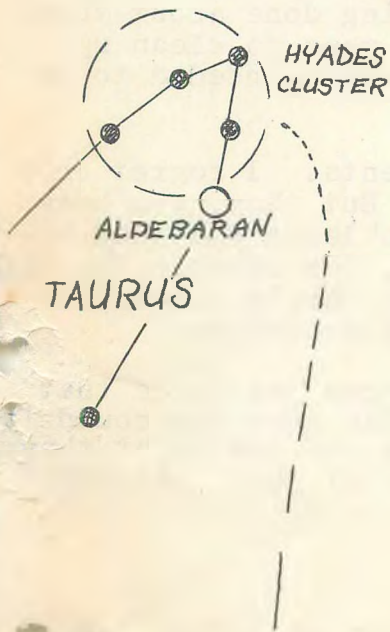
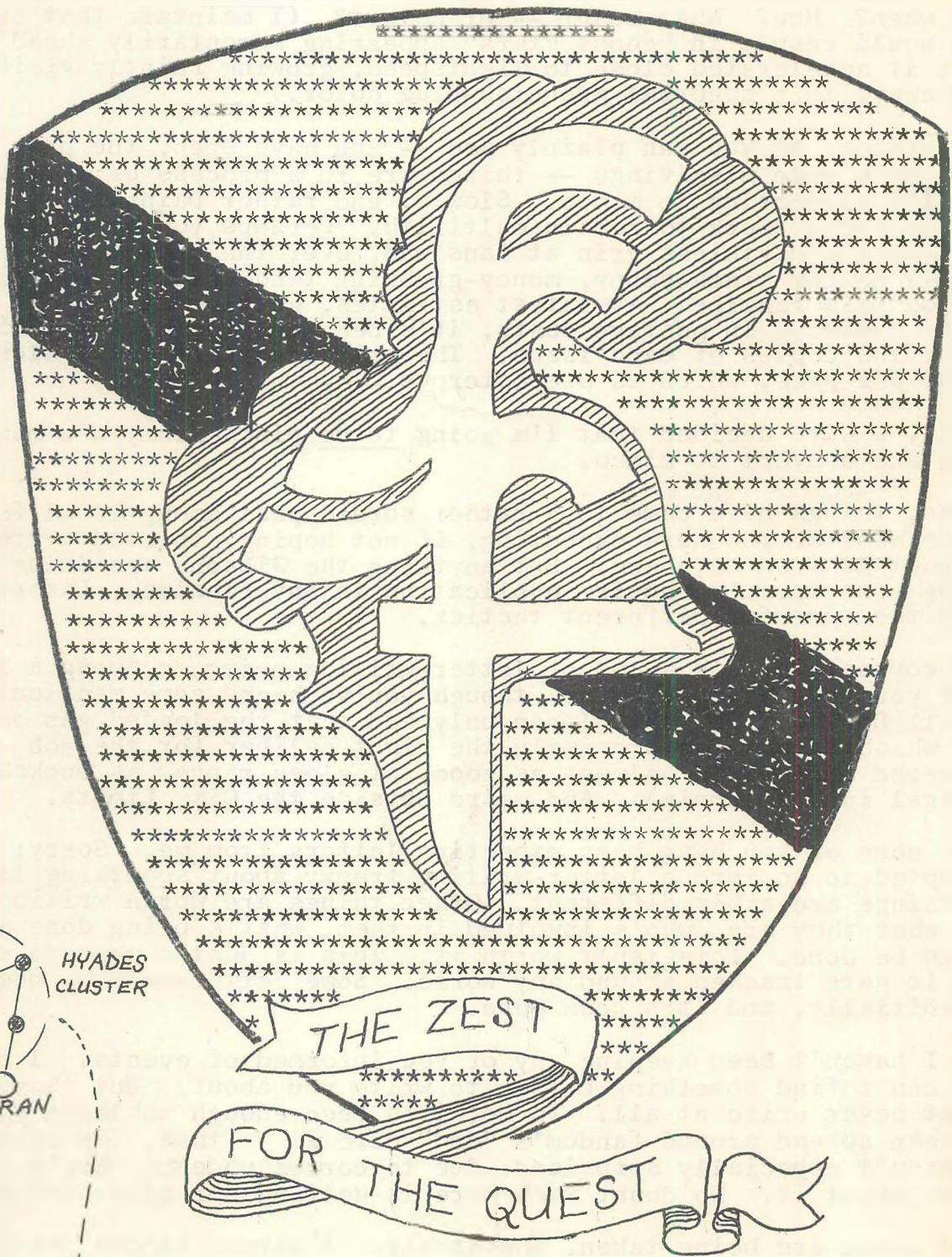




THE MAGAZINE OF SPECULATIVE  
SCIENCE-FICTION



FEBRUARY 1964



# Noise



Something else has come up since last issue's cover illo depicting "A View From The Bridge" -- perhaps something more in Roy Tackett's line, or maybe Steve Tolliver's. It was first suggested to me by Len Zettel, last time Robbie and I decided to do our laundry in Sacramento; it was suggested again by Rog Phillips while in the throes of enjoying

having been chosen for a second-year-running to have a story appear in Tony Boucher's BEST DETECTIVE STORIES OF THE YEAR.

It's simply this: at what point, during a starship's approach to light-speed, would radio waves become visible -- and would they become visible? If so, when? How? What color -- or colors? (I maintain that such a phenomena would result in "ghost stars" appearing momentarily ahead of the ship as it accelerated close to lightspeed, growing faintly visible, then fading away, in a spectral greenish-blue color.)

Otherwise, as you can plainly see -- and have seen, the past two months, perhaps with some misgivings -- things are in a process of change, around here. I'm converting to mimeo. Slowly, and rather painfully. Present plans are for artwork to remain multilith. Perhaps you can join me in a rather wry and mirthless grin at fans who, over the past three years, have ranted at me for pinch-penny, money-grubbing tendencies in charging sub rates for this fanzine. At latest estimates, getting it run off in a print shop and figuring in postage costs, it's been costing me about 35¢ per copy for 100 copies of each issue. The printing&paper costs alone ran to \$1.35 per page, which is preposterous.

Well, I have decided that I'm going to be pinch-penny and money-grubbing by damn and convert to mimeo.

Also, things have come to a rather sordid past among local fans, here. I'm sure some of you were expecting, if not hoping, to read a great deal more about it from me, here. But anything the Gibsons are doing about that stinking mess doesn't require publication in any fanzine. Later, maybe. This is the time for different tactics.

Of course, there's a lot of letter-writing going on among a lot of you. None of you have heard from me, though you've heard some mention about me from Bill Donaho. To that, I can only add that the loaded gun on the mantle is one which I consider precisely the right caliber for the job -- a Hahn CO<sub>2</sub>-powered 'BB' pistol almost as good, at close range, as buckshot (which is illegal in California). And we're outside the City Limits.

But some of you have been expecting letters from me. Sorry; I'm not at all tempted to go into a letter-writing frenzy about something like this. Other things are a bit different. Other things are worth writing letters about: what they are, who's involved in them, what's being done about them, what can be done. This isn't worth it. This is just a mess to clean up before it gets tracked around any worse. Some letter-writing needed to be done, initially, and it's been done.

