

ARTWORK:

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The above is a new address since last issue, so take notice. GODLESS is available for the usual - locs, trade, review, etc. - or for 50¢ each, 5 for \$2.00. Hopefully, this new price will remain constant for at least a couple of issues. This is Malacoda Press Publication #9.

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THE KING IN PLURAL



WHO KNOWS WHAT
EVIL LURKS IN THE
HEARTS OF ARTHUR? I DON'T

EDITORIAL

You may not have noticed it, but the last issue of GODLESS was about two weeks late.

The stencils were all run off at Ned Brooks' on January 3rd. Within about a week, I'd finished collating, stapling, making out address labels, etc. All that was to mail them, right?

Wrong. Last issue, you may have noticed, was over 50 pages long, containing 26 sheets of paper. There's a simple fan-ed's formula that goes: 6 sheets of paper = 1 ounce in weight (actually slightly less, but not enough to make more than a staple or two's difference). Twenty-six sheets of paper comes out as slightly more than 4 ounces, not counting the envelope's weight. That meant that instead of 16¢ postage apiece, I'd have had to pay 24¢ each. I was mailing out about 150 copies, and that would have meant an additional \$12 for postage, which, naturally, I didn't want to pay.

BUT...there was an answer to my problem. I had merely to mail the zines at 4th class book rate instead of third class, and I would only have to pay 18¢ apiece, resulting in a \$3 difference from what I'd expected to pay.

I knew the regulations concerning 4th class mail: it had to be at least 22 pages, permanently bound, and contain no advertising. The issue fit all those qualifications. Just to make sure, tho', I took a copy down to the Fort Lee post office (this was while I was still in the Army remember) to get the postmaster's approval.

And he didn't. "That's not permanently bound," he said. "It can't be permanently bound with staples."

I took his copy of the Postal Regulations from him and pointed out the specific passage, pointed out the fact that in no way did it specify what "permanently bound" meant. I told him that I had magazines just like this in my collection fifteen years old, and they hadn't fallen apart yet. "Nope, that's still not permanently bound."

"Look, look," I cried, picking up the zine by the corner of one page. "I can pick it up like this and it doesn't fall apart." (If the bacover had decided to fall off at that moment, tho....) "What the hell else does permanently bound mean?"

"Well, uhh, err...well, that's not a book. Books are...are printed, and they-

're permanently bound. Yes, permanently bound," he said with a smile of satisfaction on his face. He'd figured for himself what it was "permanently bound" meant, and I could see that he wasn't going to let facts or logic change his mind.

But that figure of \$12 still stood before my mind, and I tried again. I pointed out that the only definition of a "book" in the Postal Regulations was 22 pages, no advertising, and permanently bound, and that, goddamit, yes, staples were just as much "permanent" as a book sewn together with thread or one glued to its spine.

He must have been getting tired of me by this time, because he said, well, if you aren't satisfied with my opinion, you can go to the next higher level and ask the Petersburg postmaster. (Petersburg was the town of about 35,000 directly outside of Fort Lee, and a pretty crummy town it was.) So I said, OK, took the afternoon off from work, and headed to the Petersburg Post Office.

Guess what the Petersburg postmaster told me? "Why, that doesn't look like it's permanently bound to me."

So I argued some more. And the postmaster started calling in consultants, like the customer service manager: "That ain't permanently bound." Finally, they called in this guy who'd been working for the PO for most of his life and he was old. He probably gave Ben Franklin lessons.

Here at last was an honest man. He was given the fanzine and asked whether in his vast experience and knowledge of the ins and outs of the postal system, was it his opinion that this piece of mail was permanently bound and/or qualified to be mailed at the fourth class rate?

He looked at the zine for a few moments, scratched his head, and said, "Damned if I know."

And so it was decided to take the zine to a still higher level, the Mail Classification Office in Richmond, whose entire job was to decide what type of mail was what. The Petersburg postmaster told me that it would probably take about two days to get a reply back from Richmond, and if they thought the zine wasn't eligible, I could take it one more step, to Washington itself.

It took three days for a reply, and despite what I was expecting by this time, they said YES, THIS WHATEVERITIS MAY BE MAILED FOURTH CLASS. All I had to do was write "Special 4th Class Book Rate" on all the envelopes. That took a couple of nights to finish, and then I was able to take them down finally, on the 20th of January (in a snowstorm, no less) and hand them to the clerk.

One thing I forgot to mention was that while I was arguing with the Petersburg people, they came up with a real doozy. They claimed that there was some obscure part of the regulations which implied that 3rd class matter could not be mimeographed, and that if my 4th class application was turned down, I'd have to mail the zines first class. If that was a scare tactic, it did a pretty good job, except that when I asked to see a copy of this regulation, for some reason they weren't able to find it.

I never got back the copy of GODLESS that had gone up to Richmond either. Well, I hope they got a few laughs out of it, at least.

Rather than take a chance on going thru that sort of a hassle again, though, I'm going to be trying to keep GODLESS at the less-than-four-ounce size, including envelope, which limits it to about 44 pages at most. (Depends on the envelope. I may try to get some of those light weight shopping bags like Dave Jenrette uses for TABEBULAN - in a larger size, of course.)

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Nevertheless, guess where I've spent the last three months working? I managed to come up with a 90-day temporary job at the main Phoenix Post Office less than three weeks after I got home from Virginia. The 90 days ended about a week ago as I type this, but I learned quite a bit of info there, and intend to pass some of it on.

Popular belief to the contrary, most of the people who work for the Postal Service actually do care about their work. (True, there are a considerable number of slackers, including a few who even make some of the goof-offs I knew in the Army look good.) But I suspect that the main (or one of the main) reason for lessening

efficiency and service is that the task has just gotten too damned big and complex for one organization to handle, especially when that organization is a government monopoly.

Mail isn't just mail: there are different classes of mail. The basic classes are first class, second class, third class and fourth class, each supposedly a different type of mail with different priorities and handling rules. All the classes can be further divided into three size-classifications: letter-sized, flats (large envelopes or magazines; this fanzine is a flat) and parcels, each handled and sorted differently.

Further, some of the basic classes are divided amongst themselves: For first class mail, postcards aren't handled the same as letters. In third class, they're divided by weight, under and over 2 ounces. Plus, under the third class type of mail, there's regular third class, bulk rate, and non-profit organization classifications, each with different postage rates. (There's also a somewhat separate class for free matter for the blind and handicapped, but it's usually handled like first class.)

I worked in the Mark-Up section of the Post Office, which is where all the forwarding, returning, and charging postage due took place. There, not only did we have to know how to handle all these classes and their subdivisions, but we also had to know what the various markings on the mail meant, and what action we were supposed to take with each class of mail so marked.

There were six official approved markings that could be placed on envelopes by the senders, mostly regarding requests for address corrections and return & forward postage. These six markings were:

- 1) RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED
- 2) FORWARDING & RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED
- 3) ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED
- 4) ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED;
RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED
- 5) ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED;
FORWARDING & RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED
- 6) No markings on envelope or package.

One thing I've noticed about many of the fanzines I've gotten is that there aren't any markings like the above on the envelopes. Usually the most it says is "3rd Class" or somesuch. I've also come across a few instances where people did use such markings, but weren't aware of what action the PO would actually take for such markings. (For example, you'd think that if "Return Requested" was on an envelope, and the PO couldn't deliver it, that they'd return it to you, wouldn't they? No they won't. "Return Requested" is only an obsolete form of #3 above, "Address Correction Requested." All you'd get back is a form with the addressee's new address on it, if the PO has it in their files. Also, with that marking, the zine will not be forwarded to the guy's new address.) So what I'm going to do is go thru the various classes of mail, and explain just what action is taken in regard to each of the markings above:

FIRST CLASS - Basically, 1st class will be forwarded without charge. If undeliverable, it will be returned free, except for postcards. Postcards will not be returned unless marked like #1, "Return Postage Guaranteed." If you want an address correction, add #3, and a xerox of the envelope or card will be sent back to you, with a 10¢ charge, showing the new address it was forwarded to.

SECOND CLASS - This applies mostly to professional magazines and wouldn't involve too many fanzines (Dick Geis said he'd put in for one for SFR, but he's the only fanned I know of that might be eligible). However, you might want to know how long the prozines would be forwarded to you if you move. If you move locally (i.e., in the same city), the magazines will be forwarded free for a period of 3 months. If you move to another city, there's a place on the change-of-address form to indicate if you'll pay forwarding postage for newspapers and magazines. If you check that, the magazines will be forwarded postage due for 3 months. (Even if you just

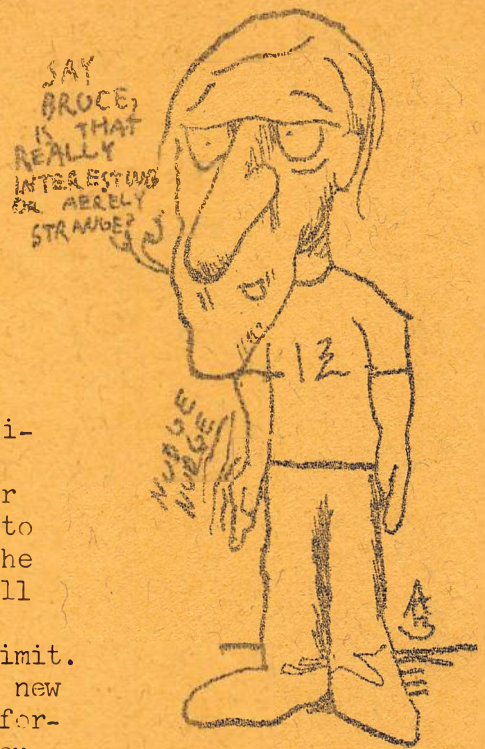
move across the street, if it's inside of a different city's limits, you gotta pay postage.) After the three months, or if you don't guarantee forwarding postage, the old address label will be ripped off the magazine, the new address added, and it will be sent back to the publishers to update their files. If the publisher doesn't bother (and there are some magazines that apparently never do update their mailing lists) and they continue to send the magazines to your old address, those copies will be thrown away or given to various charities like the VA hospital.

There are a couple of ways to get around that 3 month forwarding limit, though. If you're in the military and your move is the result of official orders, all mail is supposed to be forwarded postage free for a full year. A better way for most people, tho', is to put in a temporary change of address; for the date the change will end, put down "Indefinite"; your mail will be forwarded for a full year, including magazines.

There's also a way to get around that one year limit. If your move is local, instead of giving the PO your new street address, rent a PO box and give that as your forwarding address. Supposedly, if you have a PO Box, you haven't actually "moved", you just don't want your mail delivered to your home. All your mail will be forwarded indefinitely (and I saw one file card like that in Mark-Up dating back to 1968). If it's a move outside the city, tho, it'll only be good for a year and you'll be charged postage due for anything besides 1st class.

THIRD CLASS .. Now here we come to what most faneds use, and I'll go thru the various markings on the last page by number. Remember, though, that depending on the weight, the pieces of mail will be handled differently. The first classification is **THIRD CLASS UNDER TWO OUNCES**: Mark it with #1, and it will not be forwarded, out of town, forwarding postage guaranteed or not. It will be forwarded locally. If it doesn't have a local forward, it will be returned to you postage due. No address correction will be provided. #2: It's forwarded locally and dis. The dis envelope will have "Postage Due ___¢" stamped on it. If the recipient wants it, he pays for the postage. If he refuses the package, however, it will be returned to you, double postage due (once for the forwarding, once for the return). #3: The entire piece will be returned to you with the new address marked on it and a 10¢ charge. It will not be forwarded. #4: The piece will be forwarded locally and a xerox with the new address sent you, 10¢ due. If the forward is out-of-town, the entire piece will be returned as with #3. #5: Forwarded locally free and out-of-town postage due, and xerox sent to you. If refused by addressee, you pay double postage again. #6: If the piece is not marked at all, and it's not of obvious value, it will be thrown away, even if the PO has a forwarding address on file. I suspect quite a few fanzines meet their fate right here. According to the PO, "obvious value" means that it is marked "Return Postage Guaranteed" (see #1) or the piece contains merchandise or personal property - and fanzines are not considered as either. (If you mark the envelope as "Merchandise" or "Personal Property" tho, I doubt if anyone would notice the difference.

