high degree of purity -- but it wasn't as pure as they'd like.

Campbell postulated getting iron from the Asteroid Belt, ammonia and methane and helium from Jupiter's upper atmosphere, water from Saturn's rings. He neglected the fact that we'll get to the Moon first; if he hadn't, he might have realized that we won't be going to the Asteroid Belt for iron -- for the simple reason that we probably won't want that much iron, by then!

The kind of "vacuum" they'd love to get inside a "sealed" apparatus on Earth is just about what the astronomer boys are calling "atmosphere" on the Moon. And there's so much solar radiation that you have tremendous amounts of power just with mirrors. The lunar elements are, unquestionably, very much mixed up and compounded with each other; but a spectrum-triggered rig that gets high purity at Brookhaven can do the job just as well, and probably better, on the Moon.

Extremely pure elements have extremely interesting properties. High-purity iron, for example: where you'd need steel beams and girders two feet thick on a skyscraper or bridge, you could use high-purity iron girders two inches thick. And as for high-powered electric motors the size of office pencil-sharpeners....

But just a darned minute there! Many types of ordinary rock are far more plentiful than iron ore is: basalt, for one, may well be very plentiful in those dark lunar Mares. So what about the properties of high-purity silicon?

And who wants to build a skyscraper or bridge with two-inch-thick girders, anyway? Six inches or a foot would do nicely, given more strength, less weight, better durability, greater ease in shaping and forming, in a chemically-compounded material without too much processed high-purity moondust!

Now we've got this postulate reaching into an entirely new concept. Look around you at everything made of metal, wood or glass -- we won't be using those, anymore. The kind of plastics we have now will be as outdated as the celluloid collar. The first nation that builds a base on the Moon will be the richest on Earth -- temporarily, since it won't keep others out. Russian Communism is as good as dead; the commissar-monopolists who rule Russia tomorrow will probably be worse to get along with, too.

Right now, the scientists working on rocketships are concerned with the problems of putting a man on the Moon. The general public is asking, "Why should men go to the Moon?" The scientists are giving them some damned ambiguous answers.

Science-fiction could spell out the answer so clearly that the next phase of world history could be predicted with considerable accuracy. Earth's conversion to an unearthly technology will almost certainly begin in our lifetime. If you accept such an universal concept for stf as this, rather than the concept by which most modern stf is conceived, then you may begin to feel that modern stf is a literature of failure -- failure of men, failure of the future, failure of its own reason for existing at all. You may also begin to feel that stf could be written today as great or greater than anything Wells or Verne did. Now's the time for it.

The interplanetary/interstellar culture of Earth will have technological advantages which can only be imagined (with a big margin for error) by science-fictionists, never by scientists, at this early date. (Fantasy's the realm where miracles are performed at the wave of a wizard's hand; science-fiction's the realm where they aren't miracles, it doesn't take a wizard, and they're darned sure going to be

performed! Ergo, the "natural resources" we get from space -- when we no longer use presently-available materials for buildings, books or airboat hulls -- sounds just a bit unscientific the moment you start calling it moondust. It's fantasy to scientists who aren't going to the Moon to make money, so long as they get a fat government check each month; but then, most things men want to do seem pretty fantastic to scientists, anyway.) This culture will have problems, both technological and ethnical, which even science-fictionists will be hard-put to imagine. The majority of scientists want nothing to do with that. The majority are neither sociologists nor psychologists; it's not their field.

Science-fiction isn't, either.

It might seem that I'm arguing against scientific facts with what I simply think are better scientific facts. But I haven't meant that my "airboats" are better than Raphael's air-cushion cars, or that my Lunar Base is worth more than Campbell's Asteroid Belt. I'm not that enamored with scientific research.

What I'm saying is that they believe science-fiction must be based on Science -- that it must be built upon fresh speculative scientific thinking, period -- and they're wrong. You can do that much and write fictional science, but you can't write science-fiction.

My airboats are better and the Moon richer not because of what the scientific facts are, but because of what men are. Men will do that job on the Moon before they've ever reached the Asteroid Belt and men will make the airboats float -- not because it can be done, but because it's fun to do!

Science-fiction must be based on mankind. Science is only a tool. Jules Verne didn't simply write a book about a submarine; he knew what really mattered. He wrote a book about a man who travelled 20,000 leagues under the sea, and why he did as well as how. Without the trip, the sub's a mere curiosity.

Modern stf based on Science, thanks to Campbell's influence, has necessitated the use of propaganda for the world the writer wants to bring about -- naturally, since he's writing about Science instead of about men. If he writes about men, he can't use propaganda. He'll have to be mercilessly honest in depicting how men will react to his world, in that case, or his story flops. He can't write a "Gravy Planet" or a "World of Null-A" or, for that matter, a yarn like "The Humanoids" where propaganda's his temple and men are mere tools. Any story he writes like "Mission of Gravity" or "Second Foundation" will have a rather different plot-development, conclusion, and reader-reaction.

Of course, a lot depends on what you mean by propaganda, too. But the majority of propagandists aren't historians; it's not their field. (Not that they haven't tried!)

Science-fiction isn't, either.



