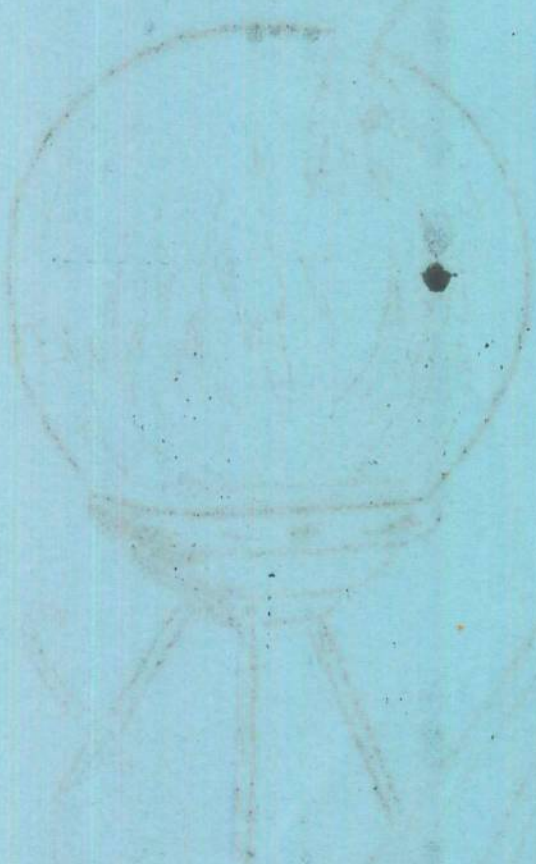


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HOCUS-13

Mike Deckinger  
85 Locust Avenue  
Millburn, New Jersey  
U.S.A.

Art Editor: David Prosser

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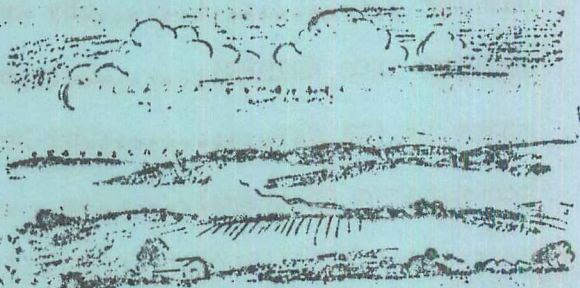
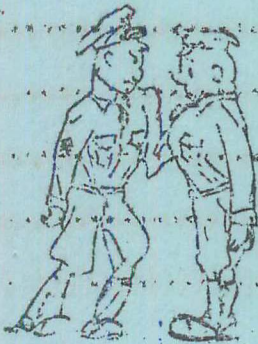
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HOCUS #13, more or less of an Annish, is produced by: Mike Deckinger, 85 Locust Avenue, Millburn, New Jersey, U.S.A. Single copies are 15¢ apiece though you may be able to pry a free copy from the black-hearted editor if you have something printed in here, or if you have some ego-boo, and if we trade, you'll probably be stuck with this too. Occasionally free sample copies may be dispatched but this is not too often. HOCUS is published very, very, irregularly. There is no fixed time schedule for it, but if you're reading this, you probably have issue #13 on hand. Contributions of any form naturally accepted. Letters of comment wanted too.

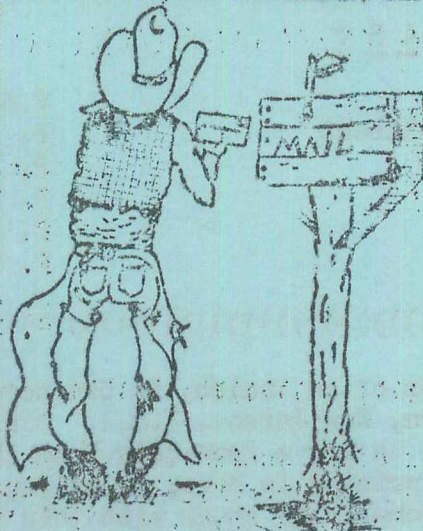




# DECKINGER'S DRIVEL

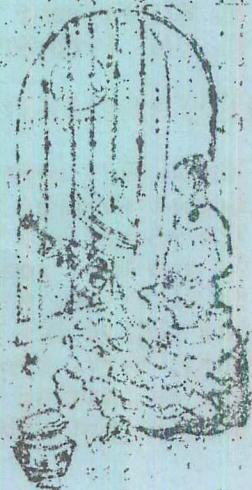


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First of all, there is the round-up of opinion on last issue, which went like this:

Cover (Prosser): It didn't draw as much comment as last issue, but it was well liked, and regarded by many as being another Prosser masterpiece.

Editorial: Those who mentioned it seemed to like the idea of having a round-up of comments on the previous issue, so this practice is being continued. Otherwise it was considered too short.

Arkham House (Derleth): Again a very popular item, and everyone has thought favorably of Derleth's venture, except Harry Warner (see Lettercol). These "advance information" type articles prove to be of great value to the collectors.

Detention (Lambeck): Just about everyone liked this better than the first part, even the author who was mad at me for butchering the first portion so, which I foolishly did. This was practically free of cutting, and shows it too.

Is Fandom Sacrilegious (Wells): This one really surprised me. Here was George writing a controversial type article in the Bill Durkom tradition, and everyone pounced on him. It seemed to me that he said most of what he did in order to just arouse comment, and this certainly did. It's amazing what people will believe if you seem serious enough about it.

Visit with Von Braun (Sneary): Only complaint here was that the Sneary spelling had been corrected by some villain, and I can only plead guilty to the charge. I'm so sorry I did it, and it won't happen again.

Sound Off (Rapp) drew just complimentary comments and really aroused no great ire anywhere.

And that is that. This issue will be longer, but after this I can honestly say I have no idea when #14 will be out. For some odd reason material kept piling up, enough in fact to warrant an issue #13, but beyond that only Ghu knows, and he is not speaking.

As it says elsewhere, Don Ford has won the TAFF race, with a wide margin over both Terry Carr and Bjo. Now I will have to admit this victory came as a surprise to me. Certainly Don is deserving of the honor, but the most about him, was told on the TAFF ballot. I think I only saw DON FORD FOR TAFF mentioned in 2 or 3 fanzines since the TAFF race started. JD-ARGASSY was plugging him exclusively ever since he entered, but were there any other for Ford? And on the other hand, it was almost impossible to pick up a fanzine without seeing BJO FOR TAFF or CARR FOR TAFF. After seeing those two names almost endlessly, you decide that they'll win. But there is nothing to say that Bjo and Terry Carr can not run again next time, and to Don Ford the staff of HOCUS extends its heartiest congratulations.

The TAFF race for the Pitt-con this year has just begun in the nominating stage, and as far as I know, Sandy Sanderson, Eric Bentcliffe, and Mal Ashworth are the participants, and they may be the only ones if no one else accepts. It's unfortunate that ATOM had to decline the nomination, because I feel he is certainly one of the most deserving. And I still do not like the idea of having only 3 TAFF candidates for any con. It just doesn't seem like enough to me, and you could easily crowd more fringe-fans into this bunch. In my opinion, the idea number would be 5, which should be the proper amount for all to choose from. Ah well, maybe next time...

The first issue of the new ANALOG SCIENCE FACT & FICTION, a brain-child of John Campbell's has hit the stands, and it is the most ridiculous change that could take place. In the zine, Campbell freely admits that all those who commented on the title change opposed the idea, and I can not blame anyone. Facts don't lie, and it should be obvious that ANALOG SCIENCE FACT & FICTION is not wanted, and the sooner Street & Smith realizes this, the happier a number of people will be. The editor is not supposed to work against the readers' wishes the way Campbell has been doing.

(continued on p. 14)



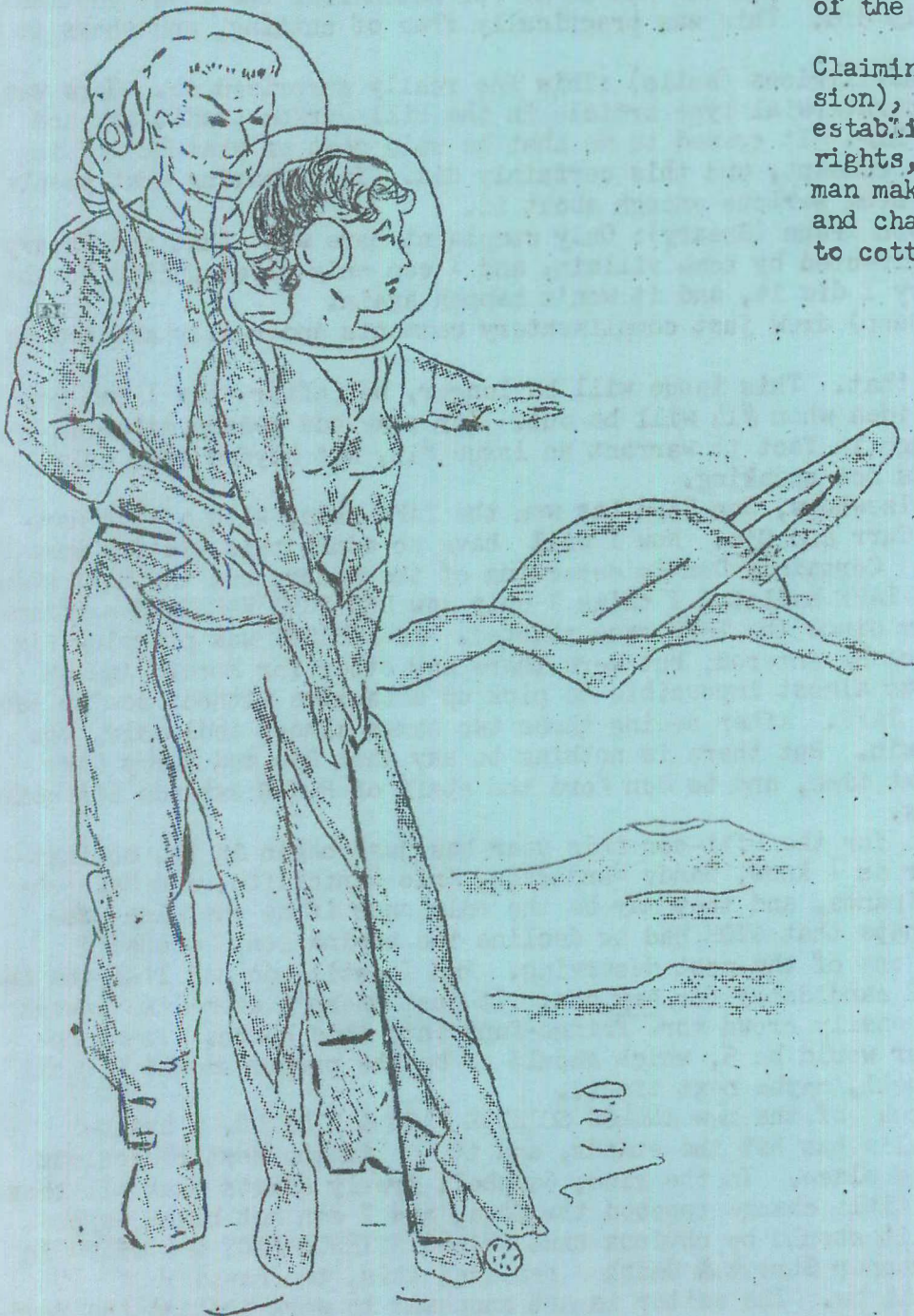
MAN IN SPACE — 2200?

Long needles weave the web of man  
from sun to sun.  
Something more than mass-attraction holds  
this galaxy as one being--  
perhaps the empire-mind of colonists,  
perhaps the common roots of race  
that twine in age on Earth.

Like as not, the union lies, as  
usual, in man-the-maker--faker,  
even;  
bilking three-toed natives of their  
wealth,  
conning simple planets of their  
power,  
playing the eternal pukkha-sahib  
of the stars.

Claiming whole worlds (on commis-  
sion),  
establishing the natural human  
rights,  
man makes a carney of the cosmos  
and changes spiral nebulae  
to cotton-candy swirls.

The Prime Creator of the  
stars and men, knows the  
universal trouble-makers  
are doing it again. He  
sighs, and the cosmos  
shudders.

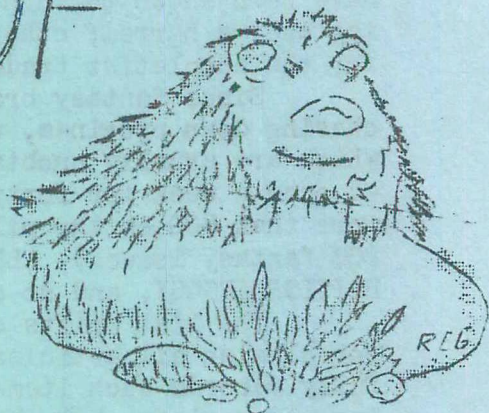


BY  
PEGGY  
COOK



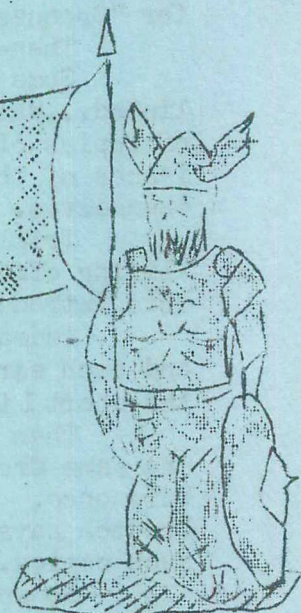
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# THE PERILS OF COMPLETISM



BOB SILVERBERG

Originally published in RHODOMAGNETIC DIGEST,  
March, 1951. Reprinted by permission of the  
author.