Now we come to **THIRD CLASS OVER TWO OUNCES** (large fanzines). These are handled similarly to 3rd under two, but with a few essential differences. With #1, if an out-of-town movee guarantees postage, the piece will be forwarded postage due. #2 is handled the same. #3: Will be forwarded locally if of obvious value. Otherwise, the PO will rip off the address portion, mark the new address, and return that portion 10¢ due. The remains will be thrown away. #4: Handles the same as for less



than 2 ounces, except that if the piece is returned to you, you get charged postage for the piece plus 10¢ for the new address. #5: Forwarded locally and out-of-town. If no forwarding address, returned postage due + 10¢. #6: Thrown away if not of obvious value, forwarded otherwise.

FOURTH CLASS - is handled the same as 3rd class over two ounces, except that it's always considered to be of obvious value and the entire piece will be either forwarded or returned.

And that's about it. One thing: if you should just want someone's new address, and not to have a letter or package forwarded or whatever, you can write directly to the postmaster, giving the person's name and last address. There's a drawback, though: the PO charges a fee of one dollar for each address change provided thusly. But you don't have to pay that much, if you use your head. All you have to do is send out an envelope to the person's old address, marked ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED, DC NOT FORWARD, RETURN TO SENDER. It will come back to you (or should) with the new address written or labeled on the envelope, and only a 10¢ charge.

Of course, you can't always depend on the rules I've described above being used correctly all the time. Too many individuals, people who interpret the rules as they see fit, work for the PO and a lot of them aren't particularly well-trained in the first place. There was one lady in Mark-Up who was of the opinion that whenever a marriage broke up, it was always the fault of the wife. So whenever she got changes-of-address on couples who'd broken up and moved to separate addresses, she'd always send the bills to the woman and any checks to the man. I'll admit I even stretched the rules myself a few times: I always forwarded any sf prozines that passed thru my hands (about half a dozen in three months), even if the three month forwarding period had expired. And once I did the same with a horseman's magazine, because I happened to think of Sheryl Birkhead and how much she loves her horse, and figured that maybe the lady the magazine was addressed to felt the same about horses.

I could go further into my experiences with the Postal Service: the lack of air conditioning in the Mark-Up section, how the building - only several years old - was in danger of collapsing (in fact, another similarly-new building in the Scottsdale postal system did have its loading dock collapse recently, injuring two workers slightly; if our sagging floor had collapsed, it would have done so right over the employee lunch room, and depending on the time of day, might have killed or injured as many as a hundred people; it hasn't gone yet, but I'm glad I'm not sticking around there anymore), how if you mentioned the word "union" to anyone in management they'd crap in their pants, the mind-boggling mail-sorting machines that reminded me of that harried worker at the giant clock-like device in Lang's Metropolis, et cetera bloody cetera. But I've already given some more in-depth opinions on the problems of the Postal Service in the first UNDULANT FEVER (available for 25¢ or two 10¢ - or whatever they'll be using by the time you read this - stamps) and I'd rather not repeat myself here.

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I'm planning on producing a FANTHOLOGY '75 at the end of this year, a collection of the best writing to appear in fanzines during 1975. I suspect it will probably be in the neighborhood of one hundred pages long, price still uncertain. The print run will be limited to 150.

I've already started a list of potential contents for the book, but I'd like to have more than my own opinionated choices. Also, while I get quite a few fanzines, I definitely don't get all of them, especially the overseas fanzines. In addition, there is good stuff being published in FAPA, SAPS, and other apas that otherwise isn't available to fandom at large, and I'd like to include such material also.

So, what I'd like is to hear what you think have been the best examples of fan writing so far this year (and for the rest of the year as it passes), whether they come from generally available zines, apa-zines, or even clubzines. If I don't have it myself, I'll try to get ahold of a copy of your recommendation and see what I think of it. Thanks, your help is appreciated.

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This issue of GODLESS is smaller than the last few and it's a trend that's going

to continue. To save postage, I'm going to try and restrict future issues to a maximum of 24 pages. I'm also hoping that this will stabilize the price for subscribers for a decent interval. This issue's giant lettercolumn blew the page count for this issue, but I'll try and keep it down to a manageable size from here on.

That lettercolumn also makes the issue rather unbalanced, I think. No big, controversial or comment-hook-jammed articles like the Elwood article in #8 or my Discon report in #9 in this issue, just my own editorial and a couple of entertaining articles, nothing heavy or unsettling. The letters take up over half of the issue. I enjoy letterzines, but I don't want GODLESS to become one. Maybe someday I'll take a stab at producing a letterzine (even have a title ready for it) but not this year.

Rather than risk getting Bower's Syndrome and continuing to talk about What-I-Want-This-Fanzine-To-Be, let's go to another subject.

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I've decided not to bother running the results of Al Sirois' suggestion last issue of picking the Hugo-winners five years after the fact. For one thing, not all that many people sent in their choices for best sf of 1970, and another was that most of the lists I did receive were near duplicates of the Hugo and Nebula nominees for that year. This could have two meanings: 1) It could mean that the nominees really were the best published, or 2) it could mean that the act of being nominated for an award makes a story memorable and brings it to mind five years later. Or a little of both. Thanks anyway to the people who responded.

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For the first time this issue, I'm using advertising to try and increase the circulation of GODLESS. I just sent off an ad for the 3rd MidAmeriCon progress report. The major portion of the mailing list is (and always will be) people who loc, contribute, trade, or give some sort of personal verification that they know I exist, but I'd like to get a little bit higher percentage of people who pay money. I know I'll never make a profit, but every little bit of cash will help keep this zine coming out. Especially now, since I'm presently unemployed and living off the GI Bill payments (which actually won't start until a month or two from now); I'm looking for a part-time, preferably night, job, but until (and if) then, I'm living on a very tight budget. Another reason for the smaller size.

The ad's mighty nice looking, if I say so myself. It's the first time I've used Prestype (rub-on lettering) and it's damned effective. When I have a little more cash coming in regularly, I'll probably start using it in this zine. I think that I'll get back at least enough response to cover the cost of the ad. Anything above that will be gravy.

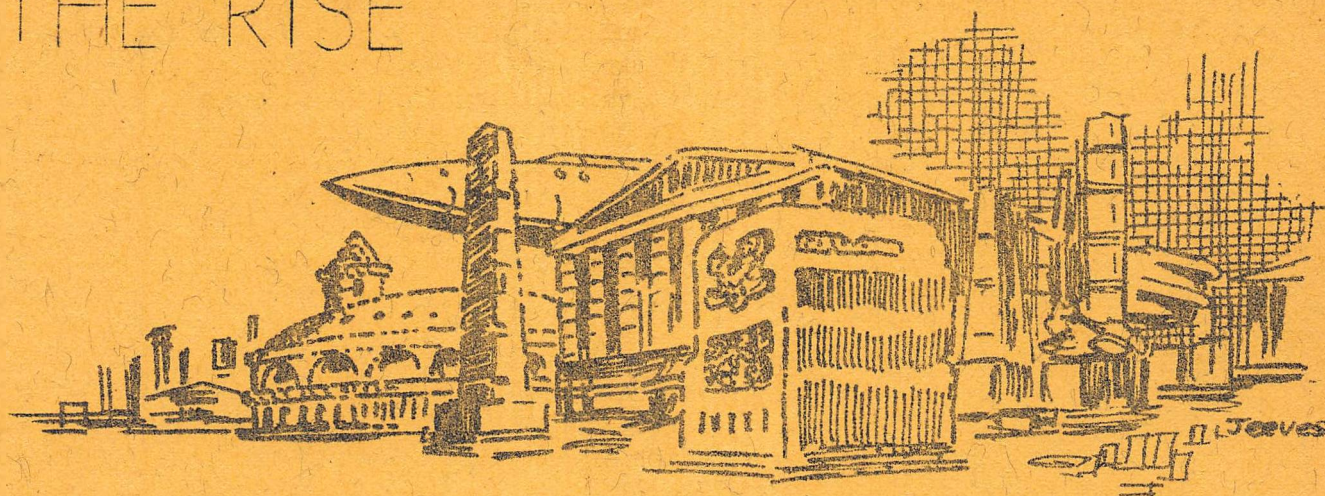
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I've got a few things lined up for next issue, but my contribution file is starting to get a little low again. Take the hint, folks? I've got the first installment of a column by D. Gary Grady, which I seem to have misplaced at the moment, drat. Hope I can find it by next issue. I also have another of Rich Bartucci's parodies, but I've been meaning to read the original story before running his version. I know it's been months now, Rich, and I feel like a real shit about it, but I promise I'll read the original before next issue. There; right out in print; no way to go back on my word now.

And my mind has dragged to a stop, so I'm going to ignore that blank space below and finish this off right here.

- Bruce D. Arthurs

THE RISE



AND FALL OF THE ALEXANDRIA MA-JONG ASSOCIATION

as related by Michael T. Shoemaker

When I was in high school, the clique I belonged to, which most of our classmates called "The Eight Great", was highly respected as the card sharks of T.C. Williams High. We knew every game in the book that was worth knowing, and even some that were not in the book, because we had invented them ourselves. Each person in our group was truly expert in all of these games, and although we gambled occasionally among ourselves, we were more inclined to do so with outsiders, because then we had a better chance to make a reasonable profit.

The wonderful part was that we all had the same lunch period, so every day we congregated at the end of a long table in one corner of the cafeteria and played cards while we ate. When we played, we were in another world, oblivious to all that went on around us, although we raised quite a ruckus ourselves. One day I happened to notice, not just see, but actually take notice of our clique in action from the other side of the cafeteria. At various times they laughed, pounded fists on the table, slapped cards down in an angry manner, jumped up in jubilation, and emitted varying grunts and squeals of ecstasy over a brilliant play. No one paid them any attention because everyone had grown quite used to our antics. The general attitude was, "Those card nuts are at it again." We took pride in our position though, because, by God, we started the card playing fad at TC and we were the best!

Often we would slip away from a school-wide assembly to a pre-arranged meeting place in some empty classroom for a card game. I remember once when we were discovered by an earth science teacher and we thought it was curtains, but he joined right in the game ("These assemblies are dull, aren't they?" he commented) and was thereafter a valued member of our group. He was one hell of a good double-deck pinochle player.

A typical day might find us engaged in a game of five-handed team pinochle (an invention of mine & Ken's):

"Pass," I say. "Pass," Erik and Peter say. "Twenty," says Lance. "Twenty-one,"

says Ken. "Twenty-two." "Twenty-eight." "Pump, pump!" Erik and Peter chant. "You got it chump. I think you're shafted!" and a broad grin breaks out over Lance's face. "Remember, aces to the eldest," says Erik. "Hey, hey, watch that table talk." The play progresses and after a while I get the lead. "Who's out?" I ask. "I am," says Ken. "Ah-ha, it's time to pump trump!" I respond.

Such was the game that contained the marvelous invention of the rotating lead. Then there were the times we played Alpha-Beta-Positive-Negative Bridge. This game, which would befuddle any bridge expert, includes the possibility of reversing the ranking of cards. The bidding might go something like this:

"One heart, Alpha-negative," I bid. "Two clubs, Beta-positive," bids Peter. "Two diamonds, Alpha-positive," says my partner, and I gag while our opponents chuckle, as everyone can see that our hands are mismatched.

Sometimes we played AC Bridge. The name was suggested by Ken because he said the game was like AC electricity, as compared to normal bridge, which is like DC electricity. In this game, the direction of each play alternates, first clockwise, then counterclockwise. We got some really fierce headaches trying to figure out how to be in the correct hand at the right time to take the finesse.

We even invented new techniques of rapid dealing and scoring. We usually scored right on the table itself. This saved us the trouble of keeping track of a score-sheet. Anytime we had to continue a game the next day, the score would still be there on the table, except of course when they washed the table. If you go to TC today, though, you may still find one of our scoresheets written in pencil on a pillar in the cafeteria.

Eventually we tired of even the most extravagant games, because we usually became too expert in them to make it interesting. On one of these days when we were looking for something new, Ken introduced us to the oriental wonders of Ma-Jong. We were enthralled by it, and immediately started playing an adaptation of it for four card decks.

After a while we found the rules to be a complicated mish-mash of vagueness. In fact, we had two or three different sets of rules. At the same time, Lance found a true Ma-Jong set in the attic, which we henceforth used instead of the cards. All of us realized that before we started gambling at the game, we would have to come up with a definite set of club rules with no loopholes.