Any visiting fans who look for Robbie at the University of California in Berkeley won't find her there -- not at the U.C.P.D. nor at the Math Department nor anywhere else. Robbie is no longer a working girl, like it says on the Form 1040. She's now a working girl like out in Far Oof El Sobrante with the Siamese cats.

¹⁰ SOME CONCLUSIONS ON

As I begin writing this, Wally Weber and Marion Zimmer Bradley are nominated for TAFF in '64 -- without us having to be nominators or writing letters or speaking at fanclub meetings or, in fact, doing one blessed thing to help. Other fans did that. We don't even know which fans are supporting Wally or Marion, for sure.

All we've done is raise hell.

But as a result, this fanzine almost became a TAFFzine. We got letters like the one in which someone said that last year's "special funds" for Ella Parker and the Willises competed heavily for fans' interest -- to the detriment of TAFF's campaign, election, and winners and we ought to stop that. We've also received three plans for revitalizing TAFF and curing its ills. In other words, we were loaded with material for a full-fledged TAFFzine, here.

I refused to publish it. I'd given TAFF as big a play as any fanzine editor ever did, I'd pulled every stunt possible to give it interest, I'd toned down other material to give TAFF the spotlight in each issue -- but I would not publish a TAFFzine. I chopped letters or didn't print them at all. I flatly rejected any and all plans to change TAFF for better or worse; and of course, I prevented any consideration or discussion of the whole thing or any part of it.

Consequently, I will be very much surprised if a number of fans aren't just a bit peeved with me. But there's something those fans (I could count them without taking my shoes off) should find peculiarly interesting: They were interested in TAFF. They're the ones who cared. Their letters proved it. But those were almost the only letters I was receiving at all!

With each TAFF*-dominated issue we published, the influx of LoC's dropped. In the last three months, it dropped drastically. Paid subscriptions coming up for renewal weren't renewed; only the new subs gleaned from favorable fanzine reviews kept our sub-list from dropping.

It can hurt a fanzine to talk about TAFF.

We knew the majority of fans simply aren't interested in TAFF, so what else could you expect? It didn't surprise me at all that when Buck Coulson reviewed g2 in Yandro, he remarked that "A large number of California fans seem anxious to make TAFF into a duty; something to be supported whether we're interested or not. Now I'm in favor of TAFF, but I'm not going out and end it all if we don't get a candidate this year." Of course, Buck judges everyone he bothers to judge (which does narrow it down, somewhat) by his own set of values -- as if we all wanted guitar-playing wives or a home in the rural Midwest -- but in this one instance, he speaks truth about TAFF.

If you talk about TAFF to someone who isn't interested in the first place, it's the nature of the beast to put you in the position of telling the guy what he ought to be interested in. Doesn't matter a bit that you didn't mean it that way, either; that's the way he takes it. Fans may want to indulge in fannish endeavor but they're going to choose which endeavor that is. Nobody's going to tell them.

Now, that's no more than you could expect. But how do you get fans to support TAFF without seeming to pull that stunt? How do you get 'em to vote for a TAFF candidate? Or to vote at all?

Well, we can sit around all day telling ourselves we should never try to tell fans what their interests should be. Sure, we're interested; but they aren't, and we can't order them around. Fine. The question is, what can we do?

And since I ask that question, I'll answer it: we'd darned sure better find out why those fans aren't interested!

TAFF

or another of those g² things -

And suppose, for a start, we take a good, hard look at this TAFF business we're so hot about.

There is a little booklet of which, thanks to Ron Ellik, I have a purloined copy. You may have a copy, too, free to N3F members or 20¢ apiece if Ron Ellik has any left at 1825 Greenfield Ave., LA 25. It's called "SOME HISTORICAL FACTS ABOUT SCIENCE-FICTION FANDOM" and amidst Hugo Award winners, World Cons and suchlike, it has a little list.

The list by itself doesn't tell much. Just the names of the fans who were TAFF candidates, and who won (names underlined). But some shrewd guesses could be made from that list, even if you weren't in fandom when it was being compiled. If you were, you could fill the margins with footnotes.

My doodling with that list comes out this way:

1954: A Vincent Clarke, James White, Ken Slater, Derek Pickles, Tony Thorne (Clarke did not make trip)

1955: Ken Bulmer, Eric Bentcliffe, Terry Jeeves, Ted Tubb, Ken Slater, Stuart Mackenzie

= I knew nothing at all about those TAFF elections,
= but I heard the British were rather unsure of them-
= selves and dissatisfied -- this being excused on
= the grounds that TAFF was still such a new thing.
= Only point of interest: Eric Bentcliffe was nomi-
= nated again, five years later, and won.

1956: Lee Hoffman, Forrest J. Ackerman, David Kyle, Lou Tabakow, G. M. Carr, Wally Weber, Hal Shapiro, Kent Corey (Lee declined, funds held over)

= Lee Hoffman not only won, but was sure to win from
= the very beginning and everyone knew it -- not one
= of the other candidates were the least bit of com-
= petition to her, and weren't nominated as such.

1957: Bob Madle, Stuart Hoffman, Richard Eney, Dick Ellington, Boyd Raeburn, Forrest J. Ackerman, Ed McNulty, George Nims Raybin

= Then something happened! The only real winner was
= supposed to be Dick Eney; the rest were mere
= window-dressing, nominated "for the honor of it."
= But the East Coast fanclub fans turned it into a
= real election, got out the votes, and gave it to
= Madle -- which made some other fans mad as hell!