So I haven't been keeping any of you informed of events. I regret only that I can't find something better to write you about. But then, you know I almost never write at all. To me, it's been enough to learn what had already been spread around fandom's "dnq" circuit -- that, for example, British fans weren't especially surprised, due to correspondence they'd already received about it. No doubt much more is getting spread around now.

And sides are being taken, inevitably. I warned fandom just once that it was heading for exactly this kind of an explosion. The ones who couldn't do anything about it got busy telling me how wrong I was and how right they have always been. The ones who could do something about it just listened and sat on their hands.

So I'm ready for it. I hope you are.

Anyone looking to see when their subscription runs out will find it somewhere back in the lettercol....

All right; class will please come to order...

I have decided to do this quietly.

This is the final session on our local star-cluster which, as clusters go, is a relatively minor and insignificant cluster without much of anything astronomically interesting about it. By and large, the textbooks ignore it. Yet there is only one title I can possibly consider using for this last symposium:

*Part Three (Conclusion)*  
 THREE  
THOUSAND  
 SUNS!!!

But I'm doing it quietly.....

We've just about exhausted the value of any astronomy books in this exploration of interstellar space. We're reaching the point where scientific facts become negligible or nonexistent.

The astronomy books like to tell us that our Solar System is on one of the spiral limbs of the galaxy, about three-fifths of the way out toward the galactic rim. This is often illustrated with a stylish, little "chart" of the galaxy that has an arrow pointing to a tiny dot, and with the caption underneath explaining that's where our Sun is.

The sector filled with our local star-cluster, roughly some 100 light-years across, might also be included within the tiny dot on such "charts". The great spiralling lens of our galaxy is 100,000 lightyears in diameter, something like 1,000 lightyears thick at its center, and contains some 125,000,000,000 stars.

The cluster within our tiny dot contains no really impressive giant suns. It has Aldebaran, 36 times larger than our own sun; but it has nothing like Epsilon Aurigae, 75 times larger than Aldebaran -- or 2,700 times larger than our Sun. It contains no vast number of suns; most of them are smaller and fainter than our Sun, too. It has no noticeable clouds of interstellar gas, neither luminous with starlight glowing on them nor jet-black shapes blocking off starlight from behind them. It has no densely packed groups of stars, nor any exploding stars.

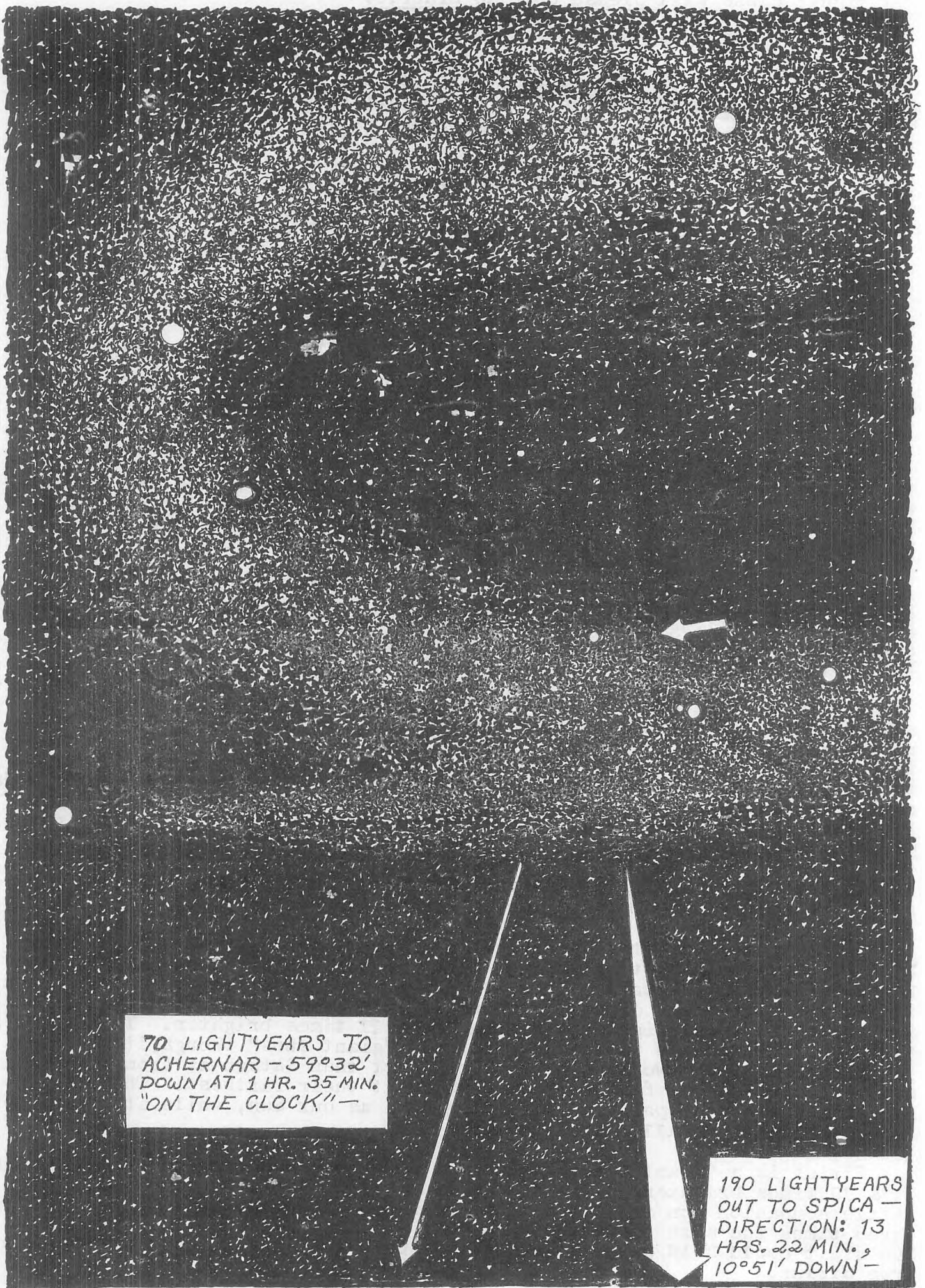
It does have suns with planets. But very few of them may be Sol-type suns -- and very few of those may have Earth-type planets.

It does have variety. Arcturus is about 23 times bigger than the Sun; Vega, tho, is only  $2\frac{1}{2}$  times bigger than the Sun, but is about 60 times as bright. Altair is rotating so fast, its equatorial diameter is half again as large as its polar diameter; overall, it's about twice the size of the Sun and nine times brighter. Fomalhaut is 11 times brighter. Then there's Alpha Centauri listed among the cluster's "giant suns" though it isn't a giant at all; it's two suns no farther apart than Saturn is from the Sun, at their closest, no farther than Neptune at their farthest. The bigger, brighter one of the pair is almost the same as our Sun, while its companion is only slightly smaller and fainter.