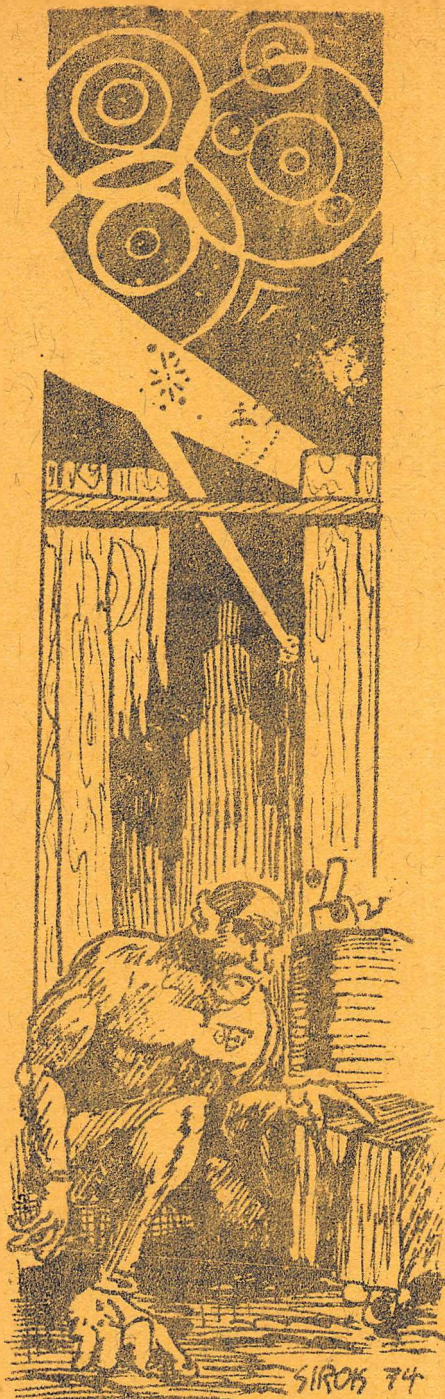
This was the genesis of the Alexandria Ma-Jong Association. We drew up our rules by picking, from the entire gamut of variations, those rules which seemed to be consistent with each other and historically close to the original Chinese game, rather than the Americanized version. Then, of course, we added our own rules regarding the stakes and the payoff of the game. Copies of these rules were dittoed and distributed to the club members, so that there would be no arguments.

We played on and on, at lunch, before school, after school, and on weekends, into the wee hours of the night. Then catastrophe struck one weekend, brought on by a combination of extraordinary luck and playing skill.

In the first game Peter ever played (a game at Ken's house which I was unable to attend), Ken got the first limit hand that any of us had ever gotten. A limit hand is a rare hand in which all the losers pay maximum stakes to the winner. There are thirteen different limit hands and Ken got the Seven Pairs hand. Peter was obviously quite distressed.

That evening, in a game at Lance's house, I too got a limit hand, the Four Winds hand. Later that evening, Ken and Peter came over and joined in the game. On the third hand of the game I got the Seven Pairs hand. Peter was dumbfounded and said that we should eliminate it from the rules because it was too easy to get. "If it's that easy, get it yourself!" said Ken, which seemed reasonable to everyone including Peter. The worst, however, was yet to come.

On the very next hand everyone was concentrating intensely, for it was a very strange hand with complicated interplay of unusual strategies. Suddenly Ken grinned, chuckled from deep within his throat, and broke into an idiotic laugh of



disbelief. He tipped all of his tiles, and lying there before us we saw the Seven Pairs hand. Peter was furious, but his rage was choked by his incredulity. Lance was more than slightly disturbed, although I myself felt the impulse to laugh.

After that day we went back to pinochle, skat, canasta, bridge, and all the others, and have never again played Ma-Jong. Such was the rise and fall of the Alexandria Ma-Jong Association.

- Michael T. Shoemaker

"It's a good thing I can run so fast; I never thought they'd take dealing from the bottom of the deck that seriously."

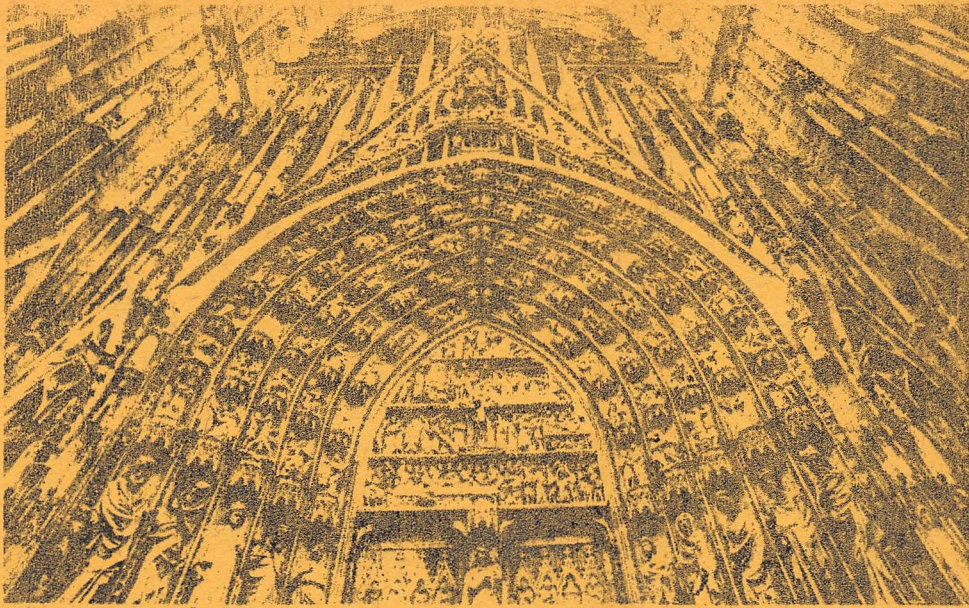
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"Yeh, Wertham was right, all right. Just the other day, I was eating fried chicken with Faruk von Turk, and he pointed out that here we were, two guys who had read EC comics in childhood, and what did we do after we grew up? Sat around tearing birds apart with our teeth, that's what."

- Don Markstein in GLUM SKU BADFU YU #9

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That Tarl Cabot really knows how to hit it off with women.



by Don D'Amassa

Every once in a great while, a first story appears that is so replete with literary excellence and socio-philosophical implications that one's very substance is affected. But never -- until recently -- have two such tours de force appeared in a single issue of a prozine. The February 1975 issue of FANTASTIC is thus an unprecedented milestone within the genre, as it contains both "Dissenting" by Michael Glicksohn and "The Return of Captain Nucleus" by Bruce D. Arthurs. Glicksohn is an ex-snake trainer and a noted authority on certain ethyl compounds; Arthurs is a recluse who has spent almost every waking hour of the past three years engaged in an intensive analysis of certain aspects of our national defense posture. A comprehensive treatment of the complexities of either of these two stories would require a voluminous work, so for purposes of this present brief dissertation, I shall confine myself solely to the religio-syncretic aspects of their works.

The nameless persona of Glicksohn's "Dissenting" is an obvious Christ figure. He spends his time in a "mental liturgy", his meals appear miraculously (an obvious allusion to Christ's multiplication of fish and bread), and he refers to the accumulated paraphernalia of his endeavors as a mountain, an equally obvious reference to Calvary.

Glicksohn reinforces this overt symbolism with a parable-like juxtaposition of a spider and a fly. The fly of course performs a "purposeless ritual", yet another indication of the religious theme underlying the story. The persona spends his waking hours in a ceaseless battle against "meaningless" and "nihilistic" points of view. Additionally there is a brilliant personification of the Devil, subtly slipped in to catch the reader unawares and reinforce the subliminal impact, as we are told that "somewhere a cockroach scuttled". Only the persona, we are told, can confront and temporarily overcome the "monstrous implacability of fate".

In "The Return of Captain Nucleus", Arthurs has cloaked his philosophical-theological message with what appears to the casual

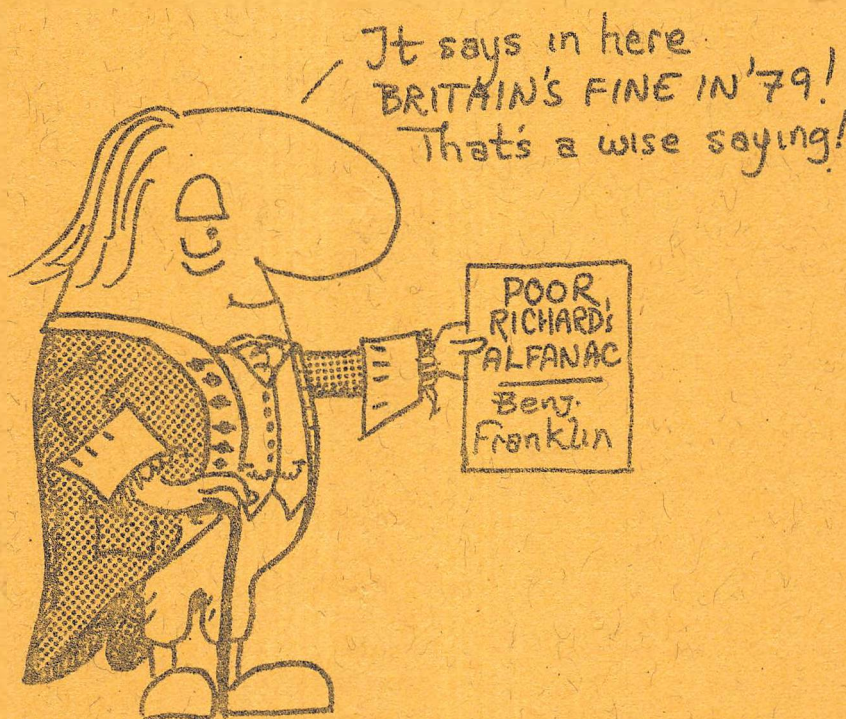
A PRELIMINARY SURVEY
OF RELIGIOUS SYMBOLISM IN THE WORKS OF
MICHAEL E. GLICKSOHN AND BRUCE D. ARTHURS

reader to be nothing more than an adventure story. But a careful perusal reveals that Captain Nucleus is the "savior of Earth", that his opponents come from the "hell-holes of all the planets", and that his personal insignia is "crossed comets". Nucleus, whose very name indicates his primal nature, reinforces the religious theme by asserting that "hedonism is good for the soul", by referring to the Martian desert as that "god damned sandtrap", and by inquiring of Eleena, the girl who deserted and betrayed him (like Judas Iscariot), "Where the hell have you been?"

As it turns out, Nucleus is as innocent of the charge of philandering as Christ himself. Rather than sully Eleena's virginity, Nucleus assumes a homosexual relationship with his assistant, Ugoo the Martian, an obvious expression of Nucleus' (Christ's) love for his fellow man. Eleena herself reinforces the ethereal nature of Nucleus' existence by insisting he is not "a real man", and by calling him a "son-of-a-bitch", referring to his more-than-human progenitor.

Arthurs develops his symbolism further in the final scenes. Three members of the criminal revolutionary group journey to Nucleus' retreat, re-enacting the visit of the Three Wise Men. We are then shown symbolically how Nucleus can infect his fellow man with his divine attributes. How else explain Nucleus' statement when clasped in the arms of one of the criminals: "What is this, a goddamned double-cross?"

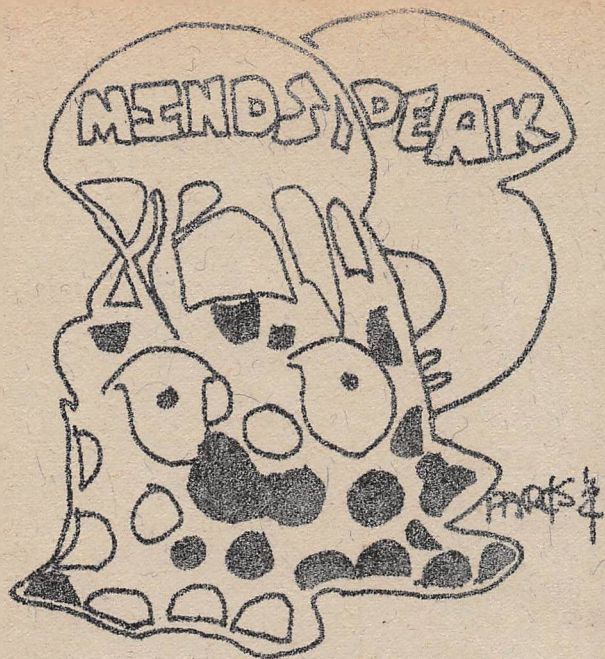
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A bumper sticker for tax reform:

THEY WILL TAKE AWAY MY MONEY ONLY WHEN THEY PRY MY COLD DEAD FINGERS FROM AROUND IT.