1958: Ron Bennett, John Berry, Dave Newman, Roberta Wild

= Britain carries on, almost.

1959: Don Ford, Terry Carr, Bjo Wells

= Eney was being nominated, too, but declined in favor
= of Terry Carr! (Please, let's have no competition.)
= Terry should have won, and Bjo was "being awful" to
= really compete -- but those dirty East Coast fans
= joined the Midwest fanclub fans to ruin it all again!
= (Captive votes in fanclubs, y'know.) Ford got it.

1960: Eric Bentcliffe, Mal Ashworth, H.P. Sanderson

= Britain loses heart, almost.

1961: Ron Ellick, Richard Eney

- = Where, oh where are all those "for the honor of it"
- = candidates? Why, oh why all this nasty competition?
- = Tsk tsk.

1962: Ethel Lindsay, Eddie Jones

- = Britain, too -- maybe we should never have called it
- = an "election" -- now it's what we've got!

There, d'you see? This is what today's fandom has inherited, in the name of TAFF, from those oldtime fans who were around when it all happened. There is much more here than meets the eye -- undercurrents of fannish egoboo and fannish spite, old misunderstandings and forgotten feuds. Today's fans could ask, "Why didn't Lee Hoffman have any real competition?" The real question was why anyone chose to call it an election. They set up TAFF (with elections) then proceeded to run it exactly as the Big Pond and Willis Funds that preceded it (for one BNF--no contest); and when it did evolve competitive elections, with the inevitable politicking consequences, they complained to high heaven! So what did they expect elections to be?

Especially in fandom! There are damned few saints in fandom -- and they're not much interested in TAFF, either.

As I said, I've received three plans for curing TAFF's ills. These came from Rosemary Hickey, Archie Mercer and Len Moffatt. Each of them seems motivated by a desire that TAFF should be interesting without anyone having to beat a drum for it. Well, what were those plans?

Okay, here they are -- but keep in mind that these three fans were already interested in TAFF:

Rosemary Hickey wrote (December 14th, 1962):

Why do so many complain that TAFF isn't meant to be a popularity contest? What are the criteria for nominations? What is given the voting public to use to decide which candidate is better suited for the award?

Funds: There should be sufficient money in the TAFF fund to provide for

1. A publication of qualifications (by demonstration) of the candidates.....perhaps a selection of material previously printed? Status in the apas? What contributions to fandom nationally?
2. To cover all travelling expenses for a specified period of time so that if the winner must cover ongoing expenses at home while he's gone....he can use his own money for that...instead of giving up shaving, etc.
3. Covering the cost of the TAFF report so that the winner can write it immediately upon his return without worrying about meeting the personal bills which accumulated during his long absence and paying for the stencils and printing bills.

Qualifications: There should be some.(Right now it's a popularity contest.)

Fan Interest: Give the individual fan more participation and you will have his interest and involvement. Perhaps more fund-raising techniques through the year - special issues of something or other sold and the income to go to TAFF. Get after what local groups which do exist and have them

establish a TAFF fund project. That will involve every member - and that means many more than are usually aware.

Archie Mercer wrote (January 9th, 1963):

As things are, anybody who agrees to run as a candidate has to be prepared both (a) to travel if elected, and (b) to be defeated and not go. Lesserknown fen are therefore inhibited from standing just to give the favourite a run for his egoboo, because of the off-chance that they might actually find themselves elected instead of the favourite and feel guilty about it. And having nobody to run against tends to inhibit betterknown fans from standing, on the grounds that they feel as if they're cheating fandom somehow if they're returned unopposed.

Personally, I think the time's about come when TAFF delegates should cease to be elected, and should instead be selected - invited to make the trip on their own merits. This way, if a fan accepted the invitation, he/she would know that provided sufficient money was forthcoming and barring the inevitable Acts of Ghu, Roscoe, etc., he/she would actually be making the trip. Under those conditions, I think far more fen would accept than accept competitive nomination now. I don't have anybody particular in mind - certainly not myself - but I think my supposition sounds reasonable.

Remains the problem of who does the actual selection. Provisionally, I would suggest a panel of five people, three of them elected for a fixed term by all of fandom that was interested (much the same as the delegates are now), the other two being the last delegate to travel in each direction. These two might act as joint chairmen of the panel, each perhaps presiding over arrangements for the next trip in the same direction as was his own. The three electees would of course be chosen from among the small band of fen who don't mind office-holding - but all of fandom should have a chance to OK their appointment.

Len Moffatt wrote (March 23, 1963):

Electing Delegates: Nominations, ballot distribution, and voting same as now--except voters need not send in donations with ballot.

Fund Raising: General request for donations in the form of money, items (mags, books, artwork, anything) that can be raffled, auctioned, or sold for money, and selling subscriptions to the TAFF Magazine. (Joe Gibson has pointed out that most monies for TAFF come from convention donations and the like rather than from the individual donations sent in with the ballots. A sub to the Taffzine would "replace" donation-with-ballot procedure.)