Sirius is a "giant" only because it's so hot. Only twice the Sun's size, it's 30 times brighter. It's also a binary like Alpha Centauri, but its little companion sun is 10,000 times fainter -- a white dwarf only about three times the size of Earth! However, its mass is about the same as the Sun's; it could hold planets in orbit, though they'd get their radiant heat from Sirius.

Moving on through our cluster, the next "giant" is Procyon -- only 1.7 times larger than the Sun and 6 times brighter. Am I boring you yet? Then comes Pollux. But then we come to Castor, a "giant" which any good telescope reveals as six little suns arranged in three pairs, all whirling around madly. Any of 'em could have planets, each world basking in the





70 LIGHTYEARS TO  
ACHERNAR -  $59^{\circ}32'$   
DOWN AT 1 HR. 35 MIN.  
"ON THE CLOCK" -

190 LIGHTYEARS  
OUT TO SPICA -  
DIRECTION: 13  
HRS. 22 MIN.,  
 $10^{\circ}51'$  DOWN -



OUR LOCAL STAR-CLUSTER: We're standing off from it, out beyond Arcturus which is that first giant sun, up there; then it curls back past Vega and Altair, with Fomalhaut off on a little limb, and sweeps across the Alpha Centauri/Sirius/Procyon group to Pollux. Curling deeper into space, it touches Castor, Capella and finally Aldebaran -- but with another limb stretched out to Regulus. Is this where the small, faint suns are? Probably not; in other open clusters like ours, the star patterns are haphazard. But this luminous stream through the giant suns probably does exist -- as a stream of illuminated interstellar gas, its glow perhaps brighter than the faintest of visible suns, due simply to the bright glare of those giant suns along its path. Or such gas may not have enough density within our cluster to glow even that much; I can only say that I've seen reports stating that such gas-density is a very definite limiting factor to the astronomical observations we may expect to become possible from a space station!

I've left plenty of other little light-motes scattered around to account for some 3,000 suns. And of course, some of them will be within that luminous path.

One more factor, in comparing other, similar open clusters to ours, is simply that they are clusters. Suns normally arrange themselves into such clusters throughout our region of the galaxy.

Between them, space gets relatively empty.



total warmth of all six suns -- I wonder if the natives get along, at all? Then, Capella is another Binary with the two companions no farther apart than the Earth is from the Sun, but with a total brightness 150 times that of the Sun. I hope you're all taking notes? Then comes Aldebaran, 36 times bigger and 100 times brighter than the Sun, one of the few real "giant suns" we have. And finally, there's Regulus, 150 times brighter.

This amount of variety among the "giant suns" indicates what we might expect among the smaller suns (which haven't evolved to such gigantic proportions that, as current theory has it, they'd have swallowed any planets they had).

But where smaller suns are concerned, the astronomy books throw another monkeywrench into the works: most all of those suns are identified by some catalogue number! This may be all very well for astronomers, but it's worse than useless to us. In fact, as Andy Young wrote to us, two years ago:

"I'll stick to catalog numbers that tell me something, like BD or HD numbers ..... It's been bad enough just naming the 1700 asteroids with roughly determined orbits. In fact, the main trouble with names is that we have too many of them already. For example, Castor C is also (in addition to being YY Gem) .. BD+32°1582 and GC 10121. If you go into the southern sky, things can be even worse. For example, consider HD 22053. This star has two durchmusterung numbers (CoD-26°1336 and CPD-26°388); it also has four variable-star designations (Zi 199, HV 3038, 202.1907, and finally RZ Pomicis)." .....

After which, my only thought was that he can be blamed well have his catalogue numbers!

Other than this, I can only repeat that the Saltpeter luminosity function indicates the presence of some 503 suns within 10 parsecs of Earth (32.6 lightyears) and some 1700 suns within 15 parsecs (48.9 lightyears) based upon a star density of 0.12 stars/pc<sup>3</sup> in our neighborhood of space. Astronomers haven't yet located more than half that many -- the really faint ones are really elusive.

And that's where scientific facts end.

Now, let's see what we can do. Let's take it from here in our own quaint fashion, just for kicks.

Our local cluster apparently frizzles out some 25 lightyears from Earth in one direction -- out toward Pomicis and Vega. It streams off in the opposite direction some 55 lightyears, out toward Aldebaran, with Regulus slung out a whopping 77-lightyears-from-Earth to one side.

So all the stars within 48.9 lightyears of Earth would take in our end of the cluster, plus maybe 25 lightyears of empty interstellar space, in one direction; it would take in all the stars throughout the center of our cluster, in the other direction. But it wouldn't include that fanned-out mess of stars, Aldebaran-to-Regulus, at the opposite end of our cluster. It would only reach as far back there as Castor!

I would assume, then, that there are roughly some 3,000 suns in this cluster -- with by far the majority of them being the type of suns which have planets.

Furthermore, I would judge the average mean distance between these suns to be three lightyears; certainly, not much more than that!

And what does this star-cluster look like? Last issue, I "located" the giant suns in the cluster; now, to give an artist's conception of the shape of this cluster, I have poured in the hundreds of smaller, fainter suns so they blaze a trail out among those giants. (Is this where they are? Sorry; no facts are available.)

And so, what does it mean?

For one thing, you might say it means that all the "galactic" science-fiction that's ever been written, if served up on the proverbial platter, could simply be tipped over and poured helter-skelter into this insignificant, little cluster of ours -- and you still wouldn't have used up half its available suns!

Or you might say that all the contrived plots depending on Faster-Than-Light travel could be junked.

Or you could say all this doesn't mean a thing, that we'll still need to reach Earth-type planets, that they'll still be hundreds of lightyears apart, and that nothing known to Science or sorcery offers the slightest possibility that such interstellar travel can ever be done.

Then you can say our so-called "science"-fiction is just a harmless bit of fantasy, and ought to be kept that way; and therefore, Faster-Than-Light travel is a perfectly permissible concept.

And that, within the guise of such harmless fantasy, we should continue to explore the grave problems confronting humanity -- in our own, small fashion with stories about heroes who had an unhappy childhood, even about whole, damned civilizations that've had an unhappy childhood.

You may tell me that I'm trying to destroy what's been accomplished in stf to make it a really adult literature, and "turn the clock back" to stf's adolescent beginnings. If you're at all inclined to do this, you'll certainly claim I want to destroy your kind of stf and replace it with mine -- and then you'll proceed to deny my kind of stf any right to ever be published at all.

I'm certain there's someone around who'll waste my time with such nonsense. There usually is.

And there's one thing wrong with it: you're ignoring what I've said in preference for what you want to believe I'm saying.

Some time ago, I pointed out that there's something wrong with science-fiction as it's written today -- and with science-fiction fans. There's something missing today that wasn't missing before.

I said that science-fiction no longer explores; that instead, everyone claims that "science has caught up with it."

Here in this article, I have just taken you out beyond the reach of science. It hasn't "caught up" here. And this region is far bigger, far more fantastic than one where six-legged beasties gallump over Martian plains or Venus is a steaming swamp-world full of bug-eyed monsters.

This cluster isn't just a pretty batch of stars.

AND THAT'S REGULUS: Thanks to Poul Anderson for suggesting this method of drawing a 3-page spread; slide back the page in the center and you can line the whole thing up. I want to do this again, some day -- and do a better one.