Completist: n., Lat. In reference to a rare and vanishing species of fan (Homo Superior); often connected with various other forms of insanity at the same time.

As long as there have been sf fans there have been completists. As long as there is an attic, there will always be a Coslet.

"Completist" is applied with a scornful smirk, to the fellow who believes he must have EVERY bit of science fiction issued. This takes various forms. One off the most unusual complete collections is that of Milt Rothman's collection of conventions attended. Other fans have narrowed their collections down to collecting all Golden Atom stories, etc.etc. By far, the least sane of the lot is the Complete Completist.

This fraternity has numbered, at various times, such luminaries as Jack Darrow, Sam Moskowitz, Forrest J. Ackerman, and 1951's chief offender, Walter Coslet. Not only does this species attempt to collect all prozina ever issued



from 1923 to date, this totals some 75 titles and 3000 issues—but goes in for anything remotely fantastic; such as a 1932 SATURDAY EVENING POST story in which the family maid quotes four lines from Poe's "The Raven". This breed attempts also to corral all issues of all fanzines, dating back to 1930, including some thousand titles and just about the same number of issues. Certain wicked fans have been known to turn out one-shots in limited editions, just to see a completist over a barrel; other equally nefarious publishers have issued titles solely for the completist trade.

Since fantasy branches widely, the average completist will find himself chasing down prozines, which aren't too hard to obtain for a price; fanzines, which are usually unobtainable for any price; issues of ARGOSY (this pulp appeared once a week for forty years, averaging twenty fantasy issues a year, this is more than 800 on the pile); BLUE BOOK (monthly for thirty years with at least 200 fantasy issues); ALL-STORY, CAVALIER, ARGOSY\*ALL\*STORY, POPULAR, GOLDEN DAYS, BRITISH ARGOSY, and so on.

The list drifts off into dreary immensities when the completist decides to corral also all articles pertaining to fantasy (cf. Coswal's STEFCARD which faithfully records such items); completists have bombarded the sf radio programs for old scripts, but these have not been forthcoming; other completists fill bookshelves with the different reprints of "Mars is Heaven" and the Bonestell pix for "Conquest of Space".

Then---oh pity, pity him---the sf comic completist. These vary.

Some try to keep track of the four or five regular sf comics now being published...while others wander back along the ageless corridors of time in search of copies of "Brick Bradford", "Flash Gordon", "Duck Rogers" and the like, plus issues of the various MARVEL and WONDER comics put out by the promag companies themselves. (Also include PLANET COMICS '42-'49).

Triply accursed is the fan who hooks up with a British fan, for the tantalizing offers dangling from AngloSaxon dollar-shy paws are rarely turned down. This introduces the completist to a brand new world; british fantasy.

Added to the british prozines are the endless stream of British paperbacks, and such early items as SCOOPS, SCIENCE FICTION, FANTASY, TALES OF WONDER, plus the short lived 1946 efforts, and the completist has a virgin field awaiting him.

Then he turns to the Canadian field, which consists of Leslie Croutch---the same Croutch who threw the horrid appellation of "Completist" at Bob Silverburg once. ASTONISHING, UNCANNY, and EERIE TALES are three so rare that, as Les Croutch says, "I know many American completists who will sell their souls for such copies."

No wonder completists who have these mags are like that...

Still in the first happy haze of completism, the collector acquires some issues of SHORT STORIES and GOLDEN FLEECE containing fantasy. He follows this with a complete file of Fantasy Press blurbs and reprinted Hannes Bok bookjackets.

We now find our happy little completist sitting comfortably in his two room apartment. On his right side is a ten foot pile of prozines; by accident his dentures fell just before he put them there; they are now under the June 1928 issue of AMAZING STORIES, but he can't think of a way to get them out without disturbing the pile above them.

As a result, he has neither smiled nor eaten since dropping them.

Space has reared its ugly head; the completist, unless he has a Coswaline attic, very quickly find storage a problem. His room is filled with his 3000 prozines in various states of disrepair; he no longer sleeps on a bed, but instead uses six feet of Palmer AMAZINGS. He finds this a little rougher.

In the closets there are 2000 fanzines. Since there is no longer any room for clothing in the closets, the completist is very rarely seen on the streets.

In the refrigerator are kept the copies of MARVEL TALES for various reasons.



The kitchen contains the 1100 British items; various other foreign publications, are usually located in the bathtub, in which the completist has installed shelves. It is not used for bathing anymore.

This is another reason why the completist rarely leaves his house.

The wall is lined with original paintings. The floor is lined with clippings. The completist is lined with...

The unfortunate completist, no longer having any storage space, finds shortly that the 26 new prozines each month are too much for him. He does not buy WONDER STORY ANNUAL, thereby saving valued space. Gradually, the floor level rises as it is covered with fanzines.

Since the average ceiling is ten feet high, and since the average completist has an eight foot pile of fanzines covering his floor, the average completist is usually found just lying prone under his ceiling. Some completists have been known to remain in this position for years without stirring, except to blow the dust away. He wonders vaguely who Heinlein is.

The reason for this is that the uppermost fanzine contains an article on Heinlein. He has forgotten who Heinlein is, and his prozine files are eight feet below.

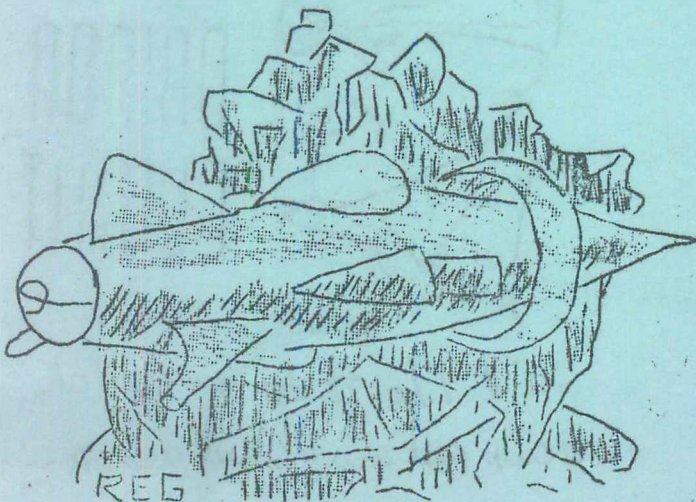
Eventually the entire apartment is filled to the ceiling with prozines and fanzines; the completist solves this in a characteristically fannish manner.

Either he crawls to the window and leaps out, or he sets fire to the house and remains inside.

Thus I've painted a rocky picture of completism. It's dangerous, unhealthy, unsanitary, and somewhat insane.

"Am I a completist?" you ask. Hell yes! Come on in, the water's fine.

—Bob Silverberg



## PITT-CON

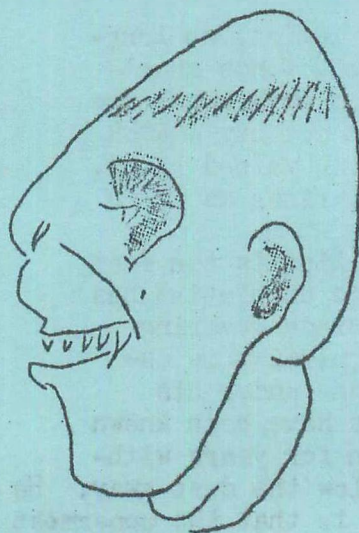
When: Labor Day Weekend, Sept. 3, 4, 5, '60  
Where: Penn-Sheraton Hotel, Pittsburgh, Pa.  
Fee: \$2.00 (\$1.00 overseas)  
Mail Address: PITTCON  
c/o Dirce S. Archer  
1453 Barnsdale St.  
Pittsburgh 17, Pa.

FIRST PROGRESS REPORT DUE IN MID JANUARY.



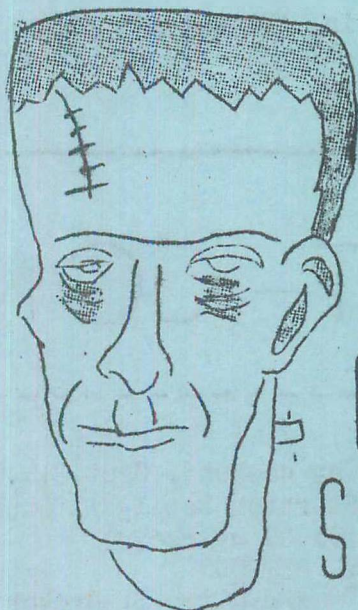
# FAMOUS FACES

BY AL ANDREWS



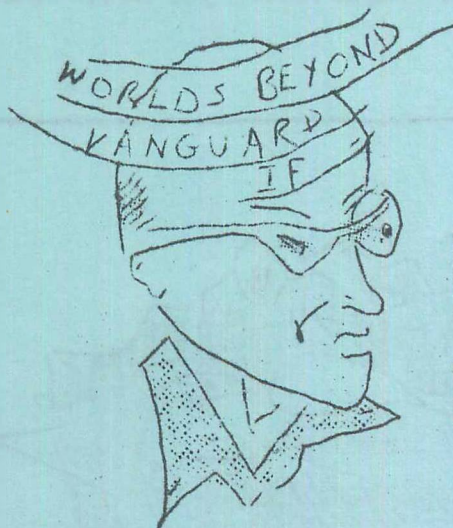
CHAD  
COOLIVER

"Well yes, I do use the evolution theme a lot...  
I'm an anthropologist you know."



MARY  
SHELLY

"well, you see I wrote under  
This girl's name for awhile"



DAEMON  
FLIGHT

"I'd like to be an editor  
again and again and again..."





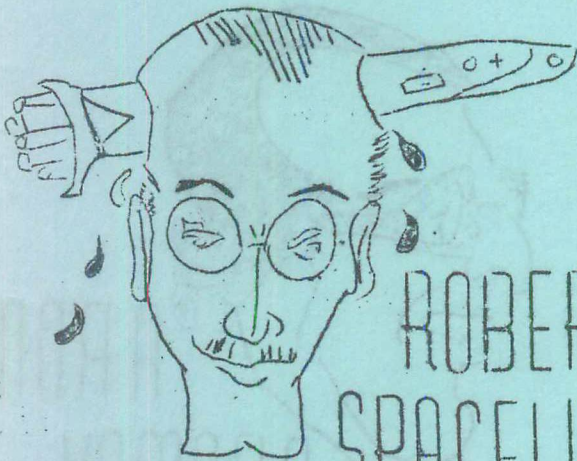
A. E.  
VAN VOMIT

"Why won't you believe  
me and Ron?"



RICHARD  
RAZOR

"Of course I'm sane!  
Now, you see, There are  
these caves..."



ROBERT  
SPACELINE

"This spaceship just popped  
into my head one day."



RAY  
BRUTTLE

"Death Themes? In my  
stories?"





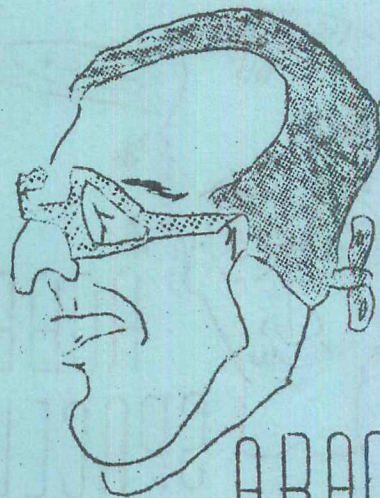
THEODORE  
FLEURGON

"Oh, we SF writers are plain,  
ordinary looking folk."



DISMAY  
PALMER

"Well I'm a skeptic about  
Flying saucers, Deros, Tarzan  
and all that Jazz."



ARON  
ARAMOV

"I just sort of have  
an instinct about Robots  
in my stories."



# MEMOIRS OF AN

## STF FAN

Reprinted by permission of the editor, Gerry de la Ree from SUN SPOTS,  
April-May 1942.

DAVE  
MILLER

The summer I was eight years old I met a man; a very fascinating character to me, because he had a large collection of detective mags. It was the largest one I have ever seen, and I have yet to see one that is larger. I used to hang around his house and look at them wistfully, until one day he said that I could borrow some of them.

Well, I started home dragging a whole mess of these magazines. My parents cast dubious eyes in my direction when they saw me reading them, but other than that, said nothing. One night they went away and left me in the house alone. I immediately procured one of the most horrible mags I could find, and settled down to read. Before the night was over I succeeded in throwing myself in such a fright that...well, I never expect to be frightened like that again.

I lay there with the light burning, afraid to move for fear of what might happen or what I might see. When the folks came home they found me still there, in the same position I had been two hours before. My father said then that I couldn't read another pulp mag until I had the brains to take them not as seriously as I had done. I sorrowfully took the mags back to the man, and read nothing but the best of literature until I was twelve. That summer a friend gave me the first stf mag I had ever seen. I was completely overcome by it, and so inducted under the banners of science fiction.

From then on I began bringing the magazines that I read out into the open. At first, when I was caught with reading them, the mags were burned up, to my great distress. But after the folks saw that I couldn't be "cured" they left me alone to read what I liked, except for a caustic comment or so. Sometimes when I was slow to obey orders or rake the yard they would say, "It's that darned old trash that he reads that's clogging his mind." Well, I guess that was at least partly true, because for almost a year all I had seen, said, dreamed, or thought had been rocket ships flying around, or time machines, or some such things.