Publishing: (1) Ballots, of course.
 (2) Limited edition "newsheets" (advertising TAFF, requesting nominations, etc. etc.) sent to fanzine publishers, requesting them to please reprint.
 (3) The TAFF Magazine, published quarterly. Sent to subscribers only. Price? One dollar, two dollars a year? Mimeographed, 25 to 30 pp per issue. Contents: news or short articles about TAFF, current progress, fund report, etc. Serialization of current TAFF Trip Report. Photos and fancy stuff when "angeled" by ye angelic fen, but otherwise cost kept to minimum so sub monies at least cover the cost of the zine.

ADMINISTRATION: Let's assume that this plan is adopted when Administrators A & B are in office. We may also assume that A & B's trip reports, if any, have been pub'd or are being pub'd elsewhere (i.e., not in the new TAFFzine). A would take over the publishing duties. Heshe would use hiser own mimeo, etc., or farm out the actual printing job to a publishing fan. B would

administer the current campaigns, collecting monies, etc. Circumstances could "alter cases" so that the job could be reversed or A & B could work together. . . . So along comes C, the next winner . . . A & B continue their respective duties until winner D has made hiser trip. A retires from active duty, B becomes publisher, C becomes campaign administrator, and D writes serialized trip report.....

Yep, that's what they wrote -- seriously, with honest concern and much skullpounding effort. You may find it boring as hell, but they didn't. They tried to do something. It wasn't easy.

I hoped Rosemary could pin down where she'd heard or read about TAFF being a popularity contest -- I'd heard it somewhere, sometime, but it didn't register as an accredited belief -- but she couldn't recall any specific source. And her remarks under "Fan Interest" really floored me.

I questioned whether Archie Mercer had explored TAFF's origin from the previous Big Pond and Willis Funds. After all, TAFF never had any trouble getting candidates or holding elections so long as (a) the winning candidate was a foregone conclusion and (b) the "election" was a pure farce. Any study of this can only give far more supporting evidence for Archie's plan.

But wouldn't his election of panel-members cause just as much electioneering, dirty-politicking and poor TAFF publicity as the TAFF elections we now have? Who'd want to stand for TAFF then?

Len Moffatt's plan is open to an immediate objection: what's to keep his TAFF Magazine from being just as uninteresting to fandom as TAFF is??

And this leads us right back where we started.

There are several bitter realities about TAFF which we may as well list right here:

1. It is applicable to only a few fans, with its present limit of only \$500; most fans can't afford it.
2. That \$500 is donated in large part by fan convention committees who've had nothing better to do with their profits, or nothing more "worthy" for requesting contribs from con attendees -- con committees can support TAFF impartially; supporting a fund for any one fan would not seem so impartial.
3. Any scheme to increase the TAFF fund, where it might concern more than just a few fans as possible candidates, will have to include some new money-raising scheme. Fandom has the money, but--
4. One thing we don't need in fandom is any selfrighteous gang of fund-raisers asking everyone to please donate; but other methods (auctions, art shows, etc.) require an organization TAFF doesn't have and can't afford. Old Taffers' Club, anyone?
5. Any year now, the convention committees may decide they can do better things with fans' money than support something which interests or concerns so few fans as TAFF does.
6. When TAFF winners were obviously picked before the election had started, a good many fans voted--just to show their approval of TAFF and the obvious winner. But when it became a real election with a contest (personality or otherwise) between candidates, very few fans bothered to vote anymore.
7. Backroom politics have a natural appeal to the very fans who're most interested in digging up candidates and nominating them for TAFF--except when someone else is doing it. And there's about as much political maturity in fandom as there is in Central Africa.
8. If fandom's interest drops much lower than it was last year, somebody's going to suggest that TAFF be scrapped.

And, too, there's something which TAFF might become -- except

extinct, that is. You might say there was almost the recent case of a much-venerated, ancient fan whose greatest triumph would be to invest the British Isles with just a little bit of South Gate; I am speaking, of course, of Rick Sneary. My own and others' efforts to facilitate this Noble Cause are now legend.

At the same time, there was also a young, teenage fan in New York State who's no longer active in fandom -- in fact, who never did much in fandom except publish a fanzine for a relatively short while. As I recall, he had to quit his fan-activity when it began to interfere with his schooling, and nothing much has been heard of him in the past few years.

Indeed, the only thing remarkable about Jeff Wanshel is that the fanzine he published was so good, he's still remembered for it.

This young man's talent was unquestionable; his personality was likeable. At his age, a TAFF trip to England would have undeniable value; his schooling could almost certainly be arranged to permit it. But equally undeniable are the problems confronting any group of fans wanting to nominate him for TAFF. They must be East Coast fans, and persons of good standing -- capable of both personally contacting Jeff's parents and winning their approval. This is asking something of those fans, if not of fandom. (It would require them to be something more than unwashed beatniks. However, I've known more East Coast fans who could assume such responsibilities -- and might even convince someone else that they could -- than those who couldn't.)

But the only "election contest" I'd like to see would be someone else pulling an even better stunt than this one!

You can say TAFF isn't a charity all you want, but there's one thing we can't get away from. We can't just say it's a Worthy Cause or we'll seem to be telling fans what they ought to do or like. We can't even argue that we think it's a Worthy Cause, and why, else we'll seem to imply that we believe other fans must think whatever way we do. That may be stretching it a bit, but these psychological things are rather tricky. No, there's just one thing we can do that will possibly seem right -- we've got to prove that it's a Worthy Cause.