Every Single One of You has flunked the course. In matters of astrogation you're dismal failures. I would not even allow one of you on the Ship's Bridge without an official escort to make sure you touch nothing! // The clues were there, last issue. The title-page illo of "the Ups and Downs of an Interstellar Scout" had the Sidereal Time dial marked at 0800 and 1200 hours -- when any 24-hour dial would be quartered at 0600, 1200 and 1800 hours; why? I said Aldebaran's located between Earth and the Hyades Cluster, so I had to eliminate it from my cover illo -- and there's the Pleiades Cluster next to Taurus; but where, later, do I locate Aldebaran? Clear off on the other side! // In short, hold this issue's 3-page spread up to a mirror if you really want to see that cluster!

Meanwhile, back in the starship: This concludes the 3-part series on our local star-cluster, techniques of mapping it, and related problems of astrogation. Any of you inclined to write me a Loc screaming to High Heaven, please remain in your seats; an Advanced Course in Astrogation is being arranged. The rest of you will find your grades posted at the bottom of this page. That's all; class dismissed.

Or will we have 12-year-old kids writing stf again, because they're the only ones with the guts to do it? To imagine -- to explore?

Maybe well-written stories, too; we do have competent writers today. Or can they write science-fiction?

Stories. Yarns by the everlasting whole-cloth yard. And hardly a damned one of them written yet! You call the Krishna series thud-and-blunder adventure? You think Clement's Flat World was something? Were you impressed by the scope and breadth of Heinlein's History, of Asimov's Foundation series? Did "The Cold Equations" give you a chilling glimpse of what's Out There? CANTICLE FOR LIBROWITZ, MAN IN A HIGH CASTLE, even STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND -- you think that's hot stuff?

Extraterrestrials? Now, look here. Given a thousand years' romp into the stars, we might not even know where our own groups are -- or be able to recognize 'em when we meet 'em. Human? Kee-rist, what does that mean?

What does it mean to us? Why should we do it -- and who thinks he's going to stop us? (I haven't seen a good villain in years!)

Here's the problem: do we need Earth-type planets? Or can we make 'em Earth-type wherever we find 'em? Or can we even build a planet circling a sun that doesn't have any?

What's that got to do with exploring?

Now, do we need the hack-written science-fantasy that stf was in its early years? All that crud, all over again?

Okay, here it is -- here's the wilderness, the Great Beyond. And having kicked around a few notions, here's a "ramjet-drive" starship that just might do the job; at least, it's a start.

We were licked.

We had no modern Jules Verne, no H.G. Wells.

But we just sat there, fat and happy with our idiotic "I told you so!" grins. Science moved in and took our little playground away from us, and we didn't have the sense to move on. Maybe we didn't have the guts, either. Maybe the early ones who pioneered science-fiction hadn't left us their gift; with them gone, nothing was left but us camp-followers. Including Campbell. Including Heinlein. Including everybody.

When science caught up with that, it hurt the general public far worse than it did us.

When science-fiction did explore, we were also beyond the reach of science. All we had was the Solar System and the idea that rockets can work in space. We were condemned, scorned and laughed at for our juvenile "Buck Rogers trash."



ONE inevitable consequence of having received so many letters of comment, the past few months, is that there are a couple of them which I must publish. Perhaps you'll see why. Here they are, with my equally inevitable comments:

```

*****  *****  *****  *****
*      *  *  *  *  *  *  *  *  *  *
*      *  *  *  *  *  *  *  *  *
*      *  *  *  *  *  *  *  *  *
*      *  *  *  *  *  *  *  *  *
*      *  *  *  *  *  *  *  *  *
*      *  *  *  *  *  *  *  *  *
*      *  *  *  *  *  *  *  *  *
*****  *****  *****  *****

```

HARRY WARNER, JR., 423 Summit Ave., Hagerstown, Md. 21740:

On that old TAFF fuss: the most frank discussion of it that I've found appeared in G.L. Carr's Gemzine for February, 1958, written mostly by Don Ford. You can't buy this issue at your neighborhood newsstand, so I'd better summarize the main points for you: When Madle won the TAFF trip in 1957, there were a lot of complaints from British fans who didn't know him as a fan. ((+I'm not surprised!+)) When he made the trip and pleased practically everyone for his personality and behavior, the gripes over TAFF had to shift target and ended up on Stu Hoffman. ((+This is what happened in fanzines; my only activity was in Chicago club fandom, then, and I heard little about any of this.+)) Ford admits that Hoffman visited various fan clubs to seek votes and considers it a wise thing for any candidate to do. Ford says that Madle also made an intensive campaign with fan clubs and old friends by mail. ((+I heard about this, all right -- it was perfectly obvious that Stu hadn't much chance against Madle, who was betterknown in this crowd -- and that candidates known to the fanzine fans (and British fandom), even including Dick Eney, hadn't much chance at all, here!+)) He says that there was no vote buying as such, that the candidates themselves did not complain about the race, but some of the individuals campaigning for them demonstrated a lack of sportsmanship. From various sources, and I am no longer quoting Ford, I gather that Mrs. Carr was the first to publicize the matter, that some of the things she said were based on distorted information. ((+And the point I've made is that the votes which won it for Madle came from fans who don't read fanzines, never saw (and cared less) anything published about it in a fanzine, and whose opinions thus have nothing in common with fanzine fandom's.+)) There were changes in the voting procedure after this series of insinuations and half-charges, and I believe that they were caused by thoughts of what might happen in the future, not what had happened in the past. For the first time, some fans took the trouble to do a little figuring and discovered that an obscure candidate could get transportation to and from England much more cheaply than through the normal method if he invested a given sum in votes for unknown or imagined fans. The fact that this protection was set up does not indicate that the situation occurred.

+ And I suppose they deserve credit for accomplishing at least that bit of something. But while taking steps against something which might happen, it seems to me they not only did nothing, but proved they couldn't even comprehend what actually did happen. Where could an "obscure candidate" even buy votes -- unless he wasn't quite as "obscure" as they thought he was!? And if that were at all possible, how could it happen -- how could he be "obscure" to many fans yet wellknown to many other fans?

+ What I've said was being spread among fans I knew then, Harry, was never spread by being printed in a fanzine. I keep telling you those fans never read fanzines and you just don't seem able to grasp the idea. As if fans couldn't have contact, couldn't hear much about other fans, couldn't have fandom without fanzines. If you have this belief, get rid of it.