Then, joy of all joys, a "corry" in North Carolina sent me a shipment of that master of all stf mags, that maestro among mags, ASTOUNDING. They had "Cosmic Engineers" in them, and from then on I spent all my money on stf mags. I took to showing my father the best science articles I could find, and all the logical editorials in favor of, and expounding the merits of science fiction. I remember an editorial by a famous author, I forget who it was by, or in what magazine it was, but I showed it to Dad. He said that was all very well that stf was escape literature,



but I was just a kid, and needed no escape literature.

We argued back and forth for a couple of hours, and finally he made me a proposition. He said to me, "All right, granting that stf is different than any other pulp literature, I have been a newspaperman for 10 years, and ought to be able to tell you whether it's good literature. You pick out a story that you consider good, and I will read it, and give it my honest opinion." I did. The story that I chose was "The Blind Spot," because I thought that anyone reading that would have to admit it wasn't so bad. He read it, or at least a large part of it and he had finished, he said, "It's as good as any fiction in a big magazine, but so utterly fantastic!"

Well then I gave him the old tale about how the human race was so stubborn that it would not accept anything that wasn't a proven fact. I told him what Einstein had said about one of the most beautiful things a man can witness being the mysterious, and my father didn't say much more, and I counted it as a victory for stf.

That's all I have to say for that, except there was another small incident that once happened at a summer camp I went to. I had taken a good supply of mags there along with me, and one day I was lying on my bank perusing one of these, when another boy came up and asked if he could look at one. I assented rapidly, thinking to win another convert to the legion of stf. His name happened to be Campbell, and the mag he picked up was ASTOUNDING. He read it for a while, and didn't seem to approve of it much. When he happened to come across his name (he thought) in Brass Tacks, he loosed a stream of invectives, and taking a pencil, marked it out. He said that he wouldn't have his name in such a trashy mag. Naturally he had gotten his name mixed up with that of the editor, John Campbell.

This began a discussion that made me a marked man in that camp for a long time. It was fun while it lasted. I was astounded to find out how many people didn't beleive in evolution of the species. It finally got all over the camp that I didn't beleive in the Bible, that I had a religion of my own. I noticed everyone staring at me queerly, but I couldn't figure out why, until someone finally told me, that it had been said that I was a heretic. I hastily reassured them, and launched into a tirade about evolution.

I didn't notice how many people had gathered, and I guess I pretty well made a fool of myself, but fools are born, and not made. I was asked whether I beleived in life on other planets, and I answer very emphatically, yes! I said why shouldn't there be? Out of all the millions of planets in the thousands of universes, do you think that our small bit of Earth should be the only one to have life on it? If we were meant to be the only people in the Universe, then why don't we have a better physical covering? Why are we subject to those fears and human weaknesses that the human race is subject to? I went on like this for quite awhile, and finally they murmured among themselves and left.

Well, they called Copernicus and Darwin crazy too, but they kept their theories. I hope I can keep tirading and cussing till the other people of the Earth aren't so skeptical. Someday they will call today's fans prophets, like they are now calling Leonardo Da Vinci. And I hope I shall live to see that day.

--Dave Miller

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#### DECKINGERS DRIVE L (continued)

After that exhibition at the DETENTION, I think it was obvious to see that most fans did not approve too highly of his Psionics kick, and I happen to think his present idea is even worse. The original title has been used for much success for 20 years, I see no reason for him to change it now. If 100% of the readers were against this, it's probable that he'd change it anyway, and I only pray that he receives enough returns from the newstands to prove to him what a folly his move is. Or couldn't psionics tell him that?

--Mike Deckinger



# THE CARE AND FEEDING OF NEOFANS

BY  
MARION  
ZIMMER  
BRADLEY

I like neofans.

There is a folklore in fandom that I eat neofans.

In fact, John Koning, at the DETENTION, thoughtfully presented me with one neofan, neatly gift wrapped, to be eaten for breakfast. With true Mezbian perversity, I ate him instead, for a midnight snack, and Bruce Pelz immortalized the event in color film, so that all fandom could see my zestful enjoyment as I bit the head off a brash young beanie-wearing neofan.

The fact is, however, when it comes to a hands-down contest between the BNF and the neofan, I will choose the neofan, hands down.

Neofans are young, in the first place. And, since most of them are considerably younger than I, they are polite. And I am old enough, and feminine enough, to like politeness. Now, this does NOT mean that I wish to be treated like a doddering old wreck, or addressed politely as madam, or anything of the sort; on the other hand, I do not like to be shouted down violently in the middle of a speech, or yelled at in a hotel lobby, or slapped heartily on the back by a contemporary. The average neofan is still young enough, and polite enough, not to commit the worst of these blunders.

Neofans (whisper) read science fiction. Furthermore, they ADMIT that they read science fiction. In fact, they sometimes even say that they got into fandom through science fiction.

When I talk to a BNF, he wants to talk about fandom, or the latest fanzines, or scandal. If I ask him what he thought of the last issue of AMAZING STORIES, he gives me a blank stare, says, "Oh I don't read much science fiction anymore," and starts in again on how TAFF is being managed.

When I ask a neofan how he liked the latest issue of AMAZING STORIES, either he tells me he liked it, or says he missed it, and asks what I thought of the latest ASTOUNDING, and thus, the conversation is off on a pleasantly worthwhile channel.

Now, some of my best friends are BNFs. Some of them are even dirty old pros. Naturally. I've been in fandom a long time.

But for a steady diet, I'll take neofans.

Maybe that's because....oh, my poor vain confession....neofans are the only people who sometimes treat ME like a BNF, and in spite of everything I have said here about how much I dislike the BNF as a type...I want to BE one.

Which of course marks me as the eternal neofan. Because only the neofan longs for the day when he will be acknowledged as a big name fan.

And I am not buttering them up so that they will be more tasty when I corner them. Anyhow, I prefer strawberry jam.

Chomp! Slurp! (Another neofan...GONE!)

—Marion Zimmer Bradley



THIS IS THE WAY THE WORLD ENDS  
a film review by Mike Decknger

In this last of meeting places  
We grope together  
And avoid speech  
Gathered on the beach of this tumid river...

This is the way the world ends  
This is the way the world ends  
This is the way the world ends  
Not with a bang but a whimper.

The above quotation, taken from T.S. Eliot's famous poem, "The Hollow Men" can pretty well sum up both the book by Nevil Schute, and the film based on this book; ON THE BEACH. Even to a science fiction fan this book is a shocker, and the movie carries even more of an impact; visual detail always leaves a far lasting impression that do simply printed words.

On December 17, 1959 ON THE BEACH was simultaneously released all over the world at 19 different cities, with only a few in the U.S. The publicity surrounding it was big, and it was entirely justified.

Several weeks ago, I saw the film in New York. The length of the line in front attested to the fact that there were many who had been hooked by the advertsing and had to see it for themselves, as well as there being many who had read the book and wanted to see how the film version would turn out. I fit into both categories.

ON THE BEACH, is briefly and simply a tale of atomic destruction on Earth, in which mankind is eventually wiped from the surface of the planet by his own weapons of destruction. And this means everyone, not the soldiers and the fighters and the generals, but humanity as a whole, from the very young to the very old all are exterminated by the weapons. Actually it is not the weapons, but the much dreaded by-product of this atomic age, fallout. The Northern hemisphere is a contaminated land where no life exists. The last refuge for the survivors is Australia, and slowly and unceasingly the deadly radiation is coming towards them, and at the beginning of the picture it is learned that these last people do not have more than 5 months before the radiation comes, carried by the air, and once it does reach them, then it is the end. The final and irrevocable end.

The acting was surprising in this picture in many ways. Gregory Peck was his usual self as Commander Dwight Towers, efficient, masculine, and completely believable; Ava Gardner was equally good as Moira, a loose farm girl who is attracted by him, though she just does not look the way she used to. Tony Perkins and Donna Anderson are an Australian married couple, with a baby daughter, and Fred Astaire is cast in his first all dramatic role as a scientist, and friend of the other four. And there they are, the stars of this epic. We are introduced to other members of the cast, but they are only around for a short while, and in a sense the whole film revolves around these 5.

Each reacts differently to the imminent doom. Each behaves in a way that he or she would want to, without worrying with conventionality or society would disprove. There is no trickery or faked dramatics; the story is heart-brakingly authentic, with the accent on the romance between Dwight and Moira, which began too late, a romance that can culminate only in death. We do not look for any miraculous cures to this doom, for there is none. Radiation is a very thorough destroyer, and nothing human can survive from its effects. The majority of those involved with this, seem to realize the fact.



The setting of this film is in and around the city of Melbourne, Australia, where the final people alive are waiting. One criticism I can offer that comes to mind after seeing this film, and then recalling the incidents, is that the picture dotes too much on these 5 main characters, and in my opinion more should be shown of the others; the people we never meet, but who are a part of the picture too. In some respects it is fairly implausible when one notes the reaction of the main five to doom, in contrast to the others that should be shown, but this will be discussed later on. The film opens with the haunting notes of the half-century old Australian ballad "Waltzing Matilda" as the submarine (one of the few remaining) surfaces in the harbor (or nearby anyway) at Australia. The catchy, almost saddening song: "Waltzing Matilda" is repeated throughout the picture numerous times, sometimes sung loudly and boisterously, other times as a quiet simple melody flitting through the air, and possesses a certain quality that makes it unforgettable.

Strange radio signals coming from San Diego, which is a contaminated city, are picked up, and the Australian Navy decides to send Commander Towers there via a submarine to investigate it, as well as to determine how far the radiation has advanced. Accompanying him is the young naval man, Tony Perkins, the scientist Julien, played by Fred Astaire, and the regular crew. As the submarine sails under the Golden Gate bridge and then partially surfaces, there is a still and a quiet hanging in the air that seems unearthly. The shots of the deserted, dead city of San Francisco as seen through the periscope are shockers, accurately conveying the mood of the tale. Now here, in this scene, was something that I did not agree with. No matter how much the persons who were dying from the radiation or suicides wanted to hide themselves, there would still be some bodies in sight, and there are absolutely none to be seen. It seems to me that there would have been some madmen who could not accept this ending and gone dashing into the streets; anything but naked, littered, empty streets.

This scene seems to follow that of the book accurately enough, when a sailor on the sub named Swain, who used to live in the city, manages to escape from the submarine and swim towards shore, even though he knows it is just bringing his death closer. And here is where some remarkable photographic process is used. With the final scene of Swain we see, sitting on a boat and fishing, the air seems textured and hard, like you were looking at it through a flawed window. Well, maybe a flawed window isn't too good a comparison, the scene is not distorted physically, but you can easily make out some grain or texture in the picture, that is obviously intended to indicate the radiation and death hanging in the air. The effect of this is startling, and even though radiation is not visible to the eye, except with a gieger counter, the point is clearly brought across.

Then the sub proceeds to San Diego where a man he is wearing a special suit is released, with orders to find out who or what is operating the radio transmitter, and to return to the sub at the prearranged signal. Once again there are no bodies anywhere in sight, but by now I was used to this phenomenon, and didn't let it detract from the film. A wonderful note of irony is provided by a lit up sign over an empty restaurant stating "Hot Lunch" which is certainly no lie. There is no letdown when the man ashore discovers that what is responsible for the relentless contact is a freak accident; a coke bottle propped up on an open telegraph key by a window shade. Whenever the shade moves in the wind, so does the coke bottle, depressing the key. It is never really intimated that there might be someone alive in the city operating the key, even though it's fairly obvious to every one no one could live there, and it's doubtful whether there'd be any mutations in such a short while. And so the man reports back that any false hopes which may have risen at this news can best be dismissed. It is an ironical trick, and the blame can only go to fate.



As usual, back in Australia some religious fanatics, who have erected a large banner reading: THERE IS STILL TIME..BROTHER begin to hold open air meetings while a preacher (who reminded me of Boris Karloff) calls upon God to save them. I suppose that in such an emergency, religion would be the first thing that people would turn to, and force themselves to believe that it can offer them salvation. Unable to face the grim, inevitable reality, religion is like a crutch to them.

But death of course is coming. Since radiation sickness is not too nice a thing to die from, the government has taken this in mind, and issues small boxes containing capsules of some poison (we're never told what) which is agonizadly, the only escape. In one scene Tony Perkins explains how horrible the radiation sickness can be, and then shows her a capsule which he's managed to get, and tells her to take it if the radiation reaches Australia before he returns. His wife, who has erected a dream world of salvation, much like Commander Towers who forces himself to believe in his wife and two children, who were among the first killed, presumes that this will cure it. No, Tony Perkins tells her, nothing can cure it, this will end it. He also advises her to give one to her infant daughter, Jenifer, an act which she finds repulsive, and believes it to be nothing more than murder to do.

Fred Astaire as John Osborne the scientist pursues unreality too, but in a different way. He is a racing enthusiast, and manages to get a Ferrari from the widow of it's former owner. In a suspense packed race for the Australian Grand Prix, he manages to win, and emerge as one of the few drivers of unhurt, many being killed too. He is one of the few who can never safely find refuge in fantasies and dreams, because he is a scientist, and he knows that nothing can stop the slowly advancing tide of radioactivity. Wisely, he does not abandon himself too deeply in a dream world where the world is safe and cleansed from death, and in his final scene, a scene of tremendous impact, perhaps one of the greatest in the film, he seats himself in the racing car, after putting on the award and plugging the cracks in the garage, and still smiling, presses down on the accelerator and keeps his foot there as the deadly carbon monoxide fumes swirl about him.