* ((Looks like it's going to be a long
+ lettercolumn this time around. Lead-
* ing off will be some late locs in re-
+ ference to GODLESS #8.))
* + * + * + * + * + * + * + * + * +
+ Jackie Franke, Box 51-A, RR 2, Beecher
* IL 60401
+ Since GODLESS is your big, impres-
* sive genzine, I suppose it should rate
+ first call at comments. The cover was
* quite striking. For some weird reason
+ I liked it, though it wasn't particu-
* larly well-drawn. Barnett shows a de-
+ finite flair for design, and with more
* practice should really turn out some
+ splendid work. What I generally look
* for in judging a new-to-me fanartist
+ is a good sense of design, rather than
* good drawing skills. The techniques
+ can always be picked up, but I've
* found (*sigh*) that choosing place-
+ ment, proportions of basic form, and

balance of light against dark seem more of an inherent talent than a learned one.
(Not that design can't be learned as well, but it helps if you've got a good start
on it to begin with.) I'll look for more of Barnett's work in the future to see if
my hunch is correct.

In fact, all of your artwork this issue is good. I didn't like Sirosis' bacover,
but then I'm no fan of the Underground Funnies, and that's the style he's emulating.
If you like that sort of ~~stuff~~ stuff, then you'd most likely like this. I don't, but
that's no big deal. Favorites; Kunkel's lettercol illo on p.32, Grady's lettercol
illo, and Jeeves' spaceship illo on page 5. The rest were okay, but those I liked
best.

I think you gave a very fair subjective view of Roger Elwood, though it's not
what I'd consider a truly objective view, which you may have been shooting for...or
at least that's the impression I got in some areas of the article (not all). Most of
the dubious feelings you have about him I share as well. The number of stories this
man controls is boggling in itself. His seeming lack of discrimination (I also have
to compliment you on recognizing the difference between not having to your tastes
and not having discernible tastes at all). His insistence that stories avoid his
personal phobias. These are all valid points to question in my mind. (His editorial
restrictions don't phase me at all. Every editor, and every truly professional writ-
er faces those limitations daily. It's not stifling to someone whose business is
writing for a living. It's a fact of life.) I object to the control he exerts over
what his writers actually write about, not in the form in which they write them.

I've gone a bit into this taboo bit with Denis Duane, who sees little wrong in
the man inflicting his personal moral code on stories. But I think you said something
in your article which points up my gripe about that situation. "If I were editing, I
would probably be more inclined to accept anti-Christian stories than pro-Christian
stories. So much for my own prejudices." Yes, you just might be so inclined...but it
would be just that; an inclination, not a law set down by you. ("Didja hear about
the restrictions Arthurs insists on? Can't show religion in a favorable light..."
Now, could you really picture yourself editing like that? I can't!) ((I could see
myself editing a specific "theme" anthology of ir- & anti- religious stories, but
not as a general directive, no.)) All editors have pet peeves, all have things they
object about, but most editors, and all the good ones, will toss out those prejudices
and biases if the story is so well-done that it merits publication. I can't see El-
wood ever bending his moral code long enough to permit anything, even a masterpiece,
to see print in one of his anthologies if it conflicts with his beliefs. He sets up

his views as Law, not a guideline, and that I object most strongly to.

Overall, I'd say I agree with your conclusions. But equally agreeing, I'd put a long sigh after each of the "hopes" you expressed. Elwood has done some creditable things for SF, but he's done some shitty things as well. I hope the good will outweigh the bad, but somewhere a small voice says "Fat chance!"

To me the biggest drawback in the study of astrology is the insistence on using zodiacal figures that no longer line up with what they used to when the charts were first established. How can you be influenced by something, assuming you even accept the notion that a planet can affect in you only certain areas (by this I mean it would be easier for me to accept the notion of planetary bodies influencing people if stress wasn't placed on certain aspects of personality being affected by particular planets; it's a gigantic stumbling block for me), if the "thing" that supposedly governs an area of your Id isn't there any more? I'd like to hear some comments on the whole schmar from someone with no axes to grind, no books to sell, no games to play. Hope Jeff cooperates....

Reviews. Blah. I don't read S&S.

Fanfiction! Blah. Blah. I try to avoid that too.

Ah, lettercol, now that I read, with gusto and enjoyment! I appreciated Ben Indick's mention of Tiffany Thayer's Three Musketeers. Mostly because I keep forgetting who the dickens wrote that book. I read it when I was but a wee child, and it was the first book I can remember loaning out and never getting back. I'd read the real novel, of course, but think I enjoyed Thayer's even more. Especially after seeing all the hokey movie versions of it and imitations like it.

That cheap shot you tried in equating wives with pets was below you, Bruce. Tsk-tsk. I won't give you the satisfaction of an indignant response. You know what it was worth yourself. ((At a penny a word, about 39¢.))

Leah Feldes, 21961 Parklawn, Oak Park IL 46237

First off, GODLESS #3 is really too thick to be folded in half, and my copy suffered because of it. Believe me, it's in bad shape. Either put out the money for envelopes, or mail it flat with a piece of paper on either side and staple all four corners. ((Sorry, Leah. I meant to mail #3 in envelopes, but when I collated together a copy, I found that the heavy stock used for the cover made the zine weigh just barely under 4 ounces. Envelopes, or the two pieces of paper you mentioned, would have sent it over 4 ounces, resulting in an additional \$12 for postage. The best I could do was add one piece of paper and fold the zine over to mail. Live and learn, I guess; I've stopped using heavy stock for covers.))

The bacover was much more interesting than the front, which was too sparse for my tastes. With one or two rather noticeable exceptions, the overall appearance of the artwork was pretty good. You really do have too little of it, though.

Not having read any of the Elwood anthologies, I cannot make much comment on your article. Good writing, though. (Yours, I mean, not his.) Has it ever occurred to you that fervent anti-Christianity can be just as revolting and frightening? Extremes always are. Are you any better than Elwood, preferring agnostic and atheistic viewpoints to religious. As you point out, it's all a matter of personal prejudice, and Elwood is as entitled to his as anybody. What I don't like about it, personally, is the same thing I don't like about your standpoint - I don't like missionaryism of any kind. Everyone has his own right to believe or not believe as he sees fit; that's a sacred right ((that would make a catchy slogan: "I have a sacred right to be an atheist!")), and proselytization, in word or deed, belies this. ((The problem is that the missionaries know that they are the only ones who are Right, which would certainly seem to be sufficient justification to preach to people, even if the audience has to be forced to listen.))

Of course, I'm sure Elwood's religious and sexual mores do him in good stead commercially. After all, many of his books are used in high school sf classes. You won't find anything like what's been doing in West Virginia going on over an Elwood anthology.

Don Ayres, 2020 / Manor Parkway, Peoria IL 61604

Right now, I want to get to the Elwood article (I can't really think of it as an interview). It has, I think, been a fair one (sensu, just) to all parties, including the reader. I also think that it has provided Elwood with considerable feedback; I hope it has also had just the effect you describe in regards to the matter of profanity, that it does loosen things up if they have been constricted. As for the formula bit...some writers thrive on it, others don't. I'm inclined to suspect that the individual writer must make his own decision on whether or not he can handle the requirements, whether it may limit his market or not.

As for Elwood being a good editor, I think he has to believe he is or he (or anybody else) would've been thru long ago. That's part of that shell that an author has to construct for himself if he wants to become a pro. I too hope that the trend toward novels will make a better editor of him as it changes the nature of his workload.

Jeff May present a nice article, but like you, I don't find the how present. More important, I fail to see how any astrologer can show more than a correlation...that doesn't imply a cause/effect relationship, though it may be used usefully for prediction if it turns out to be a good one. What I see as part and parcel of the argument is that the positions of heavenly bodies affects our lives here on earth; this is the assumption. But perhaps as reasonable an argument might be given that our lives on earth affect the motions of the planets (assuming such a correlation exists). I think I just founded a new pseudoscience....

Thanks to Jackie Franke, but how long have you been hiding that snake in your file to use against Glicksohn or myself?

I hope Joanna Russ doesn't see your reply to Harry Warner, or that skull on the front cover's gonna be yours. (Funny tho,) Is GODLESS going to be the future home for Funny Animal Stories? I can see the Australians turning in things like "The Wombat Was A Nerd" and "My Koala the Klutz" while Cagle hits us with "The Case of the Pregnant Bear", Warner fills us in on cheesy chipmunks, a whole flock of people turn in dumb cat 'n dog stories, and Shoemaker tries a change of pace by telling us how he ran a mile with a trombone stuffed in his adidas. And all the while us intelligent members of snake fandom sit back trying to stifle out gentle schneers. Oh well, don't say I didn't warn you.

Ray Bowie Jr., 31 Everett Avenue, Somerville MA 02145

I found your interview-reaction on Roger Elwood interesting and a might disturbing. Although we disagree slightly on our views of religion/antireligion (I agree with you as far as the damage that has been done by religions of all kinds, but yet I try to at least understand them. If only they weren't so pushy...), I do share your concern about how much influence someone like Elwood can gain. Regardless of what editorial prejudice any editor might have, it does no one any good when he or she wields too much clout. All we can do wait and see if his output is slowed down and that other editors come in that believe differently from him.

Loved the S&S book reviews. John Robinson did everyone a disservice by not providing an address for Carlyle Communications (Beeline Books). Of course, John may not have had access to the book company's address himself. Has there been any S&S where the lead character is female? Or where both "Hero" and villain are female? So I'm a nut for female versus female conflict, so what? Actually I've gotten up to the point where mentioning the above doesn't embarrass me so much anymore. It's something that I've had for years and years now. The only thing is trying to satisfy my thirst for F/F material.

Laurine White, 5408 Leader Avenue, Sacramento CA 95841

Elwood article: There was a book which I read in high school and thought was such a great story - Blam. And the last time I read it - well, the reaction was exactly as you describe. Doc Smith's space operas never were great fiction to me, but when I re-read them last year, they were still lots of fun. There aren't any bookstores around here that put Doc Savage with the sf, but there are plenty of Perry

Rhodan books hogging the stands.

I can't really form an opinion on Roger Elwood as an editor. The only anthology by him I consciously bought and read was Future City, because of a favorable review by Jodie Offutt. The only story I enjoyed was by Dean Koontz. The rest of the collection was a real disappointment. If that was his best anthology, I may not buy any more.

Where the heck would I find The Coming of Cormac? Or Pleasure Planet for that matter. The only time I dared venture into one of those dens of sin was in 1969 to ask if the place carried VAMPIRELLA. It didn't and the proprietor directed me to a cigar store. LOCUS recently announced that Lin Carter would have a couple of S&S anthologies published by Doubleday next year. I'm curious whether he can refrain from including one of his own inferior stories. Thanks for directing me to a good book: As the Curtain Falls, I'd have missed, deciding against it because of the bad cover. Why couldn't George Barr have done the cover painting? Did you notice the reference to Dunsany's world, when the hero spent some idle days on the Yang? ((Afraid I've only read a very few of Dunsany's works, alas. Where does all the time go?)) ((Typing up stencils, that's where it goes.))

Dave Rowe, 8 Park Drive, Wickford, Essex SS12 9DH, UNITED KINGDOM

That's a beaut of a quote from you on page 20 of GODLESS 8. "I haven't yet read the second volume in this series yet, but it's pretty good." Ye gods, not only Jeff May the astrologer, but also Bruce D. Arthurs the clairvoyant!

Actually, I can't stand astrology, because too many people follow it like sheep, even tho' they don't openly admit it. One magazine over here (HOROSCOPE) was given to say "A good day to buy shoes is December 25th"!!! (Which explains why sheep don't wear shoes. Perhaps a fair judgement could be made by Jeff (if he has the time) drawing up natal charts for both yourself & Gary, with comments by yourselves.