It really ought to be a good thing to be worth fandom's bother.

Maybe that's the real trouble, the reason fans aren't much interested any more. It's been too long since we've made anything good of it.

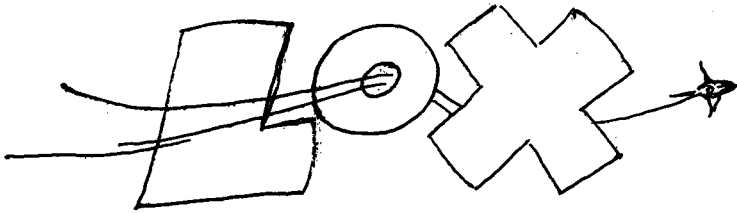
Orders are now being taken for Ethel Lindsay's TAFF Report -- Around The US In 31 Days on 50 pages or so, with ATOM illös. Price is 7/6 or \$1, proceeds going to TAFF.

You get it from:

Ethel Lindsay, Courage House, 6 Langley Ave.,
Surbiton, Surrey, England

Or:

Ron Ellik, 1825 Greenfield Ave., Los Angeles
25, Calif., USA



- + There are a couple of letters I'm not going to publish. What
- + they both say is simply for me to get that TAFF stuff out of
- + this fanzine and keep it out. Anyway, now you know I got two
- + such letters. Now, let's get on with this...

RICK SNEARY, 2962 Santa Ana St., South Gate:

Going over my collection of early Shangri-L'Affairs I discovered a number of Gibson covers.. I remembered the covers well enough, as they were among the first I saw--but with my old weakness for names I forgot who had done them..

- + On SHAGGY??! Are you sure you haven't got a few old VoMs mixed up
- + with them, Rick? Oh well, it was 15-20 years ago -- I can't remem-
- + ber who that guy was, either.

Dispite this though, I'm not sure I will take your word for the fact Joe, that you know fandom better than I ever have. I don't question that you know more about life than I do, or about people. ((+Here now, no fair changing the subject!+)) I wouldn't question that you know a lot about fandom. But I have devoted most of 17 years to it.. While I've had few friends in the active top ten ((+Yeah, only twenty or thirty of 'em!+)) I've known a lot of people--if only by letters. My approach to things in fandom have been close to the average --- while you have been an iconoclast. Fandom loves an iconoclast though.. But you are out of step.. Or, you step to the music of a different drum.. So don't give me this about you knowing fandom..

- + And here I haven't clast an icon in years! But wait, Robbie just
- + looked it up: "one who attacks cherished beliefs as shams." Is that
- + what you mean? Rick, how could you say that. But look, I've been
- + saying that fandom's in bad shape because it's Big Fandom; do you
- + disagree? And even tho Roy Tackett asked me point-blank, I have yet
- + to say how big I think fandom is. What's your estimate? You're wrong!

I want to mention one thing more about my not standing for TAFF. I'm glad, for the sake of my good sense, that I'd already made up my mind not to stand. I'm not sure I could have made up my mind, or said no, if you had hit me with the desistion still up in the air. Once I've made up my mind hardly anything can move me, but before that I'm not to strong. I'm afraid your approach would have over-whelmed my good judgment..... Just as Ella might have, had she talked to me in person.

- + And if you'd said "yes" I would really have had to go to work! And
- + I could've got lynched for doing it -- tampering with candidates,
- + rigging elections, turning TAFF into a gift solely for BNF's like
- + Rick Sneary. Tsk. And having to teach you how to outfox a posse!

But turning to other things.....I'm now the owner of a very small bore cannon.. -- My weapon collecting friend, Jim Wilson, who wants his friends to be interested in the same things, presented me with an Ivar Johnson .22 target revolver. The old 1909 model--that he says was made to sell for \$2.00.. It has an over-size grip, which is almost large enough for my hand. All I've fired in it are "cartouches" (a 6mm round ball, with little more than a primer behind it.) ((+A teeny Minie-ball?+)) The trigger pull is pretty hard for me, and at slow fire the barrel waves in the wind. But if I cock it by hand(thumb), it requires very little pull to set it off.....

- + Mighod, Rick, nobody shoots double-action when they're aiming off each
- + shot! That's strictly for someone with enough practice to empty a gun
- + rapid-fire into a target, maybe 3 bulls out of 5. Careful, now!

As for my Fan Dream House ((+an old house full of fans Rick

keeps dreaming about+)) it is just one of the many spots in my Dream City.. It all starting with a bookstore on a corner, two blocks up the right side of the hill from the main street. -- The downtown part of my city is build along a small vally, which widens out just before it reaches the sea.. The main street of the city runs the length of the vally.. The seedyer and factory parts of town being farther up the sides of the vally. ---Oh, I'd wated in the lobby of the citys finnest hotel, many a time... Or backed bags in its suites.. Or set though endless dull plays and movies at its theater--which is never dark enough. -- I've seen its skid row, and debated which of its three burlesque shows to attend. (I didn't attend any.. But then I never buy any magazine or books. Which is a sign of frustration, I suppose.)