After I wrote that other letter, it occurred to me that I should have pointed out a few more items relating to my own reasons for publishing only in an ayjay group (ayjay equals a j equals amateur journalism equals publishing with no financial return at all; see?)(+It may be amateur, but it's sure not journalism.+)) Remember, I published Spaceways for a price and for exchange fanzines for four years, never for letters of comment, and I published Horizons itself as a subscription fanzine for the first two or three years, without giving any exchange copies as I remember. I converted to FFAPA after this for several reasons: I was tired of maintaining a mailing list, keeping track of subscription expirations, wondering what to do when a letter came without the money that the writer said was enclosed, answering telephone calls from the bank about fans' checks bouncing,



negotiating for the remainder of a subscription from someone who had suddenly started publishing a fanzine and now wanted to exchange, and sending out sample copies to people who had sent postage for this purpose. It also seemed better if I published a fanzine that contained only my own material because this way, I could be sure it would see print promptly and I'd have a copy of it in published form. I'd gotten tired of writing material for other fanzines and not receiving a copy of the issue in which it appeared or finding it distorted in grammar or spelling beyond all kinship with the original or discovering too late that the fan who had accepted it had changed his mind and had sent it to another fan for publication. I was tired of sending out about one-half of the press run of each issue to subscribers who never reacted with comments or did anything else except send not quite enough money to meet expenses: the slight loss on each copy in this category didn't bother me as much as the tedious work done in publishing it. Of course, FAPA in the 1940's represented active fandom to a greater extent than it does today. ((+Some who were fans in the 40's wouldn't agree with you that FAPA or any other fanzine-oriented nonsense represented their kind of active fandom at all.+) ) Whether I'd make the same transition under present conditions, I honestly don't know. I still think you're protesting too much and that you'll find yourself joining or thinking of joining an ayjay group pretty soon.

Anyway, if you do gather enough interest to borrow someone's FAPA mailing, pay particular attention to the paragraphs devoted to arguments about all these contributions to the FAPA publications from non-fans, unknown fans, waiting listers, and various other genera. It's odd that you're setting up this straw man about publish-only-apas at a time when there's so much outside contributing that we're having trouble keeping track of how to give activity credit under various situations.

- + Straw man, huh? Okay. When my "Thieves, Whores & Moochers" was published in Shaggy, someone I like very much told me in a quiet way that I was "calling a spade a shovel."
- + I know some fans who've been wishing they had one, lately.
- + What's odd to me is how you can't see there would be no arguments in FAPA about outsiders contributing if it weren't intended to be the very thing I've been calling it: a publish-only apa. I have already accepted the conclusion that you're incapable of seeing that merely having "activity credit" to award members means your apas are Off Limits to many fans I know, and always have been.
- + But there's something else I'd better tell you, too, and be quick about it: I've always considered these "other fans" rather foolish in their repeatedly-expressed abhorrence of fanzines and fanzine fans. In short, I think both groups are foolish.

DCN FITCH, 3908 Frijo, Covina, Calif.:

Naturally, I can't speak for other apas, but as a member of entirely too many apas (SAPS, OMPA, The Cult, Apa X, and Shapa (FAPA Waiting List)--I've dropped M'APA recently, not wanting to run the risk of becoming an apa completist) I'd like to say something about my ideas concerning circulating my apazines among non-members. As a basis, I'm willing to send anything I publish (excepting only material done for super-duper-secret apas ((+Hah! Are you there, Norm Letcalf?+)) which some of the members wish to keep in the realm of Private Communications) to anyone who wants it, though this is limited by my financial resources. I do send most of my apazines to a few people who have indicated that they'd like to continue getting them, but I'm always surprised when such people turn up, and I hesitate to accept cash subscriptions or offers of trading on an all-for-all basis.

There are several reasons for this, and none of them are connected with being Exclusive. I think of fanzines in general, and apazines in particular, as being extensions of correspondence, rather than imitations of professional magazines, and my apa material, therefore, is almost exclusively in the form of Mailing Comments. These are, in general, either incomprehensible or uninteresting to people who have not seen the mailing or mailings in which the topics were presented or previously discussed (and sometimes they're incomprehensible to the members who have seen the mailings, but that's beside the



point). It should be possible, I suppose, to present them in such a way, with preliminary quotes, as to make them more understandable, but this can easily become boringly repetative to the members and may be, for the writer, the thing which makes writing of them Work rather than Fun. In other words, not many non-members are likely to be interested in apazines.

Most of my apa publications have been done at the last minute, under the pressure of a deadline, and with my need for leisurely writing, this does not make for material of which I am particularly proud, or even satisfied. They are usually adequate as informal letters, but not as Publications to be distributed to a wide audience.

I have an intense dislike for typing address labels and keeping track of who should get what, and of making Special Wrappers for overseas copies and of trying to find out from the Post Office what the rates are for various-sized issues to various countries. Furthermore, these apazines are by no means of a standardized size or frequency, and I could accept subs only on a so-many-pages-for-a-dollar basis, thus getting involved in a lot of niggling bookkeeping which I would not in the least enjoy.

These are my reasons (most of them) for not sending my apazines to all and sundry (though once in a while I may send an issue out to a large number of people, usually more in recognition of the zines they've sent me than for any other reason), but it's also possible to comprehend some other reasons, I think; one person (at least) for example steadfastly refuses to print more copies than are required for the apa and her own file, on the basis of "if anyone wants to read apazines, let them join the apa; if the zines are available to anyone, very few people will bother to Create anything" (Considering some of the page-requirement "creativity" I've seen and published, this might be a good thing, but it takes all kinds..... Or, Chacun a son gout

+ Now, this is interesting. Some fans tried to blackball me because  
+ I charge subscription rates for g2, refuse to give free copies for  
+ LoCs, and refuse to trade on any basis except equivalent sub-rates  
+ with other fanzines. So I turn around and criticize the ones who  
+ won't let fans subscribe to their 'zines. So what do you guys do?

+ You proceed to tell me how and why you publish your fanzines or  
+ apazines or whatever. In addition to you and Harry, I should also  
+ mention Dean Grennell's letter in Logorrhea, being in much the same  
+ vein. This is your response when I give you the same medicine other  
+ fans had been trying to make me swallow.

+ Now, what do you expect to gain by it? Is it that you believe if I  
+ will now look into how and why I publish g2, I'll reach much the  
+ same conclusions you have and see that I've been mistaken, that I  
+ will then publish fanzines the same way you do?

+ Okay, let's try it right here and see what happens.

+ Before Robbie and I moved to the West Coast, and for a year or more  
+ after that, I had no desire or inclination whatsoever to publish my  
+ own fanzine. Furthermore, I had no desire or inclination to write  
+ material for anyone else's fanzine.

+ And I had no interest whatever in corresponding with anyone.

+ Since getting out of the Army in '46, in fact, I'd had very little  
+ contact with fanzines -- but quite a satisfying amount of activity  
+ in fandom. But fanzine fans knew little or nothing of me during  
+ all those years, I suppose, except at conventions. By the time I  
+ was wishing I'd subscribed to DIMENSIONS, Max Keasler wasn't ac-  
+ cepting any more subs -- at the same time I was one of the very  
+ few who gave aid and encouragement to attempts to form fanclubs  
+ in New York. I had active contacts throughout East Coast club  
+ fandom, heard all the scuttlebutt on their "grapevine" (which makes  
+ fanzine fans' dnc communications look silly) and participated in  
+ many a smoke-filled room's machinations. I maintained a fair  
+ amount of such activity later, after moving to Chicago. But I  
+ read very little of the fan press (I found it boring as hell) and  
+ wrote no letters to speak of -- certainly nothing like correspon-  
+ ding with 50 other fans! I had no need for that.



\* And writing LoCs to prozine lettercols isn't in any sense compar-  
+ able to writing personal/fannish correspondence -- in fact, I  
+ always considered the prozine lettercols such a minor bit of ego-  
+ boo that it shouldn't even be classed as serious fan activity.  
+ I almost never discussed it with the fans I knew, then.