Of course, that's all very well, but what about the little baskets who are prematurely born, or like it where they are and stay in for an extra three weeks, or when they get half way out decide they've made the wrong choice, and as they can't get back in, stay where they are, until the Doctor can give the brat's poor mother a shot to put her out, and then tear the dear little child into the land of the living whether he likes it or not. That once happened to someone I know, and would have gone thru eleven degrees of ascendant while being born! What happens to that person, when 15 minutes is enough to change twins' ascendants "significantly"? Does the poor creature, because he covers such a spectrum, take on all the worries of the world, the conscience of a nation, the labours of Hercules, and the cheek of the Devil?

* - * - * + * + * + * + * + * + * + * + * + * + * + * + * + * + * + * + *
((And now for some locs on GODLESS 9...))

Ed Cagle, Star Route South, Box 80, Locust Grove OK 74352

I see you X-ed me. One sale and he starts getting pushy.... No, I deserved to be warned. It's been too long since I've written, and after all, I rather enjoy your zine.

Congratulations on your first sale. May you be wise and drop it while you're ahead.... No, if you like it, by all means continue to write. You'll be crotchety as hell at the age of 35, and your ass will be atrophied, but what's a minor problem here and there?

Your Discon report, although a potential source of suicidal urges to the sercon fen among us, was moderately to impressively entertaining. I would question only one thing: To state, or even imply, that Jim Beam is one of the more palatable bourbons available, is downright incredible. Certainly it is easier to take than your fondly remembered Old Rawhide, or the guest bottle I keep on hand (Old Toadkiller), but there are bourbons on the shelves, just waiting to leap into your arms, that make Beam taste like the washwater after the weekly baths at Uncle Funk's Possum Boarding Farm. But in a pinch, it ain't bad.... ((You could at least have given us the names of some of those bourbons, Ed. Or perhaps you find yourself unable to read the labels after imbibing a bit?))



Congratulations again, on your release from Man's Personality Improvement Corps. I will forego the fiendishly attractive urge to make wiseapple remarks about a guy who says being in the Army improved him as a social animal.

I demand to know if Elwood did ask Buck to co-edit with him! ((Damned if I know.))

Dave Szurek, 4417 Second, Apt B-2, Detroit MI 48201

You're one of the few people I've met, aside from extreme right wing sources, who've actually said that the service did them any good. Of course, your situation was a bit more unique than most. Granted, most of those I've known, were draftees anyway, but I have talked with a couple of less reluctant souls, and they have been thumbs down as well. With the end of the compulsory draft, some improvement is definite but it won't be complete until they stop trying to con the more naive kids into joining. The one that really gets me isn't an Army trick, but the Air Force's "High Flight" commercial, specially calculated to infect one with the most romantic of notions. At one time, I felt that anyone intelligent enough to pass the tests couldn't possibly be taken in by the hype, but I learned recently, from a reliable source, that I was wrong. The "victim" had no idea of how badly he'd been ripped off until it was too late, and he found himself bound to a life of perpetual misery.

I enjoyed your Discon report. Might have been a wee bit lengthy, but not unnecessarily so. It left me with a clear impression of what had happened (to you, not necessarily anyone else) than has been the case with a lot of other con reports I've read. I would have liked to know more of the titles of the films shown, but that's just a personal ethnocentricity.

Can sympathize easily on the Star Trek matter. I never thought it was that exceptional a show in the first place, have trouble understanding an entire sub-fandom around it, and most importantly, as you said, monopolizing makes little or no sense when the show can be seen on tv seven nights a week. I recall one Detroit Triple Fan Fair where this really bummed me out. Shows had been run all afternoon. That, in itself, never bothered me; I just did my own thing without once bothering the Trekkie room. I had a late night commitment to keep, but felt fairly content that the movies I'd wanted to see were scheduled early enough. Shit, man, someone elected to re-schedule the show (without notice, may I add?) by showing even more Trek episodes. I never was able to stay for a couple of the films I'd planned on. The Saturday-matinee-type applause which accompanied my groans, was of no consolation, and at one point I actually felt like cussing the place out. Alas....

Seth McVoy, Box 262, East Lansing, MI 48823

By all means, try out a little writing. \$105 for a year isn't so bad for a beginner. Of course, high powered beginners like myself make a lot more. In 1974 I made \$110! I'll let you in on a pro-ish secret: after a little practice, writing doesn't take nearly as much sweat as it does in the beginning. Only occasionally after a while do you sweat when you paint yourself in a corner or something. Most of my sweat-time is spent when I'm not writing, when I'm trying to figure out what I ought to be writing or what people think and say about my writing, to be more exact. Not what editors say, for the most part, but what my friends say. Showing writing to friends is a pain in the neck because most of my friends aren't writers at all and

they aren't too articulate about their reactions and a lot of confusion abounds. Editors are pretty straight-forward, though. ((If I ever sell another story - or if I ever write another story, for that matter - I'm determined to have it published under a pen-name and not tell anyone it's really me. I have to admit that I've had some slight feelings of uncomfortableness whenever people mention the story in FANTASTIC to me; I get the feeling that they're going to be expecting something good from me from now on. I'd hate to disappoint them, and I'd rather keep my fanac and any professional stuff I do firmly separated.)) ((One drawback to what I've just written is that if some previously-unknown writer starts showing up in the next year or two, I'm afraid people will be asking, "Is that you?" No it's not.))

Editors are pretty good guys, it's the publishers that are sometimes creeps. I'm currently in a snit at Popular Library. I had sold a story to someone who was putting together an anthology of Captain Future stories and he commissioned me to write a new C.F. story. Well, at the last minute, Popular Library told him "no deal" on permission to use the characters of C.F., so the editor returned my story and I didn't even get any money. Boo hoo. Oh well, it was fun to write, and I plan to serialize it in my SAPS-zine. The editor wasn't Roger Elwood, but I'm sure as heck not going to write any more stories on commission unless I get a contract and some \$\$\$.

Well, I'm voting for Rusty Hovelin for DUFF because I've met Rusty several times and I think he's a nice old coot. I also think Rusty will do a trip report and that he'll be a good representative, more the sort of person that the Aussies would be more likely to get along with. John Berry and his substances might turn off the more conservative Aussies (who are in the majority there). I suspect, however, that John will win, just because of his clubhouse stuff - the rest of John's fanwriting goes to a select audience, which does not include me. ((The results will probably be out by the time this is published, tho not at the time of typing. If the results I've been getting from my mention of the race in last issue are typical, though, you may be pleasantly surprised. A definite majority of the people loocking said they intended to vote for Rusty. I won't mind; I think Rusty's just as good a choice as Berry, and I hope he will write a trip report.))

What is Don D'Amassa trying to do? Convince us all that he has the biggest sf library in the world? ((He had 11,252 volumes in his library as of January 75, tho' not all of those are sf.)) I'll guess that the missing "outstandingly good" book is Highways in Hiding. I would have picked that myself for the nifty cover, if nothing else. I even remember a lousy pun from that book: "Dr. L. Sprague decamped." To me, Lancer was a neat company because they printed The Dying Earth. I was so taken with that book that I ripped it off from the school library in 1964 and it is one of the two books I ever stole from a library. The other was The Collected Works of Ambrose Bierce, but that doesn't really count since I didn't really steal it, I just checked it out and never brought it back (and destroyed the card, since I worked in the library).

Damon might not commission stories like Roger Elwood, but he recently rejected two of my stories that I thought were really great and asked me to write more funny stories like the one I sold him. Since I've been looking for an excuse to write some funny stories, I'm gonna write four of them and send 'em to Damon. As a further note on Damon, I hear from sources that Gene Wolfe, who some people think can sell anything to Damon (since he's in nearly every Orbit), sends everything to Damon and Damon only buys some of it and Gene can never guess which ones will hit, after all this time. Damon's mind remains a mystery, but he's a heck of a nice fellow and a sweetheart on contracts and the mechanical aspects of editing. Whether he's a "good" editor is for history to judge.

I'm not at all sure what Paul Walker means in his letter. Does he think that the other anthologists are detrimental to the field because they follow Damon or because they are concerned with style and originality? What I mean is, does Walker think that it's bad because all the anthologies are alike (in his opinion) or that they are all a certain kind? Hmm, I'll try it one more time. Does Walker object because they are followers (and therefore second raters) or because they all do the same thing (style and originality)? In other words (Jeez, but it's difficult to nitpick),

maybe it doesn't make any difference.

I'll go out on a limb and say that I think Walker misses a point, a big point. I think that excellence of style is not what Damon and the others are after. Of course they want good stories, but I think that style is only secondary to what they're really after. Style may be important, maybe I'm missing something. I'm pretty style-deaf myself. I think what distinguishes these new stories (the best of them) is that they are trying to say new things. To say new things, we need new ways to say them.

People like me are writing because we want to read new stories and there aren't any so we have to make 'em up. These new stories still have plots, but they aren't always exterior plots, they're the interior plots of the common language that literate people have. Maybe the old plots were interior too, maybe man's mind is evolving or something cosmic like that. I'm talking off the top of my head, but I feel a slight need to creep against people like Walker who think that modern sf has achieved nothing.

Harry Warner Jr., 423 Summit Avenue,
Hagerstown MD 21740

Your conreport was edifying, amusing in spots, and educational in others. Since we don't seem to have seen each other at the Discon, we obviously saw entirely different conventions or the same things from totally different angles. Yet some of my reactions to the con are startlingly like yours. You also relieved my mind on one point, the elevators. After I wrote some stuff about the con for FAPA, in which I remarked on the near-empty elevators, I read various conreports which complained about jammed elevators. You restored my faith in my own eyes; obviously there were times when the elevators weren't too busy and I must have needed them on such occasions most of the time.

I had a hassle with my reservation just like yours. But the clerk at the desk couldn't put the blame on me in this instance, because the reservation the hotel had sent to me contradicted itself thru failure of the dates of arrival and departure to agree with the number of days listed for my stay. It's also consoling to know that there are several other people in fandom who are too busy to open immediately every newly arrived fanzine. There have been a couple of times over the years when I've been quite nervous during visits from this or that fan, knowing I might have one or two of their publications in the stacks of unanswered mail with all staples or gummed flaps still intact. I didn't watch any of the movies at the con, but there is one reason why Star Trek enthusiasts might want to see the episodes which they've watched over and over again on television. There's a stupendous difference in quality between even the reception on the finest television set and what you see when the same material is being projected onto a screen right in front of your eyes. Subtle shades of color, amazing sharpness, natural-sounding voices, and many other advantages appear when there is no video tube to coarsen and no three-inch speaker to constrict.

Maybe it's time for another paragraph. I didn't attend much of the formal program, so I should be neutral, but I'm glad to see someone refraining from joining in the chorus of complaints against the Andy Offutt talk; most banquet talks I've heard have been mediocre or bores, and I don't see why so many people have complained about one more in the series. You shouldn't believe too much of what you see in the FAPA constitution. Most things that happen in that organization bear no relevancy to that or any other constitution I've ever seen. I suspect that FAPA may not survive long enough to make the question of how much a waiting lister's #1 brings anything but academic. ((Tsk. You should keep the faith, Harry. "FAPA is forever.")) I'm glad

If I told
you once,
I told you a
thousand
times! HARRY
WARNER, JR.
PS A
letter-
hack!



you were able to gain the egoboo of turning into a pro where there were a lot of sympathetic people around to congratulate you; it must have been something like the sensation of attending a con where you win a Hugo, something that I missed with both my fan writing Hugos.

When I read the OVERSEAS WEEKLY reprint, I couldn't decide if any of it was meant seriously. Maybe it's a case of doing too good a job at parodying something; most of the material here sounds so much like ultra-conservative non-fiction that I'm tempted to accept it for the real thing. Or maybe the trouble is a book I've been reading, Rhythm, Riots and Revolution by David A. Noebel, which is a mostly ridiculous rewrite of Seduction of the Innocent, substituting rock for comic books and the USSR for violence. The trouble is, there may be genuine cause for concern involved in comic books and rock music, even though it's far different from what Wertham and Noebel deduced, and there is a real problem of gigantic size ahead for mankind if beams should suddenly appear on Earth and make themselves public. I personally suspect that the bulk of the problem will be to prevent men and women from shooting, not dodging the fire of the creatures from outer space.

The letter section impresses me for what some fans might consider a negative virtue. Almost everyone kept his temper beautifully when expressing himself on a controversial topic, Roger Elwood. I don't see why fans and pros can't restrain themselves in the same way when they argue on other topics in other fanzines. Or maybe it's your wily editing of expletives and extreme statements that made the letter writers seem to be on such good behavior.