The house is a big old frame building, with a portch all across the front (sort of like Morojo's old Bixel address), with large, fairly empty rooms inside...

+ Does that town have a railroad station?

+

+ We began pubbing g2 some 2 years ago becuz we simply couldn't
+ keep track of our mail, much less answer it, and there were things I
+ wanted to write to 16 different fans which makes awfully repetitive
+ letterwriting. Well, now we've got g2 and I suppose it serves some
+ purpose or other, but we still can't keep track of our mail, such as:

NORM CLARKE, Box 911, Aylmer East, P.Q., Canada:

Hey, man, what kind of weird bookkeeping system is used at 5380 Sobrante? Tell me it's all some incredibly simple mistake, Joe; tell me my sub is good for months & months yet. Or else tell me otherwise, and tell me why.

+ Seems it's this way: somebody in Canada sent me a Money Order for
+ fifty cents. Your sub was recorded as said 50¢ -- but now, obviously,
+ it wasn't you and I've corrected your sub to \$1. Now tell me who in
+ Canada isn't getting one damned bit of his 50¢ worth.

COLIN FREEMAN, our agent in the Uncommon marKet (address elsewhere):

You've got about 13/- in the kitty now Joe. If you like I'll get a dollar from Bennett (he always seems to have a few around) and post it on to you.

+ The only thing we want right now is a paid subscription to Bennett's
+ SKYRACK; please expedite whenever you think of it--Robbie thot of it
+ just last week. Hold onto the rest for now.

ROBERT P. BROWN, 1484 Elm Ave., Long Beach 13, Calif.:

What's with this bizz re Gelfellian?

+ You asked if I'd ever heard of him (at least, that's as near as I could
+ figure out the name you wrote) and I hadn't. The back issues you re-
+ quested are herewith enclosed--I hope. Did the boat sink?

LYNN HICKMAN, 224 Dement Ave., Dixon, Ill.:

Don't blame you for cutting me from your trading list. I've been pretty inactive this past year what with travelling all the time and only getting home every three months.

Have quit now and am looking for something where I'll get home weekends again. . . Have JD-A#60 about ready to mail. ((+We lost track of that, too.+)) With issue #41 I'm changing the title to the Pulp Era. Subscriptions are 10 issues for \$2.75 - 35¢ per copy. Zines are 40 or more pages. . . Now - do you want me to pay for the g2's sent or send you my zines to make up for them? Either way is ok.

At any rate I'm enclosing 50¢ for six more issues of g2. It's against my principles to sub to a zine but hell, I'd miss you.

+ Several months back, our trading list was trimmed down, then trimmed again, until almost the only ones left are a few British fanzines and a couple of much-desired American products. Our paid-sub list had grown to the point where it was either cut what trades we had or increase our print quota and, consequently, our collating and mailing work on each issue. So I cut trades, including yours. Then with this TAPP business our paid subs dropped, recovered, and barely held steady -- I don't know which way they're going from here.

=
+ You know, of course, I should've answered you personally four months ago. We do want your issues #61 and perhaps #62, if it's not too much --after which, we ought to buy a sub if we want it.

ROSEMARY HICKEY, 2020 Mohawk, Chicago 14:

ROBBIE - Thank you very much for recreating your feelings and experiences so effectively. My only experiences in a plane are those which accrue to someone who buys a ticket for a commercial flight. Once, a very long time ago, on a quickie hop to New York, the plane was nearly empty and the pilots let me peek into the cockpit. ((+Had you locked in the baggage compartment, did they?+)) Then somebody got jumpy about the cold front and suggested too firmly that I return to my seat.

Before I met Richard, Chuck Freudenthal was telling me all sorts of things about his boy friend...like how Ritchie was a pilot and they went up for flights hither and yon...well, other things came to pass but not flying. We renew Richard's license every year. All kinds of fascinating literature arrive at home...like photographs of landing fields and little news bulletins notifying Richard about various brush-up courses...but he hasn't taken me on a personally conducted flight yet. Maybe I should have brought up this subject before we were married. Now he's acting just like a husband!

Strictly irrelevantly: Did I tell you about my skiing lessons? If you didn't read that hilarious paragraph about my skiing experiences -- well.....

+ You mean about those Nordic type skiing instructors? I'm on Richard's side -- you're just too big a girl now to fit in that baggage compartment anymore. Besides, cockpit-type airplanes are scarce. But I read every word of every letter we get from anybody, as soon as Robbie gets done with it. It's only when I begin the makeup of this lettercol that I ignore some letters and chop, carve and mutilate the rest -- not with scissors or bluepencil, tho. Sometimes I get part of a letter typed before I remember I was going to throw it out. But I do decide which sequence I'll publish 'em in, which letter follows which -- I never pile 'em up and just take whichever comes first. Part of the time, I'm thinking about the next guy's letter instead of the one I'm working on, or what the whole lettercol will read like, and some very interesting things get erased outta here and typed over.

+ But you, Ritchie, Lynn Hickman, Lew Grant, Robbie and I -- we've got the makings of a whole, dang squadron in fandom! All grounded.