To Moira and Dwight, the end of mankind means the end of a romance which barely got started. In one hectic week before the radiation seeps down the gey to a mountain stream for some trout fishing, stay at a lodge, and then return to Melbourne, in its final hours.

To Peter and Mary Holmes, the end means that they have lived through a successful and happy marriage, even though there is sadness because their child Jenifer never will know the meaning of love, and as they reach for the final cup of tea, the spectator realizes that they alone have the least regrets. They knew what true happiness was, unlike the others.

There are many impressive scenes in ON THE BEACH. There is the scene of the long line on the street, like a breadline, except that they are getting their little boxes of the capsules, after checking their names with the Red Cross. There is the final scene, showing Melbourne completely devoid of all life, as the air is tainted with the invisible death. There are somethings that I felt were wrong with the film, the problem of the bodies, as I mentioned before, and then again I thought the accent was too much on romance, and there should have been more of the other people alive at the time. But nonetheless ON THE BEACH is a shocker. It is a shocker, because to imagine to yourself that you are a part of what is going on, can have a great effect on you. This is the absolute end of the human race, the fact that it takes place in 1964, only a few years away, increases the shock.

ON THE BEACH is a film to be seen by everyone, in order that the lunacy described there will never take place. It is depressing, morbid, pessimistic entertainment. It is a great film. It is science fiction today. I hope it will always remain as such.

—Mike Deckinger



# HIS FATHER'S HOUSE

BY

EDWARD

LUDWIG

He was walking on a cold, stone road. A shroud-tight blackness seemed to press in upon him, squeezing him, filtering like smoke into his eyes and nose and lungs.

Suddenly, out of the blackness there was a light—a soft, colorless glow that revealed the towering spires of a tremendous city. It was a strange city, and somehow he knew that it was older than time, larger than Earth. It was an incredible jungle of jutting spires and towers connected by a tangle of elfin bridges as numerous as the spans of a spider web, as delicate as the dreams of a child.

And somewhere there was a sea. Somewhere dark waters lapped against crumbling stone steps and caressed bases of ancient, moss-covered towers,

A coldness and a silence were everywhere. Nearer and nearer to the city he came, a terror rising within him like an evil sea tide. His breath quickened, his eyes widened.

Nearer and nearer—

And then he screamed. His tall, slim body jerked on the bed. His eyes opened and he beheld the shadowy outlines of his clean, modern bathroom. He wiped perspiration from his hot forehead as realization came to him.

"The dream," he murmured, "I have had the dream again."

Shakily, he switched on his bed lamp, slid out of bed, and shuffled into the kitchen of his apartment.



PROSSER '60



He turned on the gas beneath the coffee pot that still held a shallow remainder of yesterday's breakfast coffee.

He sat for a long time at the kitchen table, drinking coffee, smoking. The bedroom was no a shunned place, a home of horror. It was late--nearly five in the morning. At least, he thought gratefully, he would not have to sleep for eighteen hours. He'd have eighteen hours of freedom.

Then he thought, Why? Why do I have the dream? What does it mean?

He was Johnny Winter, age 33, and he owned a small hardware store. He was an ordinary man in an ordinary job. And he was happy.

Sure, he'd been lonely once--during those boyhood years in the orphanage--but now he was engaged to Elaine: gentle Elaine with long, soft hair the color of ripened corn, with wide expressive eyes as blue as the sea, with a face that should have belonged to an angel. Elaine was lovely and uncomplicated and good, and she loved him. He was content. He had no seething ambitions that might be transformed into frustrations. So why the dream? Why, why, why, his mind screamed.

It had begun long ago, when he was seventeen. It hadn't been a nightmare then. It had been an obscure scene flitting across his dream-thoughts, to be vaguely recalled the next morning and then forgotten.

Over the years, its frequency and vividness increased. Now, almost every night for the past month he'd had the dream, each time more detailed, more frightening.

An angry defiance swept over him. He sent his coffee cup crashing to the floor. He flicked his cigarette against the wall. Elbows on the table, he buried his face in his palms.

"Lord," he breathed, "why?" And there was no answer...

So far Johnny's terror had been a child of sleep, of his bedroom and the darkness and silence. There had been no terror in the hours he spent among people, in the light.

Until--

Eight o' clock. The next night, Saturday night, an hour before the beginning of the Country Club dance. He placed the little white box containing a corsage under his arm and rang the bell of Elaine's apartment.

He was smiling--for he was the happy Johnny Winter now, the young man in love, not the screaming Johnny Winter of the dark bedroom. Through force of his will, his fear and his terror had been squeezed into momentary forgetfulness.

The door opened and Elaine stood beaming at him. She wore a formal of pale yellow, almost the same shade as her blonde hair that curled inward at the nape of her white neck.

"Hi darling," she said softly. Her nose crinkled teasingly. She kissed him. Then she spied the box under his arm.

"Oh, my corsage! I told you it wasn't necessary, dear. After all, we should economize--"

"I did economize," he declared. "I wanted to buy an orchid, settled for gardenias. Guess we can spare a buck and a half, can 't we?"

She laughed. "Yess, I guess so."

She took the little box, laid it on a small table by the door, and began to unwrap it. Her movements held a naive eagerness, like that of a small child opening a Christmas present. He watched her, admiring the grace of her delicate fingers, hoping she would like the corsage.

She slipped off the yellow ribbon, slid a fingernail under the cardboard lid and raised it. Her eagerness faded, transformed in a single second to disappointment.

"Oh, Johnny, look!"

He stared into the box. The gardenias were withered. Horribly, completely withered, as dry and brown as flowers pressed in an ancient scrapbook.







He touched a leaf with his forefinger as if to verify the report of his vision. The leaf crumbled into dust and formed a brown, ugly little island at the bottom of the box.

"That stupid florist," he snapped. "He must have given me the wrong box. Must have grabbed a box that's been lying around for—"

Fresh horror suddenly welled up inside him.

No, Johnny, he thought, you asked to see the corsage before you took it. The florist showed it to you. It was a beautiful corsage, clean and fresh and new. You watched him wrap it. You put the box under your arm as you paid for it. This is the same corsage that was so beautiful only three hours ago.

"Johnny, you look pale. It isn't that important. It isn't that important. Darling, what's the matter?"

"Nothing, Elaine, nothing. It—it was just a sort of surprise, that's all." He forced a feeble smile. "We haven't much time. Shall we go?"

The Country Club. Saturday night.

Outside, the lines of parked cars were black blobs in the dark, cool summer night, their noses pointing towards the club like a swarm of ants feeding around a drop of honey. Myriad windows, great warm eyes of golden light, angled their rays out of the lawn and shrubbery and elm and oak.

Over the Club steps passed stiff-backed, tuxedoed men in shiny shoes, and perfumed, powdered women in swishing party gowns. The air was filled with echoes of music and laughter that filtered through the golden windows to dissolve in the night breeze.

Inside were warmth, and life, and gaiety. There were smiling faces and clinking glasses, and immaculately white table cloths, and potted palms, and the endless scraping of feet over a little island of a dance floor. A five-piece orchestra played slow, easy rhythm, and a full-bosomed girl with too much chin crooned a lyric:

"Those Far away Places  
With strange sounding names,  
Far away over the sea..."

"Remember that, Johnny?" asked Elaine. "That was one of the first songs we ever sang together. Gosh, that must have been four or five years ago."

Johnny didn't answer. A shiver crept down his spine. A place far, far away. Somehow the words frightened him.

Elaine, sitting across the table from him, kept talking.

"—you look so handsome, dear. Look at those silly girls trying to flirt with you. They're probably thinking, 'Who's that dark, handsome man?'" She studied him for a moment, frowning and smiling at the same time. "I never realized your hair was so dark. Why it's black, isn't it? And where did you get that marvelous tan? I never noticed it before. Maybe it's because the lights are dim."

"Those Far Away Places  
With the strange sounding names  
Are calling, calling me..."

A far away place, by a sea, calling. Remembrance of the dream sprang into his consciousness like a jack-in-the-box. Walking along the cold stone road, the city looming in the dark distance. He shook his head.

"—those terrible girls, still looking at you. Maybe if I let my engagement ring glitter in their direction they'll stop. Oh, did I tell you?—Mother



said it's the loveliest ring she's ever seen. Of course, you know how mothers are."

She bit her lip. "Oh, I'm sorry, Johnny. I didn't mean to hurt you."

He forced his attention back to her. "No, that's all right. I mean, I'm not sensitive about being an orphan anymore."

Then his attention faded. Laughter, dancing, drinking, gay faces. How strange and distant it all seemed. The sounds died away. It was like looking upon a movie screen from a great distance, not hearing the sound, just seeing the movements of puppet-like beings who acted without apparent motive or direction.

He seemed oddly apart from it, a stranger who didn't belong. He belonged-- where? On the stone road, perhaps, walking\*\*

"Johnny, this is Mr. and Mrs. Maxwell. My fiance, Johnny Winter."

A strange girl sitting across the table was speaking. He realized the girl was Elaine.

Then he saw the paunchy young man and the spectacled woman standing by the table. The woman held a girl of about four by the hand.

"Oh." Johnny pushed his chair back and rose.

Greetings, smiles, handshakes.

"You're not leaving, are you?" Elaine asked.

Mr. Maxwell shrugged. "Baby-sitters are scarcer than thousand-dollar bills tonight. Afraid we'll have to take Clarice home." He nodded at the child, a tiny golden-haired doll nearly lost in the immensity of her heavily-starched party dress. "We planned only to stay an hour or so."

The brown, child-eyes of Clarice were very wide. She stared queerly at Johnny.

"Say hello to Mr. Winter," coaxed Mrs. Maxwell.

The girl's face was an enigmatic mask, an unfathomable combination of shyness, fear, suspicion, and bewilderment.

"Shake hands with the nice man, Clarice."

No movement, save a blinking of the wide brown eyes.

"Clarice?"

The child's soap-scented hand emerged from the labyrinthine folds of her dress. It reached outward, touched Johnny's hand.

Clarice screamed. Shrill and ragged, the sound burst from her lips like an explosion. She whirled frantically, tugging at her mother's dress, struggling to drag her astonished parent from the table.

"Misser Winner bad man!" she shrilled. Tears rolled down her flushed cheek. Every eye in the club seemed focused on her and Johnny.

"For Heaven's sake," said Mr. Maxwell, "I can't understand what got into her. She's always so well-behaved."

Johnny smiled weakly. "Children have great imaginations, don't they?"

The Maxwells left. Music played, dancers whirled, glasses tinkled. It was the same as before, and yet different. The child's terrified scream seemed to be echoing through the club, never ending.

At last Elaine said, "Y-- you seem so quiet tonight, Johnny, and I have a splitting headache. I feel like I'm going to be sick. Will you please take me home?"

Johnny's head was spinning. Lord, yes, he thought, let's get out of here, away from this laughter and noise. I don't belong here.

"Johnny, did you hear me?"

He blinked. "Yes, Elaine, of course."

A strange dream. A withered corsage. A child's scream. What do they mean? Why, why, why, why?

The next week little things happened.

Monday.



What was it Elain had said? Something about his hair looking darker? He studied his reflection in the bathroom mirror.

His hair was a glossy, raven black. Before, it had been dark brown. His skin too was darker. Not tanned, but a kind of creamy brown, like that of a mulatto.

The pupils of his once-brown eyes were as black as his hair.

I am changing, he thought...

Tuesday night.

The dream again. Walking down the stone road, nearer and nearer to the city. This time there was movement within the mass of spires and towers and bridges, movement as of tiny, silent creatures crawling slowly across the fantabridges or peering out from tower windows.

And this time he had the impression that someone was waiting for him, beckoning him on, urging him to greater speed.

Abruptly, a gate, black and rusted, loomed before him, its giant arch curving over the road. With a groaning of ancient hinges, it opened, slowly.

Perspiration dripped from his horror-twisted face. His hands swept upward to block the vision of the gate from his eyes.

He awoke screaming...

Wednesday.

For three hours he talked to the psychiatrist. He hid nothing. He revealed the most minute details of his life, all the little incidents that might have scarred him psychologically.

"An odd case," the psychiatrist mused. "As I see it, the only fact that might create a fear complex is your being an orphan, having your mother die at your birth, and not knowing who your father is. I can't determine the significance of the dream yet; that will take time.

"But as for the business of the corsage withering, forget it. Obviously, the florist made a mistake and gave you the wrong box. If you want to make sure, buy another corsage. You can be sure that it won't wither, too!"

Johnny bought another corsage. He took it to his apartment, opened the box, and held the fresh, fragrant gardenias in his hand. He studied the white, clean leaves, felt them with his fingers. There was no indication of withering, and he began to smile.

Then, in an upper right corner of a leaf a spot of brown appeared. The soft luster faded. There was a wrinkling and a shrinking and a darkening. The corsage became old, old, old. A minute later it crumbled into brown dust...

Thursday morning.

"See my bird, Mr. Winter?" A little boy who lived on the second story of the apartment held a feathery object in his palms. It was a canary.

"He had a broken leg, Mr. Winter, and I put a splint on it, and now he's almost well."

Johnny grinned at the beaming boy. He patted the bird's head, smoothing back the yellow feathers. "He looks fine. You'd make a good doctor."

That evening the boy was sitting on the apartment house steps, scowling, chin cupped in his hands.

"What's the trouble, fellow?" asked Johnny. "Where's your patient?"

"He died," the boy said sadly. "He just died. I don't understand it. He was almost well. He died just after you saw it."