I found the red on yellow much easier to read than the red on white. Somewhere I've read that the former is the most legible of all color combinations and was therefore much in favor for circus posters in the old days when they were posted on barns some distance from roads. The artwork is splendid. I liked best the front cover. It's a good example of how a simple, different idea can make a greater impact on the subconscious fears and terrors than a page filled with all sorts of conventional horrible things. ((I think you were just about the only person with a good word for the red ink on any color paper. Incidentally, I just discovered a few lines ago that I've been typing with the ribbon in the "On" position. There aint no way I'm going to go back and retype the last 7½ pages, but fortunately the stencils seem to have come out nicely cut even with the ribbon in the way. I guess I'm lucky to have a "Slam 'em, jam 'em" typing style.))

andy offut, Funny Farm, Haldeman KY 40329

My lady the famous fanzine writer just came in, looking Touched-but-not-quite-teary-eyed, and handed me a copy of GODLESS.

"Some nice things about you on page 26," she said with a catch in her voice.

Naturally I stopped work on the current novel in mid-word to read page 26.

Thanks, Bruce Arthurs.

The thing is, at the lonnngng costume party there's no particular individual to blame, when it's hot, and seems to be going on a long time. (Maybe as part of his/her act someone does a few-minute monolog. Only that person can be blamed - and is.)

At the banquet, when people are antsy about the Hugos, and a child-level nominee is even antsier and hasn't showed off and hurt anyone for a couple of hours anyhow, and the airconditioner fails, and those who can barely survive without an at-least-hourly alcohol fix can't buy any, and the toastmaster dares talk about central/southern/midwestern fans rather than the usual East Coast and West Coast people, and there are four thousand people there and it's hot and the toastmaster doesn't realize he's lost them because there can't be eye contact with 4,000 people and so he mistakenly doesn't cut any of the material on which he spent nine hours the previous week, and since he always sweats - not perspires, sweats - when he's upfront and in the light, both figuratively and literally, and doesn't realize everyone else is nearly as hot, and so he goes on - that, man, can be a bad scene and it must have been. Vengeance was had; no one was hurt so badly as I, right then and there, and afterward, too, as slash-and-jab notices appeared.

At the banquet, see, an utterly impossiblesituation anymore - there is someone

to lay it all on. So there I was, the Goat for Azazel.

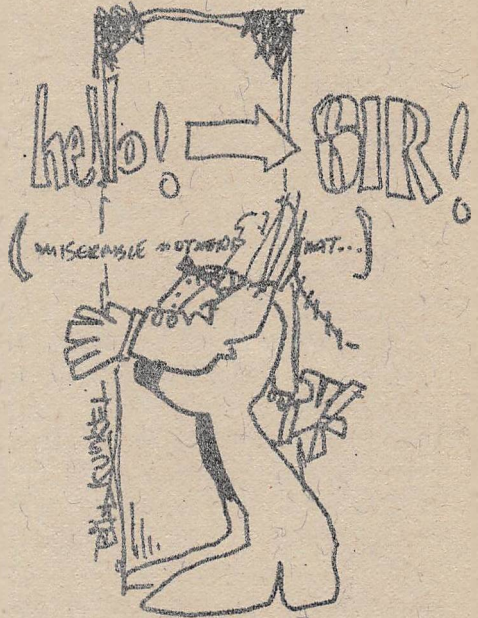
A lot of people took the trouble later that night to tell me all was cool, because I imagine I looked as if I needed a little stroking. And later, letters came along, saying the same - and now a few fanzines turn up with nice people in them saying nice things because they have an ability to be subjective, sympathetic-empathic - and human.

I appreciate it a lot more than somewhat, Bruce Arthurs. And about those Hugos - next day, at one PM, I heard myself ask Jodie who had won. And I was serious. As she told me, I remembered - sort of like seeing a movie again after a long while!

Larry Downes, 21960 Avon, Oak Park MI 48237

I can't believe all these people talking about their problems with finding a full drink machine at Discon. I admit, it was a bit of a hassle, but with ease, any dope could have. As Tim Marion and I did. ((You shouldn't hand straight lines to people like that, Larry.))

Now look, first you go in the elevator from your room and go to the lobby floor. (Now, if you're in the motel part of the hotel, go to the eighth floor, which is actually the negative sixth floor of the hotel across the street, where I was staying.) Now, once you get to the lobby floor, you go down wing C, but not wing C-a. C-a leads right to Ted White's room, a dead end no less, so don't take C-a. Go down C all the way until you reach A, and make a left. BUT NOT A RIGHT. A right will lead straight to Cleveland, so don't make a right. Once you arrive at the end of the corridor, you should be near the hucksters room. Go straight down the hall of states, and keep going until you reach the out-of-order escalators. Get on and scream "FIAWOL!" six times. The escalator will go up. When you get to the top, go straight towards the registration desk, and make a sharp right. Go past the orgy couches, and towards the hotel desk. Pass that, spit at the clerk, and go down to elevator 6-b, located near the bar. Next to it are a pair of double doors. Kick them open, and follow the hallway straight thru for about six blocks. You will find more double doors. Kick them open and make a left. A few feet later is a staircase. Go up one flight and go underneath the steps. There you will find a drink machine that has exactly three cokes left. And that's the truth. Tim and I did that and got those last three cokes, but unfortunately got lost on the way back, and were forced to trade them for information on how to get out. Ah well.



Steve Beatty, 1662 College Terrace Drive, Murray KY 42071

I was very much impressed with GODLESS 8 and 9, and if you keep it up, I wouldn't be surprised if you got a Hugo nomination a year or two or three from now. (((!))) The only thing wrong with #9 was that the bacover fell off.

You had a nice, meaty lettercol this issue, but I was rather surprised at the reaction to Elwood's religious and moral standards. Yes, sad to say, there is such a thing as religious bigotry in this world, but there is also anti-religious bigotry, and I've seen more of the latter than the former in fandom. Probably most of those who commented were reacting to the interview and others like it, rather than basing their comments on any of Elwood's anthologies they might have read. Now what counts is what he does, not what he says. If they would read some of Elwood's religious theme anthologies, they could see that the situation is not as bad as they make it sound. In Strange Gods, for example (reviewed in PHOTRON 12), the story I liked best was pro-Christian, but there were several that could not be interpreted as pro-

Christian by any reasonable stretch of logic. The rotten majority ranged all across the spectrum. Now if Elwood deliberately bought good stories that were pro-Christian and bad ones that were anti-Christian then that would indeed be reprehensible and propaganda. But if similar results occur without conscious design, what then?

Sure Elwood has taboos; any editor does. At least he lets people know what his are. Granted he does have flaws, there are other pro editors & authors who would harm the field more were they in his position.

I think it would be fun to see Elwood get a Hugo nomination for best editor, just to see the resulting hysteric frucus.

Paul Walker, 128 Montgomery St., Bloomfield NJ 07003

A word to Don D'Amassa: A better name for 'Lancer', in fact the only name for Lancer, is Robert Hoskins. Hoskins built the sf list single-handed. He became beloved by a few, and notorious to many pros for his caustic acceptance/rejection slips. He told everybody - including me - how to write, and I know at least one writer - Dean Koontz - who remains grateful to him, a friend. He really loved sf, and had some definite convictions about it. He did all he could to make Lancer a major sf publisher, but office politics did him in. He was a free-lancer, last I heard. ((I hope to hell that that wasn't a pun, Paul.)) His anthologies are doing very well. We owe him a debt of gratitude for trying and partially succeeding at making Lancer's list worthwhile.

Speaking of Koontz, he has gafiated with a vengeance. In fact, his gafiation more resembles a vendetta. He has not a kind word to say for sf any more. And he is not alone. I don't take this too seriously because I know Koontz. He is a young man of extremes, who can never be dispassionate about anything he does. When he wrote sf, sf was God's Gift of the English Language. Now, he is writing suspense novels and Suspense is Literature. He not only burns his bridges behind him, he drains the river and puts up a condominium. He is buying all his old sf novels and burying them in the backyard. If he has his way, in ten years, no one will remember that he ever wrote sf. ((I can just see him now, going around assassinating any fans who have books of his in their libraries. Now there's an idea for a suspense novel....)) And he is not entirely wrong. His suspense fiction is 100 per cent better than the sf he wrote. He never took criticism graciously, and it was difficult during the first years I knew him to avoid knocking those awful novels and immature short stories. They had the same virtues and vices. A strong beginning, vivid scenes, vivid and original ideas (which attracted the admiration of Delany), but after the first two or three chapters, they seemed to get lost in unimaginative and monotonous action writing. Years later, Koontz admitted that he never planned one of them beforehand. He visualized the first few sequences, then just wrote, and his imagination failed him almost at once. He was just not interested in the plot or how it all came out.

His suspense novels are consistently imaginative, consistently well-crafted and written, for the most part, and are making him ten times what his sf novels are. He told me the other day that when he got a check from UK for a paperback sale that amounted to more than all he had made for all the sf he had written in his first 5 years, he wondered to himself what he had been thinking of all those years! And he was proud of his books he was writing now; while previously, he must have been increasingly contemptuous of his work and himself.

If you are interested, look for the names K. R. Dwyer (Chase, Shattered), Brian Coffey (Blood Risk, Surrounded) and his own (After the Last Race, which got a rave review in the Times, and is headed for Hollywood). He is also writing under other names he refuses to tell me. Apparently, if a high-priced pro writes "too much" he makes publishers think he is worth less money, so he must conceal his identity from them as well as from the public. Curiously enough, most of his suspense novels have been reviewed by Newgate Callendar in the Times, and the reviews differ amusingly as Callendar is not aware that all the names are the same person. He has damned one name as an "unimaginative writer" while praising another for "strong imaginative plotting." ((I'm sorry to see Koontz see the sf field. He had undeniable talent, but unfortunately never seemed to be able to keep up the momentum in his sf work. Maybe

someday he'll need a break from suspense and make another stab at sf. Hope so.))

Brett Cox, Box 542, Tabor City, NC 28463

Your con report was, in a word, excellent. Not only did you do more than I did at Discon, but you also remembered more of it and put it down on paper in a more skillful fashion than I. Two specific comments: First, I'm sorry you skipped the dramatic readings, as they were truly magnificent. Second, I can sympathize with your Great Drink Quest, since I went through the same routine Saturday night and got so tired as a result that I was unable to last through all of "A Boy and His Dog." When I go to my next con, half my luggage space will be taken up by half-gallon bottles of Coke.

I strongly disagree with Paul Walker's loc. I don't think that the original anthologists (Knight, et al) have contributed to the "detriment" of sf. Indeed, I think they've improved the quality of the field to the nth degree. When they're bad, they're bad, but when they're good, they're excellent.

All of this, of course, ultimately boils down to a matter of personal taste. Paul says that "the majority of us derive pleasure from, first, a cracking good story, and secondly from a cracking good idea." Agreed. But what constitutes a "cracking good story" to me is far different from what constitutes one for Paul Walker, and they're both different from what does it for, say, Bruce Arthurs. In my own case a "cracking good story" will more likely emphasize style and characterization above and beyond plot or idea. For this, the original anthologies come across to me very well indeed.

The tone of Dave Romm's loc disturbed me. I realize that it's absolutely none of my business, but I feel compelled to say that I just don't like the idea of somebody condemning one brand of organized religion and then claiming to be proud to be a member of another branch of organized religion which is just as illogical and destructive as the one he was condemning. (I realize that these comments may leave me open to charges of anti-Semitism, but t'ain't so. I feel this way about all forms of organized religion.)

Darrell Pardoe, 24 Othello Close, Hartford, Huntingdon PE18 7SU, UNITED KINGDOM

I liked your worldcon report. I am amazed by the revelation that some people have actually held closed room parties where admission was by printed ticket! What is fandom coming to - can such things really happen? Mind you, what with conventions growing bigger these days and attracting all sorts of fringe-fans, it mightn't be such a bad idea to have some such dodge: in Britain nowadays the Easter convention is being flooded out with young fringe fans who've read about it in that ghastly publisher's propaganda sheet SF MONTHLY and come along expecting a weekend of Serious Constructive SF discussion. I think 25% of the attendees last Easter were such people. Maybe one or two of them will become fans, but most will probably just drift away again.