+ So when I mention fans who wouldn't be caught dead reading any  
+ faaanzine, I'm talking about fans I've known and been active with  
+ during at least half of my 20 years in fandom. I know they aren't  
+ the group Sam Moskowitz ended up writing about in his IMMORTAL  
+ STORY: any more than fanzine fans are -- if you want to find any  
+ of Sam's old crowd, you'll have to look to some of the current  
+ editors & writers of the stf field. And what caused fanzine fans  
+ to withdraw into their own little fandom, back then, also caused  
+ the withdrawal of fanclub fans. So now, the two factions have a  
+ Frenchmen-Hating-Germans relationship that younger fans have swal-  
+ lowed and propagated down through more than six fandoms without  
+ ever perceiving that its origin was in a past event most of them  
+ have never even heard about.

+ But then, Robbie and I moved to the West Coast. Club fans out here  
+ are completely isolated from the rest of their own species -- they  
+ simply can't be reached by a scuttlebutt "grapevine" which functions  
+ with a minimum of fan correspondence -- and so they've evolved for  
+ themselves a rather unique kind of fannish relationships. Unfor-  
+ tunately, to anyone accustomed to the activities of club fandom on  
+ the East Coast or even in the Midwest, these club fans out here  
+ seem so "in-groupish" it's sickening! In fact, the only West Coast  
+ fans we could stomach at all were the fanzine fans!

+ Furthermore, it seemed appallingly clear that if I were to maintain  
+ any contact worth mentioning, I should have to write letters -- and  
+ d'you see my dilemma with that? Most of the fans I knew almost  
+ never write letters. And neither do I. For us, the necessity of  
+ having to write a letter to someone is a matter of pain and sheer  
+ drudgery that's to be avoided at all costs.

+ But I also knew, in that predominantly stodgy bunch of club fans,  
+ a few malcontent radicals like myself who would deign to read a  
+ fanzine, occasionally -- tho of course, this was a most carefully  
+ guarded secret amongst ourselves insofar as our relations with that  
+ bunch were concerned.

+ And so I began publishing g2. And so I charge subscription rates  
+ for it -- so anyone can show their interest in it simply by sending  
+ money; yet those rates are so low that fans who like to write are  
+ not being asked to give a great deal more.

+ But I am not nor shall I ever want to be a happily-conforming member  
+ of your fanzine fandom, Harry -- no more than I shall ever want to  
+ have a great deal to do with the two local fanclubs, out here.

+ Other than this, I should tell you that I simply do not consider  
+ g2 to have even a remote resemblance to what a fanzine ought to  
+ be. Why, man, this wouldn't even make a good, regular "personality  
+ column" in DYNATRON -- and remember when fanzines had so many  
+ columnists you could hardly find anyone to write an article? But  
+ nonetheless, I think g2 will suffice as it is. There isn't really  
+ much competition any more. Seems to me a good so-called "genzine"  
+ in today's Big Fandom would quickly exhaust the capabilities of any  
+ one editor -- that it would actually require the teamwork of a  
+ rather large staff to edit, print, distribute and keep books on the  
+ thing!

+ Go put that in your apazine and smoke it.

+ Anyway, I hope you can see now that every disadvantage you (I've  
+ just noticed how I switched back to answering Harry Warner, rather  
+ than Don Fitch, here; it's meant for all of you) have mentioned on  
+ fanzine publishing had certainly occurred to me, plus some that  
+ may never have plagued you. But if I don't do this, I'd have to  
+ start writing letters to people. For me, this is easier. Much  
+ easier, despite all the disadvantages of it.



What you got here is g2, Volume 3, Number 5 which is a fanzine pubbed monthly by

Joe & Roberta Gibson

5380 Sobrante Ave

B1 Sobrante Calif 94803

which can be had regularly by subscription; or you may get sample copies most irregularly depending on how our discretion feels at the moment. No back issues are available. No trades. Sample copy free if you ask. Otherwise, it's money or check or US 5¢ stamps.

Subscription rates: ' -

Stateside: 3/25¢, 6/50¢ or  
12 for \$1. -

Europe: 3 for 1/9, 6 for 3/6  
or 12 for 7/-.

European Agent:

Colin Freeman

Ward 3, Scotton Banks Hospital

Ripley Road, Knaresborough  
Yorkshire, ENGLAND

(✓) Your sub expires with the Vol. 4 No. 3 issue.

( ) Sample copy.

+ Now, whether you mind it or not, I've got -- lessee, four - five -  
+ six letters from our abovementioned agent which I haven't answered  
+ here. (Yep - we don't write him much, either!) Now, Colin, we will  
+ start with your letter of last September 11th:

COLIN says:

I was delighted to find myself on the cover

+ WAAAAAIT a minnit! How'd Archie Mercer's letter get in here? Only  
+ five letters from Colin, and the earliest is dated October 26th and  
+ what I started with is the November one, not September, and anyway  
+ Colin writes us faithfully every month to report all the imaginary  
+ subs he's been getting. Let's go back to October.

COLIN says:

I like the way you announce that "we" are going to explore space ourselves, when what you mean is that you are going to do the exploring while we are dragged along behind at the end of tow-ropes. I've a feeling that you are going to enjoy the trip in comfort while we are banged around and bruised in the slipstream. Whady'mean, "What slipstream?"

+ O, you hit that interstellar gas at .99c and -- now, what makes you  
+ think I'd do a thing like that? Okay, now the November one:

I was delighted to find myself on the cover of the October g2. I'd been hoping to make the full 1,000 year trip with you, but it's now obvious that you are extending my area as g2 agent and are dropping me off on some weird planet in that capacity. This is promotion? Still, inter-galactic agent sounds more awe-inspiring than European agent. ((+We might get more subscribers, too.+)) May I make one request, skipper? Please can I have Betty Kujawa for "company" or do you need her on board ship as ballast?

+ I'd hate to see the two of you turned loose together on any planet.  
+ Besides, Gene wouldn't hear of it -- not after he's gone to all that  
+ trouble getting an airplane with two engines just so she'll have one  
+ on her side to worry about and stop bothering him about his.

Your own experience is no criterion or measure to go by -- not as a general rule for fandom.

+ True -- but for which fandom? I never saw any general rule that was  
+ any good for more than one segment of fandom, the one that wants it.

Your remarks about apazines were a little unfair, also.

+ It's that British habit of understatement you're showing, no doubt.  
+ I was being most unfair if people took my remarks the way I was  
+ pretty darned sure they would. And they did. Shook 'em up slightly.

You'll earn my undying gratitude if you explain Einstein in simple non-technical terms. I've been trying to find someone for



years who'd do this ....

- + Lessee if I can keep this dang stencil from unshipping its moorings
- + here, this time. All right, Colin, the schedule's set up like this
- + (1) next month, we make planetfall in the Hyades Cluster; (2) in
- + April, we haul freight to the Pleiades -- and I'll give you your
- + Einstein up to your ears in that issue; (3) we make planetfall in
- + the Pleiades, that's the May issue; (4) we return to Earth; and
- + finally (5) we return to the 20th Century in time for this year's
- + World Con. Must get ATOM back in time for it, y'know...