It was Friday evening. He'd gone thirty-six hours without sleep. At eight o' clock he sank into an easy chair. His eyelids were heavy, his mind numb. Without realizing it, he fell asleep.

The dream. The road, the city, the slowly opening gate. The clump of his feet on cold stone, the hiss of his rapid, shallow breathing. Nearer and nearer--

This time he became aware of a dark figure standing in the gateway, mot-



ionless, waiting. Presently it moved forward, its face hidden in shadow. It strode toward Johnny in long, slow, even steps. Its arms lifted as if to embrace him in an embrace.

Inexplicably, Johnny's sense of horror was less intense. The brooding city, the gateway, and even the dark figure somehow possessed a familiarity that was no longer terrifying.

Johnny stepped forward, lips parted, the tenseness gone from his lean body. Closed and closer he came to the dark figure until he could almost distinguish its features. The figure started to speak.

Brrrrinnngggg!

The sound of a bell clamored in his ears, obscuring the deep, rich tones of the voice.

The vision faded. His eyes opened. "With a feeling of frustration he realized that he was in his apartment, that he had been awakened from the dream.

Brrinnngggg! The telephone.

Like an automaton he lumbered up from his chair, groped for the receiver. He could not speak, but stood swaying, trying to force the words from his lips.

"Johnny, is that you?" A familiar voice, yet somehow unfamiliar. An echo.

"Johnny, are you there, Johnny?" Elaine's voice.

"Johnny, I've been trying to get you all week. Where have you been? Can you hear me? Why don't you answer?"

"Elaine," he murmured.

"Johnny, I'm coming to you, I'll be right there." Click. He stood staring at nothing, his mind a chaotic jumble of spinning thoughts.

Withered corsage...a child's scream...children know things, they feel things that grown-ups don't...a strange black gate...a dead bird...someone waiting...my mother died when I was born...and I don't know who my father is...

He stood there, it seemed, for an eternity. At last he thought, I do know who my father is! And Elaine was coming to him.

He stumbled out of his apartment, into the self-operated elevator. He pressed a button furiously. Down, down, the door sliding open. Out into the foyer, through the revolving door. The street. Elaine must not find him. She must never, never, never find him.

Lights. Blinding lights that shone like flame into his hot eyes. Ugly sounds of voices, of traffic. He staggered down the crowded sidewalk.

"Johnny!" A small, thin, feminine voice leaped out at him.

He ran. Down the sidewalk he ran, ran, ran. He collided with a fat lady. Someone cursed at him. Behind him sounded the staccato click-clack of high heels.

"Johnny! Johnny!"

He spied a park, a little square of darkness in the throbbing city. He raced into it, stumbled over pebbled paths, over grass that withered beneath his feet. Then he was kneeling before a bench, panting, sobbing.

Soft footsteps fell at his side. "Johnny! What's the matter, Johnny! Please answer me."

He rose and whirled. "No, Elaine! Don't come near me! Don't look at me! Don't touch me!"

She fell into his arms, exhausted. He could not help holding her. She looked into his eyes. "I love you, Johnny. No matter what's happened, I love you. I'm Elaine darling. Elaine!

Her lips sought his.

"No, don't kiss me. You don't understand. Don't—"

She kissed him. He tried to break free. The perfumed scent of her hair entered his nostrils. He felt the softness of her slim body against his, the caress of her long fingers on his neck. For an instant he sat there. Then he shoved her away. She staggered backwards, eyes bulging with shocked astonishment. "Darling, why, why—"

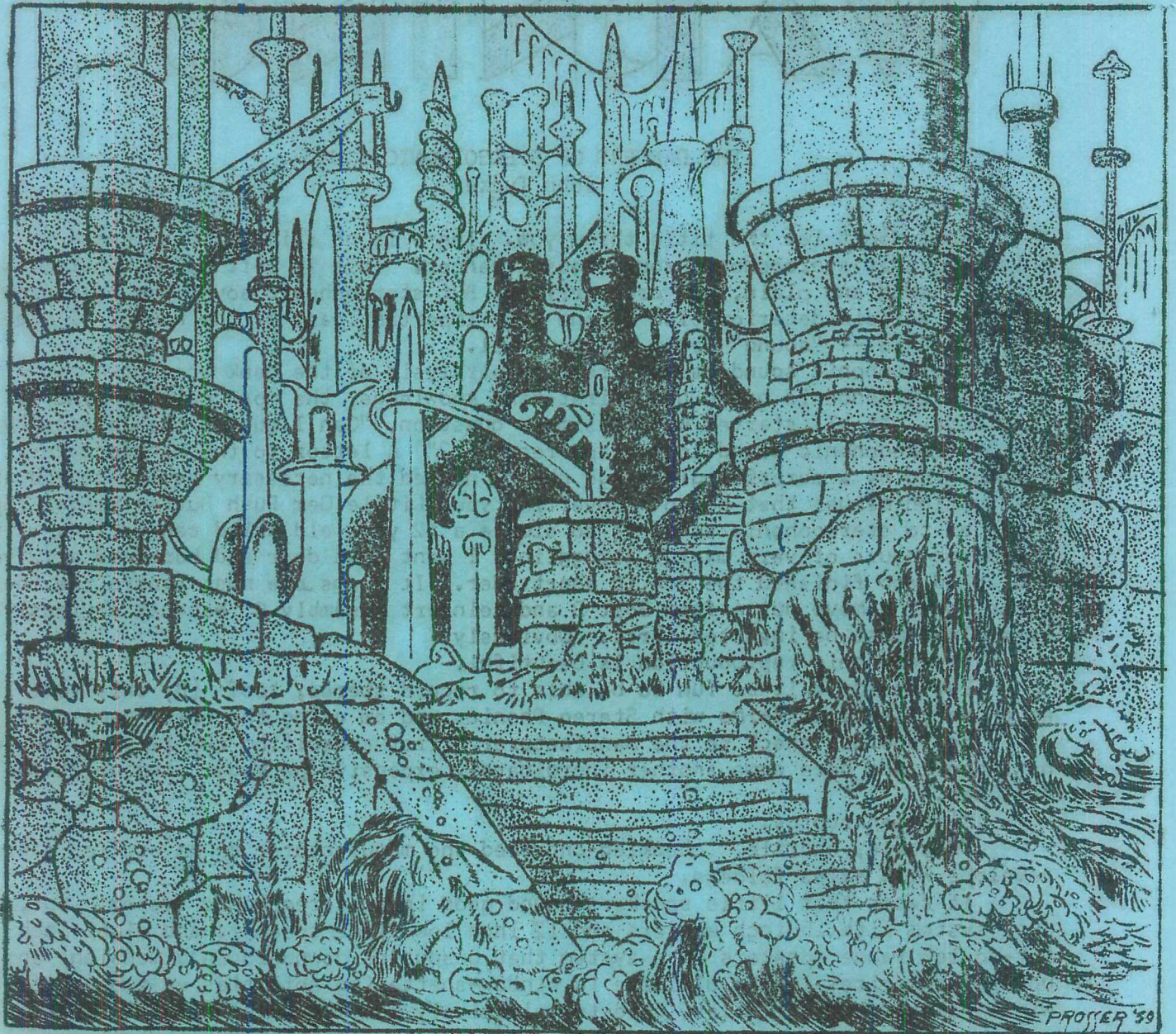
Her words froze. She swayed.

He watched her wither as the gardenias had withered.









He stared at the body for a long time, stunned, until he realized that someone else was standing there too.

It was a tall figure, standing a short distance from the path, its face cloaked in shadow.

"I have waited long for you, son, and I have been lonely for you. I called you, but you did not answer, and so I have come for you."

The voice was deep and rich and gentle. The words were like those in some ancient, musty volume, by a strange magic given new life and the power of sound.

"Your mother is in my city--and now Elaine," said the dark figure. "Will you come too, son?"

A great peace descended upon Johnny Winter.

"Yes," he said softly, "I will come too, father."



# WARNING

## THE DANGERS OF STEREOPHONIC SOUND

John Tucker

"Now, don't let the title throw you. There is no scientific evidence to this time that stereophonic sound causes cancer. This is left up to cigarettes, both filtered and plain, and cranberries. But stereophonic sound has been proved to cause a rapid deterioration of one very important part of the human. I have proof of this -- "sound" proof, if you will.

Stereophonic sound causes creeping paralysis of the bank account.

My evidence is based upon first-hand knowledge, the most painful kind of knowledge. It all started with a simple question, "Can I out-do the Joneses by adding stereophonic sound to my tape-recorder?" A letter to the manufacturer, accompanied by a surprisingly large check, netted the necessary equipment and an instruction manual that began "Converting your Little Gem Push Button Wonder Tape Recorder to stereophonic sound is so simple a 12 year old child can do it". After seventeen hours of very manful struggling, I went next door and borrowed a 12 year old child who finished the job in short order. It seems one must ignore the instructions "Remove nut A from Bolt B and reinsert Assembly C" because obviously assembly C must be inserted first. Obviously.

Stereophonic reproduction is beautiful.

But wouldn't it be fun to be able to record stereo, too? (By this time I am on very familiar terms with Stereo Phonics and am using the first name only.)

So, another check to the manufacturer (first consulting the 12 year old boy next door) and here came another inordinately expensive package. And great fun followed.

Also bankruptcy.

"Chuckle, chortle," chuckled-chortled the manufacturer as he stuffed a big envelope with sales folders.

It seems that little speakers sound good in a stereophonic system. But, a dual system with 15 inch woofers and 12 inch low range speakers and eight inch not-so-low range speakers in a system that graduates downward in dimensions and upwards in prices is the ultimate in window-shattering abilities -- two channel window-shattering abilities, able to selectively knock out the \$385.00 picture window on the left or the cheaper \$50.00 double-hung sashes on the right.

About this time I decided to apply some of the knowledge I'd gained in the field of electronics -- having served at a few minor jobs such as Chief Engineer of AM-FM broadcast stations, designer of central audio-control systems, and such little posts. From the industrial and broadcast equipment catalogues in my office I began to make a group of selections. I would build a real stereophonic system. Brand names that could be trusted were the order of the day: Broadcast models of tape recorders were ordered from Ampex and Magnecord; a stereophonic Dualux console was ordered from Gates Radio Corporation; on-location microphones were obtained from RCA; studio general purpose microphones were purchased from Electro-Voice; commercial quality condenser microphones were bought from Telefunken; monitoring speakers were purchased from Lansing and from Jensen; an oscilloscope was ordered from Tektronix; oscillators from General Radio Corporation, and items to be numbered were obtained from many other sources. Naturally, the local dealer in Klein tools was delighted to see my pickup truck approaching. In fact, the local Ford dealer was delighted with my interest in stereo as he had sold me the pickup to haul orders home from the Santa Fe freight depot.



About this time it became necessary to enlarge the basement workshop in order to accommodate this expanding interest, so a new basement addition was dug. It seemed a shame to leave this concrete-covered scar visible on the attractive corner lot we occupy, so an additional six rooms were added to the house to conceal the new basement. This addition, however, was only a minor expenditure.

The electronic equipment was installed, at some cost of effort and time, and was tested and finally deemed ready for operation. Again the 12 year old boy next door, now 14 years of age -- drafted and some excellent high-fidelity stereophonic tape recordings were obtained of him shouting at one side of the new recording studio and then running rapidly -- in high-heeled cowboy boots -- to the other side of the studio and shouting again. Upon completing this recording an accident occurred and this recording was juxtaposed upon a tape of two guitars banging together while suspended from a tree limb in a high wind. The resulting tape was sold to a major recording company who released it as a popular record. To date it has sold four-and-a-half million copies and is still going strong. In fact, it may set the 1959 sales record for rock-and-roll tunes with vocals.

A portion of the capital investment has been recovered with this release, incidentally. Future plans include combining recordings of two taxicabs scraping fenders with the rhythmic pounding of a gasoline engine with a loose connecting rod and perhaps dubbing in the sounds of a distant coyote.

I decidedly diverge from the topic, though. It was at this time that true disaster struck. Someone invented a stereophonic disc.

Yesterday my son came home from the record shop with a commercial stereophonic disc. I thought this to be the epitome of disloyalty and said so. However, upon hearing the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Munch -- played on a \$49.94 stereo set purchased on the sly -- I felt that perhaps there was a slight future in such recordings and told my son he could obtain a better disc playback system for the living area of the house.

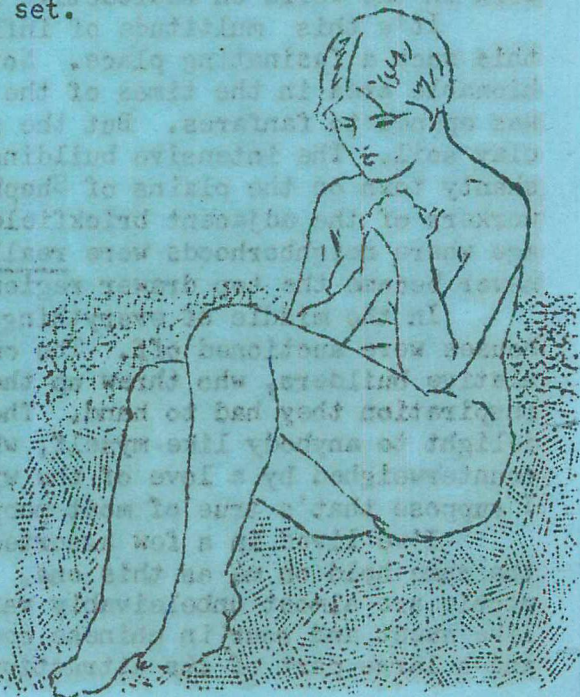
I went back to the basement in order to rebuild certain portions of the third-track preamplifier and correction network. Some peculiar sounds in the upper area of the house failed to distract me until I was suddenly assured that Mr. Sousa's own band had been invited to spend an afternoon in my home. I rushed up the stairs, banging my head on a newly-installed low-hanging conduit.