Can Barry Gold really be contemplating putting out a revised FANCYCLOPEDIA? The mind boggles at the amount of work it would involve. In FANCY II the details Eney gives of how much work that took are bad enough - and think how much has happened in fandom since 1959 that would have to be written up. Anyway, good luck to Barry if he is really serious about it. He'll need all the good wishes he can get. ((I suspect that if FANCY III should ever appear, a good many of the more outdated, ingroupish and trivial terms in FANCY II will have been edited out. I've also heard from Jon Singer, who's planning a reprint edition of Eney's FANCY II, that most of the stencils are now ready, and he's more or less just waiting for the finances for paper & ink to start producing it.))

You should worry about getting your name mis-spelled! My first name has been consistently mutilated by all kinds of people. Similarly my surname has ended up as Pardo, Purdue, Pirdeu, and other horrors. Seems some people just don't bother to get names right. ((If you think you've got troubles, what about Don D'Amassa?))

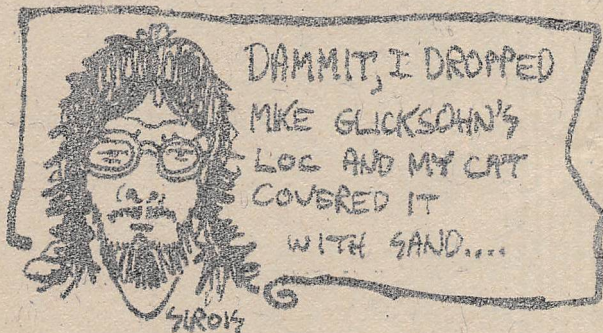
Don D'Amassa, 19 Angell Dr., East Providence RI 02914

Glad you liked the article on Lancer, even though you spelled my name wrong everywhere in the issue. Two "m's" please. And I know that I didn't spell "judgment" as "judgement". I did, however, goof, as you pointed out, by not listing the 17th title,

which was Highways In Hiding by George O. Smith, particularly important because the previous Avon paperback was abridged. ((I think Seth McEvey was the only one to guess right; most people chose Weinbaum's A Martian Odyssey as the missing book.))

Paul Walker, whose opinions I generally admire, lost me completely in his letter. I can't imagine anyone thinking that Silverberg, Elwood, Carr, and Knight all edit generally the same type of anthologies. Although Carr and Silverberg are fairly close, the other two are totally unlike either. In Elwood's case this seems to be because his anthologies are universally wishy-washy, but Knight still edits either the best or second best original series, possibly edged by New Dimensions.

Neither do I agree with him that most modern sf has been adversely affected by Knight's influence, or that most modern sf isn't up to the standards of most sf of a decade or two ago. It's true that there is a lot of dreck being published, and I hardly have the reputation of being a kind critic, but if anything, I suspect we may be on the verge of a real "golden age", if that term really means anything. Perry Rhodan and Cap Kennedy are admittedly less than satisfactory, but neither was much of Don Wilcox or Alexander Blade. And there are some definitely promising writers doing things in sf right now that bodes very well indeed for the future. Just a partial list would have to include James Tiptree, F.M. Busby, Gardner Dozois, Ed Bryant, Pamela Sargent, Vonda McIntyre, George Alec Effinger, George R.R. Martin, Brian Stableford, and T.J. Bass. Many writers who've been around for a long time are now at the top of their form, like Ellison, Silverberg, and Leiber. Paul himself describes Robert Chilson, a new writer, as comparable to the best from the Campbell years, although I'd have to disagree with him about that too. Only "Per Stratagem" and "Forty Days and Forty Nights" strike me as more than marginally interesting.



Mike Glicksohn, 141 High Park Avenue,
Toronto, Ontario M6P 2S3, CANADA

As I've told the other eight faneds I've written to today (ain't it great to feel exclusive?) there's currently a mail strike in Toronto so I've no way when this will actually start on its way to you. Luckily, though, you seem to be the only faned around who isn't expecting to publish another issue before the ink is dry on your latest publication, so perhaps I'll finally be able to get a few comments to a faned before his/her next deadline! I don't know why these mothers in the PO are allowed to bugger

up my life like this: as a teacher I'm legally forbidden to strike although I can't see anyone particularly suffering if I did so. But the people who move the mail can walk out any time they feel like it (and that seems to average at least once a year nowadays), tying up a sizeable part of the daily life of the country (and I don't mean just inconveniencing fans either) and no one says a word about it. Or at least no one stops them from doing it: I've had a few choice words on the situation as it happens.... (What really galls me on top of all that is that as a result of their strikes they'll get something like a 35% increase while teachers, forced by legislation to bargain under government restriction, will probably settle for the same 6% we got last time! And even then the inflation rate alone was over 10%. If I ever entertained any thoughts of getting rich, I'm certainly in the wrong damn business!)

Good luck in reassimilating yourself into civilian life. And I'm glad to see your overall positive reaction to the effects of military life on your development. One all too often encounters people who can see only the downer side of anything, without attempting to put the whole experience into perspective. Selfishly I must admit that I'm absolutely delighted to live in a country that does not have military service (take another look, Mike; there is such a thing as the Canadian Armed Forces, even if when they're mentioned amongst military men from other countries, loud giggles

and guffaws tend to erupt)), but it's also good to know that there are those who seem to benefit from the whole thing.

Several of the fanzines I read today had Discon reports in them, so I'm currently both sated on that con and eager to attend another like it! Your report is by far the...longest that I've seen. I don't intend to comment on it at any length, except to put to rights the occasional factual error concerning myself. But I did enjoy the report, and found it worth all the time that must have gone into its creation.

One interesting thing that comes out of reports like yours is that I find out I've been at room parties with fans I'm perfectly willing to swear I've never met. I ought not to be surprised at such thing, but somehow it still makes me sit up a bit and say "He was there? Howcum no-one introduced us?" Fandom is like that, unfortunately. I'd also forgotten that dreadful bottle of chocolate corflu that Elst had and I do not in the slightest thank you for reminding me of its (supposed) existence!

Delighted to read of your enjoyment of MPFC! There's hope for you yet. And if memory serves, Peter Cook was the devil in Bedazzled.

I've read so much about your article entitled my beard that I'm positively faunching to see it in print somewhere...anywhere. I hope Linda does put it into KARASS sometime, and I agree that Gorra committed a bad faux-pas by accepting and then returning the piece. Unfortunately such things do happen, and I hope it won't be the source of animosity between the two of you in the future. I'd hate to think that my beard came between two such excellent fans. (I can think of many pairs of fans I'd love to have my beard come between but as you said in reference to that slide of me, GODLESS is a family fanzine...said slide, by the way, is Not What It Might Seem. There is a reason behind it, and alcohol had nothing to do with it...well...very little anyway. Ask Bob Toomey next time he salivates on your suit coat....) ((I'm afraid I've never even met Bob Toomey. Is having him salivate on your coat one of those Moments of Cosmic Truth one undergoes to become a trufan? If it is...I think I'll pass.)) ((Actually, I was thinking of doing a whole series of articles about various parts of your body besides "Mike Glicksohn's Beard" (which is now scheduled for the next GRANFALLOON). The Malta India incident would have become "Mike Glicksohn's Taste Buds" and that slide of you would have become "Mike Glicksohn's...." But the hell with it.))

To continue my subway of thought (we don't have many trains here in Toronto), having one's favorite pieces rejected by fanzines and later published in other, better fanzines, seems to be the "in" thing nowadays. Which is as good a lead in to the true story of my "pro debut" as I'm likely to manufacture this late at night. Just for the record, the story was submitted to and rejected by one fanzine. (The entire story formed the basis of my GoH speech at Confusion 13: had you been there, I wouldn't have to repeat myself. Fakefan!) That was STARLING. Gorra never saw it. Bowers saw it, and said he'd happily use it in OUTWORLDS, but I told him I wanted to get an AMAZING/FANTASTIC rejection slip first, but would send it to him after Ted bounced it. The rest, as my groupies say, is History....

The lettercol this time contains a vast amount of interesting corroborative or explanatory material about Elwood but I've said my say and will leave it at that. With so much space and time devoted to Elwood this issue, I'm doubtful you'll be able to or want to cut off discussion next time, but I hope you'll restrict additional commentary to those who have something new or insightful to add. Personally, I expect most of the worthwhile comments/opinions/viewpoints have already been aired and I'd be happy to see y-y go on to other topics. (I mentioned this in my speech, and I've probably told it to other faneds, but the clearest indication of Elwood's editorial acumen I've heard of yet is Joe Haldeman's story that Elwood once edited a wrestling magazine and quit after two years because he found out wrestling was fixed! Joe say it's true....)

Rich Bartucci, Box 369, KCCOM, 2105 Independence Blvd., Kansas City MO 64124

Your Discon 2 report is hard to comment on. I wasn't there (gnash, grind, moan), so I can't make witty remarks about how crowded it was or how mercenary the hucksters were or any of that good stuff. Still and all, such detailed accounts as yours have

enabled me to live the thing vicariously, at any rate. Go to Sydney for me, won't you? ((Nope. I'd like to, but finances don't allow this year. Anyway, I'd rather go to Melbourne for the Worldcon, instead of Sydney.))

Speaking of the Worldcon, I spoke to Ken Keller while he was ferrying me to the January meeting of the KCSF&FS a couple of weeks ago. He said something about drafting every KC fan into the convention as guides, huckster liason personnel, projectionists, etc. He showed me the membership cards he'd had printed (a nice refulgant green) and hinted that all this would be mine, up to and including a billet at the Con Suite and a prestigiously low membership number, if I would but consent to jump into the activities. I tried to tell him that, from what I could tell, the labor day weekend in 1976 was going to be muy busy for me; I'd be entering upon my first year of formal clinical training as a 3rd-year student and I might not even be able to make it to the con (*shudder*). I don't think he understands, because he still wants my willing assistance, along with everybody else's. Ghod, but that man is ambitious! And every con committee in the years to come will hate his guts for working so hard and setting such a monster precedent!

Elst Weinstein, APDO 6-869, Guadalajara 6, Jalisco, MEXICO

Your Discon report was very entertaining, possibly one of the best I've seen. Malta India is certainly a putrid beverage, the fact that you liked it shows you either have taste, or the lack of it. I can't help recalling an incident I had with Ellison not too long after Discon. My father owns a bakery in LA (Papa Jack's Bakery) and specializes in decorated cakes. While I was home, I generally delivered cakes to areas near LA for him. One day he said "Elliott, I've got this cake for you to deliver to somebody named Erlinson or Ellenson. I think he's a Sci-Fi writer." "Oh, you must mean Harlan Ellison," I replied. "Yeah, that's him." So I took the cake over to Ellison's house. My father explained to me that the cake was from a person owed a story to by Ellison who wanted to remind him, but in a novel way. "Not by a telephone or telegram, but with a telegram written on the cake saying 'Please send the story STOP Need it soon, George,'" my father told me. When I got there I was very shocked to see that Ellison was in "real" life a very nice person. I talked with him for awhile, mentioned Discon (probably an error on my part), and told him I was impressed by his film. He said that he would invite me in but "this place is neck high in shit and I'm really rather busy." I thought of a nasty remark, but kept it to myself since he was acting friendlier than I ever could have guessed.

You might like to mention MEXICON. This is the first SF Con held in Mexico. Date: November 22-23, 1975. GoH: Mack Reynolds. Cost: \$5 attending, \$3 supporting, US funds payable to Elliott Weinstein (checks or money orders to avoid mail losses). Address: MEXICON c/o Elliott Weinstein, address above. The committee is willing to answer any questions as promptly as it can.

Mike Shoemaker, 2123 N. Early St., Alexandria VA 22302

I thought your reprint about fighting aliens was going to be a humourous piece, but really it's quite serious. I strongly disagree that the evacuation of a metropolitan area would be an easy task. In fact, I think the task would be impossible to accomplish within a short period of time. If all the vehicles of an area such as New York, LA, Chicago, etc., were on the streets simultaneously you'd have a traffic standstill that would take a week to clear. If you had 70,000 transport vehicles carrying 100 people each, and they were efficiently distributed around the city, and assuming everyone didn't give in to the impulse to hop in their car to escape (thereby jamming the roads), then you might be able to evacuate New York City alone in a few days. But what about the rest of the suburbs of New York in that 200-mile radius from ground-zero. What would you need, another 100,000 transport vehicles maybe?