LEWIS J. GRANT, 5333 So. Dorchester, Chicago 15:

Got a big kick out of the article on flying. It took me back to 1946, when I flew for the first time. I was an obnoxious CAP kaydet, and used to get 15 min. flying time for two hours of miscellaneous labor, such as washing windows, sweeping floors, or cleaning planes. I particularly remember one steaming hot day when I cleaned the inside of one of the old surplus Cubs we were flying, the ones with the full view and the fold-down door. ((+Mice?+)) Over a period of four years I accumulated about forty hours of "observation" time in my log book. A lot of this was doing gentle maneuvers, although we were never allowed to make takeoffs or landings, and one pilot I flew with had an interesting instruction technique. He insisted that we fly with the tip of the stick held in three pinkies. He had an instructor who---

+ Wait, let's not spoil it for them. Let's leave it right there. I think you ought to be CO of our squadron, Lew.

Someone has now discovered a stable orbit which is a big ellipse passing close to the Earth and Moon. . . . You build a big space station and put it in this orbit. You shield it from sun storms by covering it with rock shot from the Moon. Then you ferry passengers up to it at each end, and they travel on this "shuttle" between the Earth and Moon. ((+Be very handy to have this ferryboat stocked with provisions they'd need during the trip, too--not have to shoot the provisions along with 'em each time.+))...It would be much more sensible to manufacture it on the Moon. ((+Yep, not only the provisions but the whole station, itself.+))...To cut down on the handling of components, we mold the material into modularized shaped blocks, ready to be glued together. What do we have? A brick moon!

+ I thought of another way, once -- and you'd only have to start with
+ the old standard inflated-plastic-balloon space station, whether it
+ is a revolving wheel or big drum or whatever shape. But instead of
+ solving its sewage disposal problem any other way (shooting it off
+ to incinerate entering the Earth's atmosphere, maybe) you have the
+ crewmembers on latrine duty take the stuff outside and plaster the
+ surface of the station with it. In time, you'd have a very good
+ shield against space radiation. It might even become a problem.
+ For a while there, I had visions of this big ball floating in the
+ sky, growing larger and larger as time went by -- then Poul pointed
+ out that the larger it grew the more, er, sewage they'd need to cover
+ it, which would become pretty rough on the crewmembers if this were
+ to be taken seriously. But now, if it's a passenger-shuttle ---!!

JOHN BERRY, 31 Campbell Park Ave., Belmont, Belfast 4:

My gosh, these g2's are fairly flipping in my letter box over here...I read and digest one (and the taste's good) and by the time I've mentally formulated a letter of comment another one arrives with the same result.

+ Sorry about the letter box, John. Would it really cost much to have
+ a larger one put up?

What I cannot understand, is, why not have a special fund for Rick devoid of any TAFF connections? After all, it was done for me in 1959, and it didn't hurt TAFF one cents worth.

An interesting point.....if Rick doesn't accept, Big Bill has already stated that '64 would be a bad year for him. Would that leave '64 clear....with this hyper g2 activity and action in the fannish field, you might even consider standing yourself.....

+ I'm more likely to get together with ATOM to form a club of Those-
+ Who-Can't-Afford-TAFF than to entertain any thoughts of becoming a
+ candidate myself. As you know by now, Rick hasn't accepted and '64
+ was very clear -- and a special fund for Rick has already been sug-
+ gested in this lettercol, too. But Rick hasn't said a word about it
+ at all. In fact, when I told him fans would do most anything to see
+ him go for TAFF, he said I didn't know what I was talking about and
+ I said he didn't know fans as well as I do and there we were both
+ lying in our teeth, probably the two most stubborn fans there are.

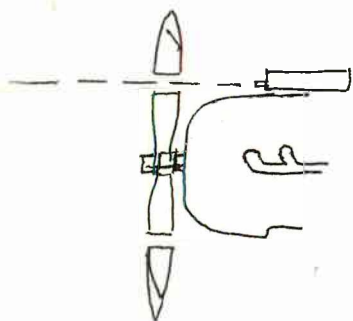
One more thing...if Rick is coming over in '64, well, that's ten years since I joined fandom....I was thinking of producing a circa 100 pager with, say 25 of my best stories, and I'd most delightedly give all the profits to the Fund, you could dispose of them Stateside.

+ Len Moffatt, would you phone Rick's house and see if he's all right?
+ I think I just heard a thud.

TERRY JEEVES, 30 Thompson Rd., Sheffield 11:

Hope you can read this scrawl. ((+Ohgawd!+)) The typer's under a load of junk, so I'm forced back on a method which pre-dates even the Spad. I see Tucker has a problem as to how guns fired through

the prop. The answer is quite simple -- each blade had a missing section (see diagram).



The bullet passed harmlessly through the gap and clobbered the Hun. As a point of interest, our gaps were shaped like this:

The German type was basically different:



being designed for propaganda purposes.

The French naturally had a design of their own:



--more suited to their national tastes.

I trust this answers Tucker's query, and if you are interested I will also explain how they got around the problem of prop-end flutter caused by the gap halfway along the blade. Some unsung genius filled it with wood (see diagram):



This brought further problems as may well be imagined, and these were solved quite easily by the

invention of the jet engine, which was little used in World War I except by Herr Doctor von Krueger against G-8 and his Battle Aces. However, owing to the great number of blades in the turbine, it was decided to re-institute the synchronizing gap with one major difference. For reasons of manufacturing economy the gap was placed in the bullet. This of course led to the whistling "Pe--eeow" noise now accepted as the standard (Mk.1) noise for bullets. This sound has even been accepted by the hyper-critical "Board of Western Gun Shots Censors" who must append their certificate to the sound track of the film.