It seems that the Curtis Mathes Company builds a "Stereo Wall" -- complete with a 24 inch Idiot Window.\*

And it only costs \$1385.00, installed. Plus sales tax.

\*Idiot Window -- sometimes called a television set.

--John. Tucker





# FANTASY HILL

by ARTHUR SELLINGS

Notting Hill—Rotting Hill, Wyndham Lewis called it. The place where the race riots broke out, the area that most newspapers call "seedy".

But newspapers never tell the truth. I once read words to this effect: whenever you read something in a paper of which you have personal knowledge, how often is it the truth? Wise words. For example, how often does the press give a truth picture of SF or SF fans?

Oh, they tell part of the truth sometimes. This is the area where the race riots happened; it is seedy in parts, in the same parts It can be raw and violent and grim (this is the area of the Christie murders). True enough, but—

Hardly any of that is true of Notting Hill, but rather of Ladbroke Grove or Westbourne Park or Notting Dale. If the papers can't get the place straight, what can they?

There is a Notting Hill. Stately (and expensive) houses are thick on its slopes; it is noted for high-class antique shops, film actors and the Mercury Theatre, where Eliot's Family Reunion was first staged, and where one of the world's leading ballet schools, the Ballet Rambert is housed. The area the papers mention is the valley to the North, comprising Ladbroke Grove and Notting Dale. It is this area (together with Notting Hill itself) which I shall be writing about.

What does the area contain?

Well, apart from the Mercury, there are several other small avant-garde theatres. There's the world famous antique market of Portobello Road, one synagogue, one Serbian Orthodox church, countless convents, some of the most filmed territory in London, two famous amateur boxing clubs, training colleges, one pocketbook publisher, one gasworks, Christopher Legue, a dozen bookshops, and one of the most heterogeneous populations on Earth.

Incidentally, on its fringes are the White City sports arena, the huge new BBC tv centre and the post-graduate medical school of Hammersmith Hospital, where they do the blue baby and Siamese twins operations and where some of the most advanced work in the world on radioactive isotopes is being carried on.

It's this multitude of influences, together with its history, that makes this such a fascinating place. Notting Hill was originally conceived as a new fashionable area in the times of the Prince Regent. A race course, the Hippodrome was opened to fanfares. But the going was, literally, too heavy, because of the clay soil. The intensive building development ran into snags because of the smoky shanty town on the plains of Shepherd's Bush and Notting Dale. This, housing the workers of the adjacent brickfields, was one of the toughest neighborhoods in an age where neighborhoods were really tough. With neighbors like that, the district never became the top drawer region that its sponsors dreamed of.

In the middle of everything, the builders' bank went broke. The unfinished houses were auctioned off. The only buyers interested were a host of small speculative builders, who threw up the remaining storeys with whatever materials and inspiration they had to hand. The result is a town planner's nightmare and a delight to anybody like myself, whose dreams of a bright and searing future are counterweighed by a love of the winding and chaotic, the dark and haphazard. And I suppose that's true of most people, realised or not.

I've lived in a few assorted districts, rural or urban, but none has exerted the same hold on me as this one. You never know what will turn up next. And the people are almost unbelievably varied. It's this proximity of extremes that, like sweet and sour in Chinese cooking, goes far to give the place its savour—and a large part of its attraction for me. I've said that it never became a fash-



ionable district, but there is a considerable population of well-to-do-people. And these are cultured people, on the whole. The kind who collect books, paintings, antiques. And on their doorsteps live the poor.

Well, some of them are not so poor. Some of them have prospered out of junk and door-to-door trading—I know quite a few of them. Round here the people are sturdy and independant. Many have trucks, a large number still a pony and cart like their parents and grandparents before them. They prowl the streets, waiting for the well-to-do to tire of their possessions, to move—or simply, if they wait long enough, to die. Then up turn the treasures on the stalls of Portobello Market, or the other one which the tourists near hear of and has no name, or in the scores of junk shops in the back streets.

What treasures have I found? Too many to list. Ones that come to mind are a volume of rare pornographic pamphlets of the 18th scentury (which I sold to the husband of a well known film star for more pounds than I paid pennies), the first book ever published (in 1662) on the art of engraving, and an atlas of 1676 that cost me less than \$10 and fetched \$250.

But one of the greatest pleasures has been the amount of old science fiction and fantasy I've found. It was my wife who unearthed an unknown interplanetary novel, ANGILIN by one A.L. Hallen, published in 1907. On my own finds, I remember Edwin Pallander's ADVENTURES OF A MICRO-MAN, E.V. Odle's THE CLOCKWORK MAN (this is so scarce that I've found only three copies of it so far!) several Griffiths, most Haggards in first editions, and hundreds more, including a Machen that isn't on the Shasta checklist. I've found eight copies of it, several in mint with d/j. There was even a signed presentation copy from Machen himself.

With the years—this is my ninth here—I've come to learn something of the fantastic lore of the place. By fantastic, I mean of fantasy. The watertower, which is a landmark, was the scene of the seige in Chesterton's fantasy, THE NAPOLEAN OF NOTTING HILL. Much of the action of HARTMAN THE ANARCHIST or The Doom of the Great City took place here. So did the events of DR. SILEX before the

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doctor took sail to discover the country at the North Pole.

But not only the characters in the books, several of their authors have connections with the district. Not far from the water-tower itself lives Sir Arthur Ronald Fraser, author of the FLYING DRAPER (one of my favorite fantasy books-- correction, one of my favorite books of all kinds) BEETLE'S CAREER, and half a dozen other distinctive fantasies. On the other slope of the hill S. Fowler Wright's wife and daughter used to keep a bookshop. E.V. Odle, author of the CLOCKWORK MAN which I mentioned, published in 1922, but whose basic theme would have listed Campbell's eyebrows if it had come across his desk twenty-five years later; he too lived here. I found his address and set off to find him, but, alas, he had died several years before. This was poignantly like the ending of his one and only sf novel where the Clockwork Man, jettisoned into this age by a malfunctioning of time--and dimension traveling mechanism, is leaving our time and a man who had befriended him here. They want to shake hands "but they missed each other by several days".

I don't know of any British magazine sf writers living here (though Bill Temple of 4-Sided Triangle fame lives only a short bus ride away). But Frank (Edward) Arnold, who had quite a few stories in U.S. mags in the early forties, lived here once, and hated it! That's how the district must affect you, one way or the other, but positively. Because the most renowned fantasy author who ever lived here, in Clarendon Road over fifty years ago, he too was only too relieved to depart; he says so in one of his autobiographical books. And that to me is really surprising. Did you ever come across an author's work and think, 'Heavens, this man thinks just like me'? That happened when I first read Machen. An odd combination of sceptic and mystic, a contemplative man who liked roaming around the out-of-the-way-places of London, a lover of old and curious books. I chimed instantly. And yet--while I could appreciate the peculiar charm of a place like Brentford, which is on the river by London and is like an old forgotten port frequented by ghosts, just as Machen did (and wrote about)--this area had no charms at all for the author of Dreads and Drolls. Perhaps he didn't stay long enough, for I remember now that it took a few months for the spell to work on me.

And the spell must work on many people. No doubt many had no choice; they were born here or drifted here. Perhaps the many actors, painters, poets, dancers, musicians, only choose it because it's fairly central and relatively inexpensive, until the breaks come; the colored people and other racial minorities because others of their people are here. But there must have been some other attraction in the first place--a tolerance, an atmosphere.

Whatever that atmosphere is, it must be different for so many people of so many different races and attitudes, I have tried in this brief sketch to give a hint of what it means to me.

—Arthur Sellings

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# INSIGHT INTO KRISHNA

by Bernard M. Cook

Once in a while a writer will create some literary work which is forever after associated with his name. Who can forget Dickens' Scrooge, Shakespeare's Romeo, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes? In the more specialized forms of literature, such as science fiction and fantasy, there are characters of a similar nature whose fame never reaches the general reading public, but whose immortality is assured within the genre itself. Thus, we have van Vogt's Slan, Robert E. Howard's Conan, Burrough's Tarzan, E.E. Smith's Kimball Kinnison, Heinlein's Waldo. The list is long. Upon closer investigation, it becomes apparent that these creations are not mere accidents--they are carefully planned, so carefully planned, in fact, that they take on a pseudo-life of their own which is powerful enough to carry them on through story after story, book after book. An excellent example of such is Tarzan.

Another example is not a character, but an entire culture, L. Sprague de Camp's future domain of the Viagens Interplanetarias, which has been a favorite of sf fans for over ten years. These stories, like those of Heinlein's future history, are like pieces of a jig-saw puzzle: a separate piece may be interesting in itself, but when fitted in with all with all the other pieces it becomes a part of a broad picture that is as wide and as interesting as the Universe itself.

The Viagens made its first appearance in July, 1949, when ASTOUNDING published "The Animal-Craker Plot," a short story concerning one Darius Koshay, an unscrupulous Persian, whose passion for making a dishonest credit often managed to get him into hot water. This was followed by the serialized novel The Queen of Zamba in August and September of that same year. This introduced the planet Krishna to the science fiction fan. It is safe to say that the major portions of the story of the Viagens either take place on, or concern, the planet Krishna. Krishna, with its companion planets Vishnu and Ganesha, circles the K-type (orange-colored) star Tau Ceti. Vishnu, with its perpetual turkish-bath climate, is closer to the sun than is Krishna, and thus corresponds roughly to Venus, using our Solar System as an analogy. Ganesha, as far as I know, has never been the setting for a story, but it most likely corresponds both in size and climate to our own Mars, since it is the outer of the three planets. Of the three, Krishna is most like our Earth, and therefore is the most interesting.

Krishna, like Earth, is composed of a variety of cultures, from the Nich-Nyamadze of the frigid South Polar Continent to the, well whatever it is that is near the North Pole. DeCamp never got around to mentioning that. It is easy to see that DeCamp purposely made individual cultures on Krishna similar to certain of our own, either in language or social set-up. Thus, the Nich-Nyamen which are mentioned in The Hand of Zei have a certain suggestiveness of the Russian culture about them. Their language has the same characteristics that Russian has, and is just about as unpronounceable. DeCamp even has the Nyamen shaving their scalps, reputedly a favorite practice among Russians, who often harbor certain annoying little six-legged insects.

In The Hand of Zei, we encounter the Sunquar, a continent of thick seaweed in the Banjao, Krishna's largest sea. The Sunquar corresponds to the version of our own Sargasso Sea that was so prevalent fifty years ago, a large area of the atlantic so choked with debris that passing ships would become entangled in it to the extent that they could not break free. Actually, the Sargasso is nothing of the sort; the percentage of floating seaweed there is not more than other parts of the ocean. But DeCamp probably thought this romanticized version was too good to pass up, hence our version of the Sargasso was transferred to Krishna.



Probably the most interesting part of Krishna is Gozashtand, which can best be described as Krishna's India, a complex of languages, customs, and religions. The most outstanding feature of Gozashtand is its language, Gozashtandou and the various dialects thereof. Anyone who knows a little about our own earthly languages would be struck by the similarity between Gozashtandou and Persian. Indeed, in his Science Fiction Handbook, DeCamp confesses that Gozashtandou is nothing less than Pig-Persian. However, it is more than that; it is almost pure Persian, DeCamp having assigned different value to actual Persian words.

For instance, in The Tower of Zanid, when we come upon a dinosaur-sized lizard called a shan, we are using the Persian word for "sand". The bishtar, which can best be described as an elephant with two trunks and six legs, has for its name the Persian word meaning "more". Yeki, the tiger of Gozashtand, (there are tigers in India, aren't there?) means "a" or "an" in Persian. The name of another animal, aya, has a name which in Persian is a word to indicate a question. Dasht, a ruler equivalent to a baron or an earl or perhaps a duke is the root of "to have". Baghan, an unprintable epithet (unprintable because I don't know the exact meaning myself) is Persian for "garden". Gozashtand apparently comes from "gozashtan", which means "pass", "place", or "pledge". And on and on and on. Obviously the author opened a Persian dictionary and took there from words which pleased him sound-wise while completely ignoring their meanings. I say this not to criticise or discredit DeCamp, but merely to pass on my own observations. Frankly, I like Gozashtandou as it is; it sounds more normal than would a lot of nonsense syllables created by dipping into a Scrabble box and pulling out a fistful of tiles. And I like Krishna as it is, too. After living with an idea for ten years, it becomes most comfortable.

—Bernard M. Cook

RISEN IS THE DAY -----  
verse by Denham Wortlecrain

The moon waves;

Up it goes,

Higher and higher into the lit up sky shaking with morning rage,

The birds that wing by scarcely notice the change,

Night creeps up,

The stillness melts,

Floods;

Flooded with the tears of unwholesome awakening,

The glory of day is forever,

And the madness of night is never.....

—Denham Wortlecrain



H O C U S

F O C U S

Len Moffat  
10202 Belcher  
Downey, California

Am surprised more don't know who the heck Brother Frank Jares is...that is, I KNOW... ¶Now I hope this will satisfy all those who seem to think that Brother Frank is a figment of someone's imagination. Yes, Virginia, there is a Brother Frank Jares, and he does exist. You see everyone, his fame is known even to California. What more proof do you want--Md¶? I've heard of him and other such "personalities" thru simple, everyday contact with people in the mundane world.