I seem to recall that Gilliland's play was first performed at the 1970 Disclave. It was probably published afterwards, thus the 1971 copyright date. It is a tremendous parody, no doubt about that. Wow! You actually met the eingmatic Arnie Katz. Did he by any chance reveal the secret of what one has to do to stay on his mailing list? Bow seven times, seven times each day toward the Northeast - no! Really? I

don't see why you should apologize, or condescend in any way, to Gorra. The balloon-headed idiot deserves every brick that's thrown at him on the basis of his TITLE columns alone. A superb con report you have there.

Romm's comments on Elwood don't make any sense. Now if Elwood were forcing people to read his books, like the schoolboard in that West Virginia mess was doing, that would be censorship. Since when should an editor be compelled to buy any story (even if it's good) that he doesn't like? Is it censorship if Romm doesn't buy a book whose subject matter is repugnant to him?

I thought Brett Cox's comment, "until I become a technical adult," rather serio-comic. Unfortunately, too many adolescents now do consider themselves adults. Ironically, 100 years ago, when the period of adolescence was shorter, there was more respect for elders. All of this is a hell of a thing for me to be saying since I'm only 20½ years myself, but the difference is that I have respect, great respect, and am only too acutely aware of my youth. ((Oh, go ahead and say it, Mike; us oldsters of 22 won't mind.)) Conrad sums up my feelings perfectly in this quote from "A Warrior's Soul": "Is it possible that you youngsters should have no more sense than that! Some of you had better wipe the milk off your upper lip before you start to pass judgement on the few poor stragglers of a generation which has done and suffered not a little in its time."

Laurine White, 5403 Leader Ave.,
Sacramento, CA 95841

The cover of GODLESS.9 was really weird. It was sort of similar to a candlestick holder I once saw in an Italian horror film: A human hand with long fingernails. Really.

Your Discon report was interesting. Too bad Mike Glycer didn't write one; his previous Worldcon reports were a delight to read. ((Where do you think I got the inspiration for writing such a long conreport?)) A wise fan does not become dependent on the elevators. Half the time I used the stairs in Washington and found interesting things like a stopped-up sink filled with green scunge and smelling rather badly. ((No,

Laurine; you smelled, it stunk.)) Bries Ardor sounds like a good name for a stripper. Susan Wood has small what?? How'd you like to be reading an otherwise inoffensive conreport and come across: "I found him handsome, vivacious, and outgoing; who cares if he's got a small..." Really!! ((~~You did not find out about me, Laurine?~~ Seriously, I'm sorry if you felt offended by that line. I was just trying to make an in-reference to Susan's famous article in STARLING. Just a joke, ha ha. Ha?)) ((I hope you don't feel disgruntled by the illo above, either. Why don't you blame the artist for that? Doesn't really look my type anyway....)) How do you expect Bob Vardeman to remain a pro, to have time to write novels if he has to read all the fanzines people send him? At least he didn't keep those fanzines in the dark, unread, unenjoyed, but gave other people an opportunity to see them. True patience was staying thru the masquerade and the judging and then watching the Harlan Ellison film without moving from our seats. I wonder how many other people did the same. That system of selling the paintings on Sunday and Monday worked out well for me. I noticed some nice art



by someone name Edward Lancaster at \$10 apiece. It was in the same section as the George Barr art, so nobody was noticing it. No one bid for it Sunday, so I got a couple of paintings at base price on Monday without having to wait thru the auction.

That article on licking the space monsters was full of holes. The aliens would have no problem melting those tanks and guns (see Day the Earth Stood Still), and since they've been monitoring our radio and tv broadcasts for years, understanding English would be no problem.

It will be rather hard for me even to make the WAHF column if more editors conclude with "and whomever...."

Sam Long, Box 4946, Patrick AFB, FL 32925

Rich Bartucci did it again! I read his story at work and it was all I could do to keep from giggling and alarming my coworkers. I like Consorter-with-Fungi - that's a fannish name if I ever saw one. The character Flatus reminds me of the old scatological joke, "Why are turds tapered? Answer: So your arse'ole won't slam shut." If we accept the truth of this proposition, it follows that farts must have squared-off ends (except for the SBDs - Silent But Deadly's) and the sound is the reverberation of the old anal pore slamming shut echoing thru the lower intestine. And have you - or Rich - ever read the book Flushed With Pride, the story of Thomas Crapper, the chap who perfected the flush toilet, and who, as manufacturing sanitary engineer to royalty, plumbed places like Sandringham, the country estate of the British monarchs? It's a fascinating book. ((I seem to remember reading recently - in an issue of SATURDAY REVIEW, I believe - that Crapper never really existed and his "biography" is really just a very clever and thorough hoax. Anyone have any verification on this?))

Dave Romm's anti-Christian belligerence irks me. If he would take time to read the First Amendment, he would find that it reads, "Congress (i.e., the State) shall make no law...." I as a private person, or Elwood as an editor in a private concern, neither of us are violating the First Amendment by refusing to publish anything; nor is our refusal "tantamount" to anything. I can censor anything I want to - as a private citizen. On the other hand, I cannot impose this censorship on anyone who doesn't want it. Likewise, Elwood can publish anything he pleases, and no one can gainsay him (as long as he keeps within the laws of libel), since no one is forced to buy his books. It's not a question of law, really, but one of dollars and cents: Elwood has to edit books that sell, and that's all. He's under no compulsion, legal or moral, to publish anything he disagrees with, or indeed anything at all. So Dave is Jewish. So what? Judaism has not cornered the logic market, lacking as it does a theology, or, more accurately, a dogma. I could go on.... As for not capitalizing "Christian", that's petulant and silly. I capitalize it out of custom and courtesy, tho I have no great opinion of the religion in many ways. I also capitalize "Jewish" and also "Devil". After all, courtesy never hurt anyone.

Al Sirois, Breakaway Station, 533 Chapel St., New Haven CT 06511

Your yellow paper and red ink are a bit hard on my eyes, but the art and layout are quite decent. I still don't like Brad Park's stuff, tho; if he took more time with things he'd be better off, and I wouldn't have to keep bitching about this. I wouldn't bitch, even, if it wasn't for the fact that he and I share the same state. Oh well. Nice art from Gilliland, Kunkel, yourself, and Cy Chauvin. Also, for some reason I found Townley's illo on page two appealing in a sort of perverse way. His cover drawing was - strange.

Jeezus Christ! Nineteen pages of conreport and no art! I liked it, tho. It's sort of hard to be critical of a conreport unless you (a) hated the con while the reviewer loved it, or (b), vice-versa. Or unless you weren't there and hence don't give a good god damn. Or if you were there and still don't give a good god damn. I don't have much to say about the con report, as you can see; I'm hedging all around that fact. Uh, uh, I liked your story...uh, oh, to hell with it.

"How To Lick the Space Monsters and Save the World" was great reading. I got a little confused, there, though, what with all them initials. I never did figure out if the autonomous CCG works with the FBI and the CIA, or if the CTF is on-line with

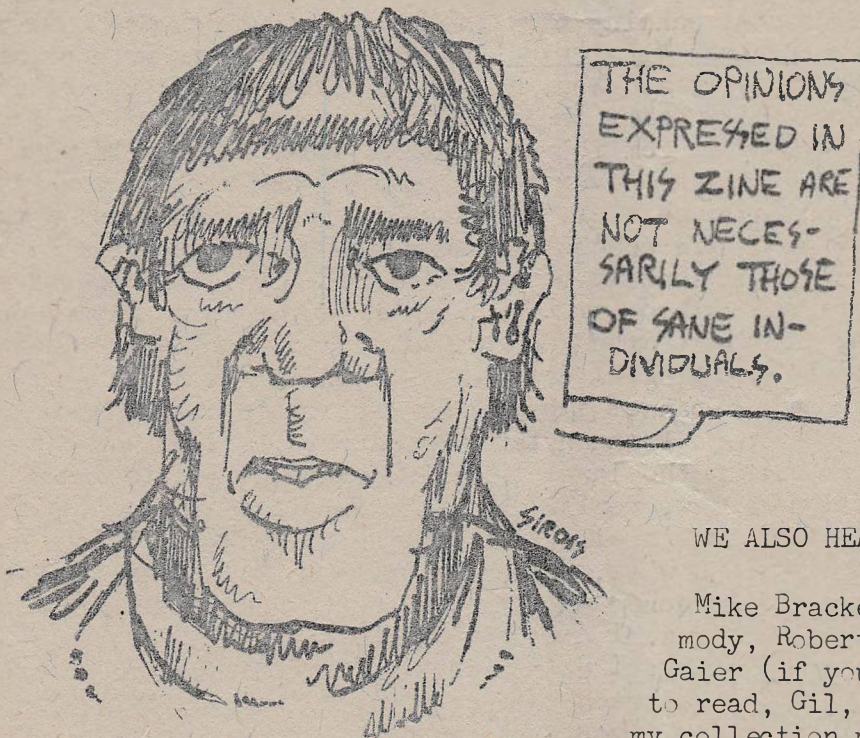
CBS' TWX, or maybe with IPT's? How about access to the CRTs at NBC and WPIX? How about GM and the FDA? And SFWA? Are they OK. I hope the AA isn't on manueurs when the BEMs land in the USA. My final comment on this is 4Q. 10-4 and OUT.

D. Gary Grady, 3309 Spruill Avenue, #5, Charleston SC 29405

I laughed so hard I choked on the whopper I was eating when I read Rich Bartucci's "Ring-Around-the-Bowl-World." That's what I get for carrying a fanzine into Burger King.

I hate to harp on astrology, but Dave Romm's remarks surprise me. Since when do astrology's advocates not claim that it is "a holdover from the ancients," Dave? Modern astrology can be traced directly to a revival of the pseudoscience on the heels of the Theosophical Movement, which was devoted to the restoration of the ancient "mystic arts."

Sam Long says Elwood has a right to let his religion influence his editorial policies. Okay, I'll buy that. But we still have a right to call him an ass hole for doing so. ((But do his books have squared-off ends?))



THE OPINIONS
EXPRESSED IN
THIS ZINE ARE
NOT NECES-
SARILY THOSE
OF SAME IN-
DIVIDUALS.

WE ALSO HEARD FROM: James Nyle Beatty,
Sheryl Birkhead,

Mike Bracken, Mike Carlson, Larry Car-
mody, Robert Chilson, Ed Connor, Gil
Gaier (if you think my red ink was hard
to read, Gil, I've got an old fanzine in
my collection partly printed in yellow ink
on white paper), Alexis Gilliland, Norm
Hochberg, Ben Indick, Terry Jeeves, Jerry
Kaufman, Tim Kyger, Eric Lindsay, Pete Mand-

ler, Jodie Offutt, a comic-strip-style loc from Brad Parks that is unfortunately un-
reproducible (next time use a black pen and leave about $\frac{1}{2}$ " margin around the edges,
Brad), John Robinson, Dave Romm, Dave Rowe, Ron Salomon, Craig Strete, Bruce Townley,
and "A.P. Tree" (whom I suspect of being a hoax; right, Robinson?).

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"I seem to be faced with the perennial fan problem of what to do with the last few
lines on a stencil. I don't have the foggiest notion how to stencil art work, and I
don't have any art work in any case. Ed Cox has more space to doodle in than he can
handle, so I don't think I'll add to his supply. That leaves me no alternative but to
put one word after the other until I reach the end of the page. If I were a really
organized fan, I suppose I would have a file of short filler pieces to use at times
like this. Roy Tackett seems to do that quite effectively. Come to think of it, there
was a period that I was filling end spaces with quotes from Pliny's Natural History.
I think that was the place I learned bat's blood was good for removing hair. Then the
only problem would be to remove the bat's blood. I think I prefer having hair."

-Milt Stevens in PASSING PARADE #1

LAST MINUTE NOTES

Addendum:

The photo on page 11 was clipped from, if I remember correctly, a copy of COLANDER'S DIGEST which contained an article on Germany.

Cy Chauvin should be added to the list of WAF.

Changes of Address:

Mike Bracken, 3913 N. 30th, Tacoma, WA 98407.

Tim Kyger, 1700 S. College, #23, Tempe, AZ 85281 (change in apt #)

Susan Wood, Dept of English, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1W5 (effective 30 June 75)

News:

Tim C. Marion has been given control of Rich Small's SOUTH OF THE MOON, a guide and index to the many amateur press associations. Tim hopes to have an issue out later this summer. Address is: Tim C. Marion, 614 72nd St., Newport News, VA 23605.

Errata:

There are two page 19's in this issue. One of them is really 18, tho, so don't worry about it.

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