+ Jeeves, you're a scoundrel. Everyone else's letter, I chop. But
+ here you go chopping up my lettercol with your fool diagrams. Can't
+ have this sort've thing, you know. Bad for the troops. And now I'm
+ torn between desires to recommend you as armorer & grease monkey for
+ our squadron (aren't flitting about in a Tiger Moth over there, are
+ you?) or as crewmember for that space station we've just mentioned...

HARRY WARNER JR., 423 Summit Ave., Hagerstown, Md.:

I never would have believed it could happen. Only four issues of g2 pile up on me while I'm getting over another broken hip. ((+Well, at least you've run out of hips to break!+))....I suppose that I'm the only fan remaining who is still thinking about the TAFF situation ((+oh, no--there are still two or three others+)).....

In the latest issue, I was completely enthralled by Robbie's article, although it impinges on my own experiences no more than if she'd been writing about her orbital flights, because I've never flown. One thing that would prevent me from piloting a plane would be my fear of myself: if I had enough gasoline I'm quite sure that I couldn't stop me from turning the nose eastward and landing in whatever part of the European continent I happened upon. (And maybe you know the answer to something that has been bothering me. Every time I read about Lindbergh in this or that capacity, I wonder how long it has been since anyone has duplicated his one-man flight to Europe as a civilian. I'll bet it's been decades. Just think, Glenn and Schirra and the rest may not only be the first, they may be nearly the last men to make these orbital flights.)

+ Oh, you're in a fine mood, aren't you! And you're just as wrong as
+ can be, too. Practically all American planes sold in Europe, Africa,
+ South America, Australia or Southeast Asia are flown there now--and
+ quite often by the guys who buy them. Quite a few one-man flights

+ are being made across both oceans, almost every year (I should have
 + explained that all this includes small, single-engine planes) but most
 + pilots prefer company. Some even take the wife and kids along. There
 + is one old granddaddy who reached Australia this year on his 30th or
 + 40th ocean flight, all of 'em in small planes, too, I think.

In the January issue, Bob Tucker made it unclear whether you
 invented the wheel or just put it onto the chariot for the first time.
 He doesn't even go into the question of which came first, the wheel or
 the chariot, since neither is very useful without the other. I have
 always wished that the wheel had been left uninvented until modern times
 so that I could have been the inventor. I don't want the glory and the
 honor of this discovery, but rather I would like to try to do a better
 job of inventing it. I would make every effort to invent a wheel that is
 not round.....

+ You left out the diagrams, so I'll not publish it.

There was a big todo in FAPA a couple of years ago about speed-
 ometers. After the best minds had considered them, there was general
 agreement that speedometers are unreliable above 50 mph or thereabouts,
 because the designers like a nice, symmetrical dial which can't cope
 with the increased rate of advance of the needle at higher speeds, so
 most reports of astounding top speeds for modern vehicles are exaggerated.
 I don't contend that you failed to get up to 100 mph, but you might ask
 someone who knows if your particular instrument suffers from this problem.

+ Tsk. You're as bad as Jim Caughran who, when I said I used only ethel
 + gas, told me to stop using that premium high-octane stuff which little
 + engines on small cars are not built for. As for the speed-gage, those
 + best minds you mention might also have realized that if you get the
 + needle on accurate reading at 50 mph, it'll be inaccurate down at the
 + other end around 0-10 mph -- and who the hell cares whether he's doing
 + exactly ten miles an hour or not? Most speed-gages in good cars have
 + been given this correction. One of the first things I did with my new
 + bus was take it out on a marked-milage course and drive exactly one mile
 + in exactly 60 seconds. My speedo was correct on 60 mph, all right.

+ When I say I only use ethel gas, what I mean is that I never buy gas at
 + a two-pump station, one that sells only regular and premium. I always
 + choose a three-pump station that sells regular, ethel and premium high-
 + blooie juice, and I buy the ethel. I have my car tuned up with the
 + engine running on that ethel juice. I never buy regular because on
 + trips it can be murder, especially after you've tanked up at a few of
 + those rural gas stations. Those farmers like big cars that use premium
 + juice; the only thing they buy regular for is tractors and farmyard
 + powerplants. And most of those rural gas-station owners don't hardly
 + make butter&egg money, so they cut corners, like filling the storage
 + tank under their regular pump half-full of kerosene. On farm tractors
 + and powerplants you'd hardly tell the difference. On your car, it can
 + make a hellova difference -- but what does he care? He'll probably
 + never sell you another gallon of gas as long as he lives.

+ But your letter arrove much too late to get into the TAFF windup here,
 + Harry -- and as you can see, I've kept it pretty much out of this
 + lettercol. So it got chopped. I have two more letters here that I'd
 + have to chop unmercifully, just to keep from rambling all over the lot,
 + so I don't think I'll use 'em at all, even tho I got a good deal of
 + pleasure out of both. Matterofact, I think I'll end this lettercol
 + right here. This will do for one issue.....

Joe Gibson
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El Sobrante, Calif.



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