Did Fred Hunter send you OUTPOST by the way?

- + Yes. Enjoyed it, but too preoccupied to do anything about it.

Did you get my letter last month renewing Jimmy Grove's sub?

- + Yes, and Cheslin's, when it comes to that. I've commenced skipping
- + about to avoid personal things Robbie will simply have to write you
- + about, herself, Ghu knows when.

I see and sympathize with your views about having g2 open to anybody who comes along without them having to praise you and your fanzine to high heaven or give you some literary effort of their own in return; but I don't understand you getting mad at all fans who do retire into their own "closed" cliques. It's a natural and convenient thing to do and the system will continue in your spaceship. What are you going to do about it? Police-enforced integration?

- + Colin, it's the damned fools insisting that I've got to do it that
- + gets me roaring mad! First they say I'm a money-grubbing dastard
- + 'cause I don't; then they say if I just think about it, I will --
- + and try to help me along by telling me why they did it. Pressure?
- + Bhoy, do they apply pressure! A real intelligent bunch, I must say.

Maybe it was different in the old days when fandom was much smaller and the interests of fans not so varied. SF was the common bond then. Now it's everything under the sun. Fandom is too damned big. So, you find a circle of fans you get on with O.K. and you stick with them. What's cussed about that? I don't think that any of these groups are closed shops on principle. If a neofan has the same interests and outlook as the circle he'll be allowed in. Fair enough surely? If a new guy can't make contact in fandom it almost certainly means that there's nothing in fandom for him anyway. But your picture of closed, unchanging circles of 50 fans is not quite true. The circles do cross each other and there is a turnover. A long-standing correspondent drops out and a new one replaces him.

- + Colin, if you ever try following the Gibsons around in fannish-type
- + circles, I would suggest that you carry a gun. I honestly don't
- + know if you could protect yourself, otherwise. Nobody has to have
- + any outlook or interests at all common with mine to be welcome in
- + my crowd. All I care about is whether he can be trusted with guns,
- + booze and women. Why, you may even consider that anyone who just
- + reads stf and has a modest collection of it is "merely a reader"
- + and "not a faaan at all" -- but when you go up to call him that,
- + you may find me holding his coat.

- + There went the damned stencil, again. But no sir, what you commend
- + so intelligently would not be fair enough to me if I did it. Let
- + the neofan who can't make contact in fandom's circles come here;
- + I have no polls nor questionnaires for him to fill out. I may just
- + possibly rather know him than some of the creeps I'd have to put up
- + with in those circles. To me, any group of fans who show no regard
- + for other fans' outlook isn't likely to earn much regard for their
- + own -- nor do they deserve any. I don't think fans are geniuses;
- + I've seen too many frauds in fandom who claimed they were, and some
- + were believed. Now it's bigger, we've got more of 'em than ever.
- + But it hasn't changed much for all that. I would quote you my
- + lamentable #2 axiom of a 20-year fan:

Fandom's always had its Alma Hill  
(tho I suppose she's a girl)  
And always will.



+ But see, now -- you could say fans are tolerant and understanding in regard to others' interests, generally much moreso than most people. And you'd be right. You're talking about fans as individuals, tho. Their group behavior is something else. The very nature of fandom precludes any sophisticated development of group behavior; so as groups, their reaction to complex situations is more often primitive and direct -- and sometimes rather savage.

+ Nor is their desire to find their own fan circles anything new; before, they formed such circles of five or six fans, while now it may be as many as fifty or sixty. But it's more widespread, now, and their motives are different. In today's big fandom, many seek such a smaller group in hope of finding for themselves the smaller fandom that used to be.

+ But it can't be done, Colin! The old, small fandom was an isolated group; it had no competitors. It could thrive and persist through a 'fan history' of several dynasties much as Egyptian civilization did. But your fannish circles today can't do that, tho they're trying mightily to define and defend the boundaries of their own interests -- which may run smack through several apas or fanclubs or other "official" boundaries which have little significance. The result is simply that where they do have contact with other fan circles, the result is more often conflict and denunciation than common cause.

+ Sociologically, fandom is a rather unique phenomenon -- which has just evolved to its Feudal Era, methinks. The growth of large fanclubs and their rule over active fandom in the 30's and 40's could be likened to the Etruscan, Phoenician, Cretan and Greek city-states -- they created the World Cons and regional cons as they exist now. The Golden Age of Science-Fiction began then; and in the 40's and 50's we had the emergence of ultrafannish Sixth Fandom, the World Cons became the Big Cons, fandom spreading in all directions like a Roman Empire....

+ And now, we're in science-fiction's Dark Ages with me trying to do the Roger Bacon bit here.

+ It's the typewriter, of course -- needed an overhaul months ago.

Is it only the science ((+Colin continues+)) that interests you on this trip? Interstellar travel and FTL may be difficult hurdles, but the social problems are going to be a darned sight worse.

What are you going to do about love??? What is the starship society going to be like? The same criminal, moral and ethical code that conventional society conforms to now on earth? You seem to have thought the whole thing out so no doubt you'll already have sorted out this little lot. ((+The problem is really what/how much our Ship's Constabulary could enforce. Theft and physical violence are crimes we can't condone; but is a properly conducted duel the same as physical violence? We'd need a long discussion with fans like John Berry and Ethel Lindsay on this.+)) You know what you'll be spending much of your time doing, Joe -- ministering to the religious requirements of all on board. ((+You're just leading up to something.+))

That's how I'd like to spend some of my time aboard -- formulating the new fannish religion. Who's next for the virgin sacrifice? ((+I thought so!+))

#### SOME OF MY BEST FRIENDS ARE APA FANS.

Did I ever tell you that when I first went on the OMPA Waiting List I asked if I could retain my membership without publishing an apazine of my own. I was told that I could indeed do so and this fact was subsequently made clear to all members and waiting listers. I also found no difficulty finding OMPA editors willing to accept my material.

+ Bully for you! Now whyinell aren't there more fan columnists and fewer fanzine editors? How come you're a nobody while you write for others' fmz and suddenly noticed when you publish your own? Or has no one realized that demanding LoCs for fanzines would focus all the egoboo on fanzine editors, that this policy grew out of apa prac-



\* tices (money is evil) and flooded the fan press with fmz because  
 + you simply can't get much recognition any other way?? After all,  
 + if you just write material for someone else's zine, nobody has to  
 + offer you comment -- but they'd better direct some comments to the  
 + editor of that zine if they want any future issues! Hasn't anyone  
 + thought this could be the result??

- \* 1. When contributors to fanzines keep coming off second-best  
 \* in egoboo -- because the editor can, and does, demand it  
 \* for himself -- people writing LoCs soon stop bothering to  
 \* pay much attention to the contributors at all.
- \* 2. Fan writers who would have contributed to others' zines soon  
 \* start publishing their own.
- \* 3. Fanzine editors soon have to write much of their own zine  
 simply because they can't find many contributors, any more.

+ So when I say "You Gotta Publish Or You Aren't In" I'm not talking  
 + about how the Rules read.