Berleth's article was both interesting and informative. Although much of the material published by Arkham House is of little interest to the modern sf fan, I'm glad that someone is able to publish his favorite kind of literature with some small measure of success. ¶I must disagree with your statement about AH being of little interest to the modern sf collector, Len. Maybe there are some who don't care for it, but the majority of those who collect book of and related to sf find Arkham House invaluable. If it wasn't for AH, where would all the Lovecraft and Smith etc.etc. volumes be? And why are copies of HPL's THE OUTSIDER being peddled by some dealers at up to \$75 a copy?--Md¶. Perhaps the time will come when weird or horror--fantasy will be in vogue again (as it was in the days when Weird Tales, Ghost Stories, etc.etc. were successful mags), and Arkham House will of course have a had start on all other publishers.

Lambeck's con report augments the others I've read, and very nicely, too. His use of the notes he was able to take is most commendable.

Sneary's report on the Von Braun talk appears at an appropriate time, considering the diatribe against the rocket expert in the current issue of Alan Dodd's CAMBER (No. 11). Rick did a very good job of reporting. I was among those present at the talk, and Rick has covered all the major points carefully, if not briefly.

Art Rapp's points re: publishing are good ones, and, I should think, fairly obvious ones. It was a good article for neofans who aren't quite sure what to do to enjoy fandom.

HOCUS POCUS is a good lettercol. You show admirable restraint in not calling it HOCUS FOCUS... ¶Or FOCUS HOCUS, for that matter--Md¶.

|||||

# D O N F O R D W I N S T A F F

Don Ford, noted primarily as a convention fan and past TAFF organizer won the current TAFF race with the following figures:

DON FORD--499  
TERRY CARR-331  
BJO WELLS--288



Robert Jennings  
3819 Chambers Dr.  
Nashville 11, Tenn.

I got HOCUS #12 today and was about to zip right through it. Unfortunately, you had the thing shut tight with two stubborn staples, and it took me all of five minutes to get it open. Why don't you send everybody a free staple remover? Why doesn't everybody have a staple remover on their desks in preparation for fanzines that come? I always do--Md.

I'm going to be snappish with a few people. These people are the ones that don't like Prosser illos, and don't bother to give decent reasons why. Harry Warner gave reasons, but I don't think that they'd stand up. Prosser "Simply cannot draw human figures that are believable in their configurations and he doesn't put a convincing facial expression on the people to fit their nasty situation. Well, I would suggest that Mr. Warner go back through the files of what fanzines he has and pick up a copy of IWE REVOLUTION, and take a good look at the back cover. That should shatter the idea that Prosser can't draw decent humans and/or suitable expressions to match their "nasty situations. That picture on p. 20, issue 11 impressed me as very good. I fail to see where artist Prosser has gone astray. Warner points out the skinny limbs as opposed to the bulging muscles. I don't care whether the legs and arms are skinny, and the muscles bulge, the picture looks correct to my eyes. The muscles and limbs give the guy a look of the strange, that I like. For all we know, the guy may be starving, but he keeps up his daily exercises, and hence those muscles. Prosser was probably trying to get that strange effect with the bulging muscles and skinny limbs. Even if Prosser does make the things look strange, I'm sure that Mr. Warner has seen worse cases on the covers of pro-mags. Haven't we all--Md. The expressions on the cover were good, I believe they fit, and I don't have any objections. Who knows, maybe she was grabbed while trying to put on lipstick? Or powdering her nose--Md?

The Arkham House article was a blessing to me. I've been meaning to look up their address, and buy some books now for 2 years, but the article really whetted me appetite, and the address in the lettercol just about closed the deal. Due to my carelessness, I seem to have missed SKULL FACE AND OTHERS, damn it.

The second part of the con report was very enjoyable. It made me wish I had invested cash and gone to it. Me too--Md.

Now there's a lot to say about the religious article. Mr. Wells leaves many devious holes in what might or might not have been a good argument. The logic is long and weavy, and very patchy. To George, I'll ask, what does fandom think of God? How many of fandom's athiests, and fandom's got them, bother to care about God in any form? Fandom as a whole falls short of the Ten Commandments? Well so does everybody, and just about everyday, too. And twice on Sundays--Md. Particularly, George makes a point about disobeying the commandment saying you shall not take the name of God in vain. That means, by his article, Ghu, Ghod, and Foo-Foo. Musn't forget Roscoe now, and Yngvli, though he's really just a louse--Md. I don't see his point here. Admitted, that Ghod may be a case or indirectly using God's name in vain, would he prefer it better to just say God? That would be cussing, you know. If a fan is going to cuss, then do it openly, and don't try to hide it with an inserted "h". The use of the "h", instead of the real word might imply something psychological. Perhaps fans are a group of guilty persons, all huddling together miserably, trying to hide their misfittness from themselves and their gods, whomever they may be. Absolutely correct, Bob. It's revelations like this that keep fandom alive--Md.

Then again, why do fans ever bother to use cuss words at all? Evidently you've never had a session with a reluctant mimeo, Bob--Md. Maybe fans sling those words just for the hell (naughty, naughty--Md) of it, to make the sentence more meaningful, more direct, and to have more strength and character about it. Fans: do you want to strengthen your sentences, then just...--Md.



When I used Hell in that sentence, it added in some small way to the strength and character of it. Or did I just use the word to impress everyone that I'm big and strong enough to use words like that openly and get away with it? Then I might be indirectly mocking God by saying I am big and strong enough to get away with it. Then too, cuss words might be used as some sort of social obligation. It has become a case of either you know or use them, or you're still a baby. Have you ever heard of some person berated and called certain things because of his overly religious attitude, or the fact that he had never used foul language?

After Ghod, I'd like to say, I don't think George has any righteous objection coming over words like ghu or foo-foo. For all he knows, these may actually be the name of gods of mythology. And the religious fan, (are there any?--Md) not wishing to break a commandment, or misuse the name of God, instead resorts to the use of ghu, or whatever he thinks of.

I notice this ish there were but four illos. (This is taken from a different letter--Md). Four, a measly four illos to illustrate all that material. It's a crime. Especially when you compare it to the eight illos in issue #11. This means you have exactly halved the number of illos in your zine. (That was just an experiment last time, I was trying to see how it would look to use practically no illos. As you can see by this, I've abandoned that policy, and am using lots more. Actually, I don't think that illos are so important; I've seen several zines that had practically no art in them at all--Md).

I'd like to know when the next HOCUS will come out. (Well if you're observant you should be looking at the new one right now--Md). Despite what Bloch says, and what you seem to be doing, I believe your zine should appear at least once every four months. (Sorry, but I can practically guarantee it won't, since I just don't have the time, equipment, and material to get HOCUS out on some fixed schedule; any fixed schedule. Maybe I'll put it out every ten years, the way Lee Hoffman did, I believe--nope, that was five years, now that I remember it.--Md).

The Bill Durkom thing still seems to be smoking. I like Durkom. (Sacrilege--Md). I get very tired of wishy-washy zines that have nothing but good cheer and sick humor plastered throughout. A nice cynical piece every now and then adds a lot to a zine, and makes for controversy

Gerry de la Ree  
277 Howland Ave.  
River Edge, N.J.

Thanks for sending along HOCUS #12. I don't see many fanzines these days, which of course is my fault. A few dollars sent to the right parties would no doubt flood my mailbox with zines.

I particularly agree with Art Rapp, who in his article "Sound Off" stresses the importance of amateur journalism. Art pointed out effectively some of the fans who graduated from the fanzine ranks to the pros--in science fiction.

While I never went into the sf field as a pro, I would give much credit to the experience I gained as a fanzine editor for the modest success I've found in the newspaper field. I was 14 when I batted out my first fanzine in 1939. Let's face it: I couldn't write and I couldn't spell. Some of the older fans of the day jumped all over me for those shortcomings, but fortunately there were a few nice guys around who took time out to show me what I was doing wrong. (There are fans that fit into these classifications around today, too; I've had my experiences with both--Md). I didn't change overnight, but gradually I did overcome many of the defects. Two years later I was fortunate enough to get a job as sportswriter for a weekly paper.



I also enjoyed August Derleth's article on Arkham House. Derleth's books are among the finest produced in the fantasy field. They are also about the only books published in the field in the past 20 years that could be termed as collector's items.

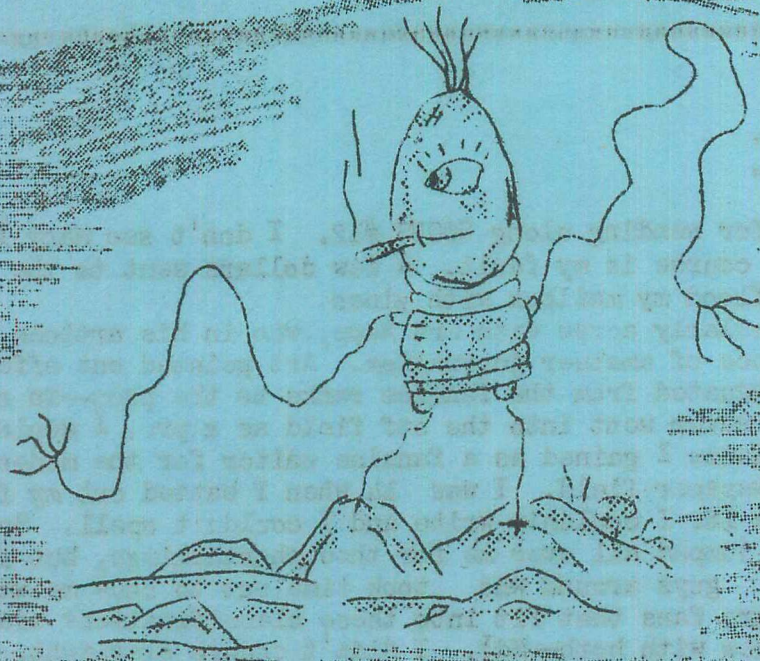
Always like to read the other guy's view of a convention. No two attendees seem to view a convention the same way. Also, Prosser's cover was well done for a mimeo job.

Leslie Gerber  
201 Linden Boulevard  
Brooklyn 26, N.Y.

I noticed quite a bit of improvement with HOCUS #12. There were some things wrong with HOCUS--but there are more things right with HOCUS, and that's what counts. The biggest improvement I suggest would be that the mimeoing be worked over. I've always liked elite type better than pica in fanzines, and HOCUS #12 looks neater for the elite type, but better repro would help.

Your art listing brings up an interesting point. Including the cover you had only 4 illos. I used to be an artless sort, who thought more of the print than the illos, and sneered at the illos, but they do make the fanzine easier to read, and you should have more than 4 illos in 28 pages of fanzine. [Agreed--Md].

I liked your run-down on what the comments were on the previous issue. Keep this. The rest of your editorial was of mild interest, although I'd have thought you'd know of the Faircon by now. Anyway, I'm on the Faircon committee now, and I'd appreciate hearing any suggestions anyone has on the Faircon--except to give it all up. [Well I hope the Faircon committee isn't forced to give up the idea, but I certainly wouldn't like to see this regional con held on the Fair grounds, with a bunch of curious non-fans invited in. I expect to be there, but I can't say I'll like it if that's the way it's held.--Md]. I intend to do whatever I can to make it possible for interested fans to attend, other than subsidizing them, that is. I can't afford that, but high prices will be a problem, and we'll keep them in mind.





Derleth's article was of the greatest interest, and if you requested it, I commend you for your foresight. I hope it will bring Derleth some orders for Arkham House books; as (I believe) Arkham House is the last fantasy specialty publisher left, and it must be kept alive. ¶ I will agree with you that it should be kept alive, but AH is not the only fantasy book publishing house. There is Dawn Press in Hamburg, New York, managed by the Kruegers, which frequently issues fantasy volumes--Md¶. I would imagine that there would be much demand for the Lovecraft letters, although not at \$10 or \$15. For \$6 I'd buy one myself. And I don't know how many people know how much Derleth writes, but I wouldn't want to think that we fans are all strictly sf and fantasy readers; I think I remember something like 75 books by Derleth. ¶It's possible, he's known for writing historical volumes, as well as fan tasy--Md¶.

The second installment of Lambeck's con-report was better than the first, though I liked the first one too. It's a good rundown of the DETENTION, judging from what I've heard. And it was the first place where I've heard of the gags from the banquet mentioned in print. The only thing I didn't like was the continuation on a previous page. This is something I've always disliked. Why couldn't you have reversed the continuation of this and your editorial? ¶Just lazy, I guess--Md¶.

George's article puzzles me. I'm inclined to regard it as a sort of a mixture of a serious and a humorous article, since there was at least one attempt at a gag in it. ¶I think plenty of people gagged over it--Md¶. I don't think it's as faggheaded as it seems tho, at least I hope it isn't.

Sneery's artical iss moast informutuve and enjoyubel. ¶Thankks ah loht fur thu cind werds, vut I think yu spel wurs then hee dus--Md¶.