+ It's like when I said the early TAFF elections had a stacked deck of  
 + candidates -- that the winners were so obviously going to win, the  
 + voting was a mere formality. Nobody seems to have considered that  
 + the elections of most apas and fanclubs and other fan organizations  
 + for years have had the same "no contest" characteristic.

+ And that just might be a fannish characteristic worth some thought  
 + and discussion.

+ But I'm more than a little interested in the question you've raised  
 + about the social problems of our starship jaunt. My problem, there,  
 + is that I haven't been able to ignore the science. All of it is new  
 + and unexplored. Nothing in science-fiction has come anywhere near  
 + presenting the interstellar frontier as we have here, the past few  
 + months (and others' comments and questions have shaped my answers  
 + here perhaps more than you might suspect).

+ So the science itself is all new material. I've yet to show you an  
 + alien and an Earthtype planet in a rather new light, too. And when  
 + we return to 30th (or 32nd) Century Earth, I've a new aspect of any  
 + interstellar civilization of mankind's future that may intrigue you  
 + -- tho why it's not been treated in science-fiction before now, I  
 + don't know!

+ It seems to me that our social behavior is bound to be pretty  
 + strongly influenced by whatever physical conditions we're up against  
 + on this odyssey of ours. So far, we've just been cooped up inside  
 + our starship. Next issue, that's going to change.

But while you've all fannishly toughened your thoughts for some  
 Gibsonian parody of fandom sealed in a starship, I've had to leave  
 such interests unsatisfied. I knew the whole pack of you would be  
 subjected to a steady series of rather distracting discoveries as  
 this jaunt turned out to be not quite what you'd been led to believe  
 an interstellar jaunt would be.

And that's bound to affect your social behavior.

So I knew from the very start that this wouldn't evolve into a ser-  
 ious debacle wherein I'd have the role of dictator to a captive fandom.  
 Instead, I have purposely alluded to "the Captain" as some mythical  
 character to whom even I must answer -- my role is simply as Chief Scout  
 of this expedition!

But sometimes the Chief Scout had better be ready to overrule even  
 the Captain. . . .

Incidentally, Colin, we've no more idea than you had who renewed your  
 subscription to STARSPINKLE. Whoever it was there in England must've  
 known you liked getting it more than we could tell, and I'm glad that  
 they saw you'd be getting it airmail. Ron Ellik told us, but he thought  
 you'd renewed it yourself at the time.



AN OPEN LETTER TO GEORGE SCITNERS:

Dear George,

In this, I am going to adhere to the lamentable #1 axiom of a 20-year fan:

Never name names;

Just publish when you won't need any.

But I'd prefer everyone to know the Gibsons agree wholeheartedly with your recently-expressed contention that Berkeley fans are unbelievable. For the past four years, we've been wondering when this bunch of idiots would ever realize just what they've been letting themselves in for -- even tho' we'd never been told just how serious this situation had become.

It's only recently that local fans have broken their 4-year conspiracy of silence. Until a year ago, Robbie was working in a police department -- if we'd heard any of this, there'd have been some action before now -- but perhaps that isn't why we weren't told, since a few other local fans were never told about certain events, either. And then, instead of now, I might've quoted a certain case history from a police reference book which tells the cops not to class child molesters with any of the relatively harmless sex deviants; it's about the guy who molested children for years, but adults thought him so nice and harmless or were so shocked that he escaped apprehension -- until finally he got two 6-and-7-year-olds and he didn't want to hurt them, really he didn't, so he strangled them first. I would admit I'm no psychiatrist to judge any such case but the police don't think they are, either. If they find one, they just don't take chances.

But for that bunch in Berkeley, apparently it took the prospect of a World Con to loosen a few reluctant tongues; perhaps the responsibilities of four guys trying to put on that World Con finally evoked some slight concern. After all, a Convention Committee has a little bit more to consider than might occur to someone just planning a local fanclub meeting; but nobody need tell you that.

However, it has become obvious to me that many Berkeley fans don't want to bother about any problems this four-man World Con Committee might have to contend with -- I have never felt happier that the two Berkeley fanclubs have absolutely nothing to do with putting on the World Con, this year -- since it must occur to you, as easily as it does to me, that if those local fans had done a single, damned thing about this (oh, they did tell the guy it wasn't nice!) then a committee trying to put a World Con together wouldn't have had to deal with it.

But this Committee gradually was forced to realize that they would have to deal with it -- that they couldn't depend on the local fans to do a goddamned thing. In the light of this behavior, George, I'm afraid the answers to the other questions you raised are all too apparent.

As an old diehard Chicago anarchist has said, "If you got 'friends' like that, who needs enemies?"



OKAY, NOW that I've been able to answer some of my mail around here, the rest of you can start writing Letters of Comment again with some reasonable expectation of seeing 'em in print. // The other night, somebody (I think it was Bill Donaho) was saying that I must have lost contact with many of the fans I used to know. This is true. The majority of fans I caroused with on the East Coast do not get g2, nor do they want it -- or any other faaanzine, thank you! But still they'll hear of anything happening with me that's interesting. You see, Jean Engel would tell them. Or Sam Moskowitz. And the same applies to Chicago fans who'd pump either Lew Grant or Rosemary Hickey. But the majority of our old friends would only scare us out of our wits if they ever wrote to us; we'd know some awful thing had happened! I am moved to add that when any fanzine fan starts bellowing that Fandom Is Just A Goddam Hobby I find myself staring at him in awe; to the fans I've known, one visit to some club perhaps every 3 months for an after-meeting bull session can be quite enough 'hobbying' apart from one's reading and one's particular collection. // But I've always circulated a bit more than fans whom I've known, it seems, and usually without their approval. Thus, on Bixel Street, I rambled thru several LASPS factions of that time and was claimed by none -- a law unto myself. In the latter years in New York, I attended ESFA and was an active member; but I also went pub-crawling in the Village with the mob from Mason's basement -- something few ESFA members would be caught dead at! (Still, I'd not attend one Hydra Club meeting -- nor any spaghetti dinners in Queens, either!) But I did read some fanzines; I did have some sporadic correspondence -- Robbie shared a room at the '52 Chicon with a girl who attended with the sole purpose of meeting me! Neither one of 'em ever saw a sign of me; I was up in the Georgia suite lapping Burwell's White Lightning! // But the guys who published fanzines like Art Rapp or Manly Bannister or any of that crowd had scant reason to notice I even existed. Why, Earl Kemp has even said (which I doubt he recalls at all) that the first time he saw me in a smokefilled room, I clutched a bottle of bourbon, and as the discussion proceeded the level in that bottle descended alarmingly but I seemed to show no appreciable effects of it at all. This much was heard about me, and not much else. // But Sykora knew I had a bit to do with keeping his grubby paws out of that first NY regional con, the NYCon; CalThos remembers me... tsk! Pity I didn't publish then!



BERKELEY CALIF

TO: POUL ANDERSON  
3 LAS PALOMAS  
ORINDA, CALIF.

G<sup>2</sup> FROM  
J + R GIBSON  
5380 SOBRANTE  
EL SOBRANTE, CALIF  
94803

PRINTED MATTER