I found a lot in Rapp's article to disagree with. First, a bowling ball costs no more than \$30, including bag and shoes. Anyone who can get a brand new mimeo, with all the necessary accessories for that is a wizard. Second, I doubt if it's possible to put out a subzine which will even come close to paying for the cost of its paper these days; there aren't enough people who will pay money for any but the best fanzines. And most of the best fanzines, are the biggest money-losers, because in order to be best they have to circulate widely among all the good writers in fandom. Third, the fanzine is no longer the best training ground for beginning sf writers, since fan-written fiction has been so strongly de-emphasized recently. You can learn to write good faan-fiction, but not good sf. Unless someone wants to start a fanzine for beginning writers, it will be difficult to get any but the best fan-written sf printed in a fanzine--except for the extremely bad crudzines, which take almost anything. I know that I publish a fanzine strictly for the fun of it, and I suppose that's why most people do.

And now to the letters:

I disagree with Harry Warner on the people Prosser may draw. They may be malformed, but I think that's done more on purpose than due to lack of knowledge. Of course, Dave's knowledge of anatomy is obviously not the greatest, but I don't think he'd make arms or bodies thicker or thinner because he didn't know any better.

An interesting exception to Bloch's postualte is CRY, which is monthly, and is currently having trouble, because too much good material is coming in. ¶If only the same "tragedy" could befall HOCUS.--Md¶. It's not that their standards have changed in the past few months, but when a fanzine gets a good reputation, the good material starts flooding in from people who want their stuff published in a good fanzine. And CRY was so darned regular that material was usually printed within a month of receipt. Now look at it, they have so much material, they don't know what to do with it.

What's wrong with putting "Contents: Pornography" on the wrapper? ¶Nothing, as far as I know. I doubt that it would get anyone angry. ¶Only the P.O.--MD¶



# BROTHER

When I mailed out copies of my SEXY DETECTIVE STORIES several months ago with "Contents: Tropic of Capricorn" on them, I didn't have any confiscated, or anything, and nobody reported an opened copy. (T. of C., in case you don't know, is a famous book of pornography by Henry Miller). I don't see why fanzines should be openable for inspection either. [I think the main reason the Post Office would want to open a fanzine (though it's never happened to me) is that fanzines are usually sent as third class matter, and third class matter can have no writing in it, but must consist of duplicated matter, hence the Post Office could be checking to see if you're violating any postal rules—Md]. I'll think I'll write "May not be opened for inspection by anyone" on my next zine and see what happens.

I notice the absence of Durkom from this issue. Good! I hope it will be permanent. [Perhaps—Md].

Janet Freeman  
91 Hawes Ave.  
Hyannis, Mass.

I got #12 recently. Your cover was good. Liking Prosser so much accounts for that, but your lettering was different and interesting. Like I have said, there is so much detail in Prosser's work, it makes me shudder to think of all the time he puts into it. His work is extremely scientifiction-fantasy [Huh?—Md] type, and that's one of its strong points.

Bob Lambeck's con-report was extremely good, interesting, and seemed to put across the idea (there was an idea, I hope) rather well. He got shook at your censorship; I'm glad you left this part alone. [Censorship is too strong a word; let's just say "editorial discretion"—Md].

"Is Fandom Sacrilegious" literally ran around in circles. The basic assumptions were shaky, to start with. That God, assuming there is a God interested in the human race as a whole, is going to take any notice of fandom, is doubtful. Let's hope this God doesn't get so interested in Fascinating Fandom, that he gets UN-interested in those little firecrackers called hydrogen bombs that we're playing with. Although it was put nicely with obvious talent, Mr. Wells should devote his talents to something more fruitful.

John Pesta  
619 Greenleaf St.  
Allentown, Penna.

Your abondonment of the justified margins is a good idea, no one really does appreciate them. [This letter was going to be used last issue, but I misplaced it then, so I'm using it now, but it contains comments on issue #11—Md]. They do, however, add to an issue's professionalism, but only if done with extreme care, and that takes along time.

Prosser's illos were the only good things in the zine, so far as art goes. Boy, but his cover was great, though at first it seemed to be a bit con-



# FRANK

glamered, what with his lines drawn all in the same stroke. I think he has just a bit of a tendency to overdraw, throwing in lines for shading where they aren't really necessary. I do like his art very much though, and I hope I'll live to see his next cover (HOCUS' irregular schedule).

Here's where I pick up on that schedule: While I cannot draw from the much vaster reservoir of experience that Bob Bloch has in regards to fangines, I'll have to say I don't agree with him all the way through his article. A good editor, one with determination and zeal and a sense of responsibility could get a zine out if he wanted to in any way. (Sorry John, but it also takes: ink, Paper, printable material, a good machine, stamps, etc.etc. to get a zine out. Those things you mentioned just aren't enough--Md). Throwing a zine together and saying it might be the last issue doesn't satisfy too many people. The best way to beat this problem is to say you publish it seasonally, that way you could hardly miss with three months leeway. Have you noticed that FANAC is back on schedule. I guess that's because of the DETENTION award. Pretty good deduction, huh? So why not at least give some time schedule? Make us happy. Let's have none of this annual business that guys like Bloch want.

The trouble with HHOCUS was the inclusion of "The Trouble with Australian Fandom". Who cares? The things Mr. Stone said could have been said in half the space, considering his necessary exaggeration.

I'm glad to see that Alan Dodd finally got something printed that's better than his usual book/movie reviews. "Food of the Dodds" was darn good and lacking only in his deleterious attempts at punization. I think his puns should be thrown in a lake or a river, maybe even in Seine.

The eminent Mr. Durkom should come down off his high horse and open his eyes. I have nothing against the man, nor his views, but the manner in which he expresses them. Also, I have never seen the attack of Messers. Hamlin and Durham, so I am speaking strictly from a one-sided point of view. However, I believe that the two latter gentlemen probably conducted themselves in a more intelligent manner than this almighty Mr. Durkom, and I will go to their rescue in what little way I can.

First off, I will accept your statement that you are not a frustrated athlete, Mr. Durkom, but you certainly frustrated over something. Who are you to call all the men idiots who have enough courage and persistence to fight their way to the top of the heap in baseball and other sports? If this is not an accepted talent in your book of unwritten laws, perhaps whatever talents which you possess, meager as they may be, are unacceptable in others' books. I don't think your mentality is such that you could watch a game and understand the intricacies and idiosyncracies of what was going on. Concentration IS a talent, you know, and one which I doubt you could cultivate.

I know nothing of Mr. Durham's anonymous approach to you, but I think nothing of his remaining as such. I will agree with you as far as the unprovenness of religion's authenticity is concerned. But if this is the case, why did you not state the truths or at least, theories to which you adhere. There must be some. Religion is just as good a theory as any for explaining where we all came from, and until someone can show me better and more inclusive evidence, to the otherwise, I'll grant religion an equal footing with any other means of creation or salvation,



# JARES

All the way through your account you conducted yourself like someone lacking in stable foundations, continually insulting and blasting at things which had no bearings on the case in point. If your two opponents partook of similar techniques, I have no better feelings for them, but if they did, I am ignorant of such facts, and apologize to you in that event only. [Apologies unnecessary; they didn't--Md].

I'm in a hurry to finish this up, so I'll simply say that Vic's Picks were mostly good, except for ALIENS 4, which was a great collection, I though. Have you read A WAY HOME, Vic?

G.M. Carr  
5319 Ballard Ave.  
Seattle 7, Wash.

The contents of #11 showed a wide variation in quality. [This was intended for last issue too--Md]. Best, in my estimation, was Bob Lambeck's con report. It was so interesting, in fact, that it almost made me late for work. I was incautious enough to glance at HOCUS while eating breakfast, and the con report really hooked me. What I particularly liked about the thing was that it was nearly straight reporting. It gave names, descriptions, and sequences of events. It not only mentioned the speakers, but gave a brief run-down on what they said. This was a most unusual departure from the usual con reports. Another thing I particularly liked about it was the absence of his blow-by-blow accounts of his travels, to and from the con. The report started as the author walked into the hotel and stopped (first installment anyway) as he walked out to catch a train. Most refreshing.

On the other hand, I'd say that the most fuggheaded item was by Bill Durham. Inasmuch as I didn't see the items toward which he directs his replies, I can only judge what they were by the nature of his rebuttal. If they were anywhere near as woolly-brained as this rejoinder, I'm surprised you published them at all.

"Vic's Picks" was an interesting book review column to me because it presented such an entirely different outlook. Judging by Vic's reviews of those items which I have already read, I would be quite safe in buying a book he says "avoid" and equally safe in avoiding a book he says "buy". Your classified advertising was the best I've seen since the now defunct SINISTERRA. Only one sour note I could see--what would Papa Dionne want with a babysitter at this late date? Someone to sit with his grandchildren? [No, probably someone to sit with him. After all, Mama Dionne isn't getting any younger...--Md].

Interesting lettercol--Ron Ellik will probably understand NJF's aversion to criticism when he's been a member long enough to recognize the fatuity of the non-NJFers who spout off their extramural inanities under the impression that they are offering "constructive criticism"... and speaking of fatuous comments, I got a big chuckle from Jane Carruther's remark, "I don't see why it is that sf fans spend so much time working on these amateur magazines when they could help the field so much more by trying to write science fiction." Looks like this gal hasn't been around long enough to see the results when they do begin to write science fiction.



15

Harry Warner Jr.  
423 Summit Ave.  
Hagerstown, Maryland

How's this for broad mental horizons, ability to adjust to the future, and so forth? January is half gone, and I still haven't started to type the year as 195 as I'd expected to do until 1962, or thereabouts. Maybe I'm subconsciously so glad to get out of the 1950's that I have made the adjustment much more easily than I had foreseen. (Well from the looks of things, the 1960's will probably be worse than the 1950's; so start regressing...--Md).

The new HOCUS seems better to me than the previous one, although it's always hard for me to pin down a reason for a reaction like that: the sense of getting accustomed to a magazine's personality may cause the second issue you get to seem more friendly, and there's always the habit of being happier with some new excellence than with some half-forgotten old one. It's something like the revision of the old song and motto, about absence causing the heart to grow fonder for somebody else. (Or somebody else's zine--Md). Whatever the cause, I can find no fault with the cover this time which emphasizes the good things about Prosser's artistic ability.

The news that Derleth hasn't finished scraping the leavings from the bottom of the Lovecraft bucket sounds depressing. There's an old remark about not worrying about the enemies you leave when you go, but the friends are the ones you should really worry about on your deathbed. (Especially if you haven't mentioned them in your will--Md). The first few years of Arkham House produced the stuff that should have been published; the Lovecraft miscellany that has been coming out of the presses ever since have undoubtedly caused most of the strong anti-Lovecraft sentiment in fandom since then. (I must admit this is the first time I've heard an argument against Arkham House. I always felt that Derleth and Co. was doing the collectors in fandom quite a service by issuing many of these volumes, for otherwise it would be nearly impossible to obtain them. Arkham House & Derleth deserve all the encouragement they can. And, AH just doesn't put out the Lovecraft books, you know; it issues fantasy and weird books by varied authors, not just HPL, though he's probably the biggest attraction. But Derleth's own Solar Pens books have been doing pretty well too.--Md).

The continuation of the convention report made very pleasant reading, although these events are becoming thrice familiar by this time. Bob does a pretty good combination of personalized and objective reporting, and there's a differentness about his account because of the scrupulous way in which he lists the time data. I hope his watch was running accurately. (He used a sun-dial during the con--Md).

I admire George Wells' courage in tackling a subject like sacrilege and fandom in a single page. I hardly think that any two readers of HOCUS would come up with even faintly similar comments on the matter, simply because concepts like god and sacrilege differ so greatly among people, and because fans use terms like ghod and finite universe in such varied means. (Yes, but the point was; what god did a fan mean by ghod? Did he mean Ghu or Roscoe, or did he mean the God, which all good children are taught to believe in. It's like asking a south sea islander which god he is worshipping when he prostrates himself before an idol. Does he know?--Md).



# THE

I'm distressed to learn that Von Braun still clings to the Space Station notion. This space station deal has impressed me from the first time I heard it as a project which would take centuries to accomplish. For a while I feared that it had so many adherents that it might prevent men from getting to other planets in our lifetime, but apparently that isn't going to happen. I still believe that there are such difficulties involved in a space station around Earth that before it comes into being, its need will have been outdated by some new development like anti-gravity or harnessing nuclear power for transportation purposes. In fact, that mystery weapon that Russia is now bragging about could quite conceivably be anti-gravity. Von Braun's remarks about that sound strangely like the things that Willy Ley was saying about the uselessness of rockets in war, in the book he wrote just before Germany started to use the things in 1940.

Art Rapp may find some complaints, because there are individuals in fandom who don't like to see fiction in fanzines. I see no harm in it, although I'm somewhat dubious about the value of this as a step toward writing for the prozines. I don't think that the writer gets the kind of criticism that will help him to write saleable fiction, from fanzine lettercolumns. But it is possible that the encouragement derived from seeing your fiction in print, even in crudzines, has kept some individuals writing until they hit the prozines. And it is also possible that Ray Bradbury and Marion Zimmer Bradley, for example, might have started to sell to the prozines a year or two sooner, if they hadn't wasted their time with fandom.

Mimeography in my copy is pretty good. Your new typer seems to cut an excellent stencil, and any imperfections in the reproduction look to be more the result of ink starvation than anything else.

Al Andrews  
1659 Lakewood Dr.  
Birmingham 9, Alabama

I received HOCUS #12 yesterday, so let's get right down to the comments:  
COVER: Prosser is interesting, even when his subject matter is repulsive, which seems to be about 100% of the time. It is difficult for me, who has done so little, and certainly amateurish artwork, to criticize the work of an artist who most certainly has talent and trained ability. Yet I must agree with Harry Warner Jr. that Prosser's depiction of facial expressions carry too little import, and sometimes are even incongruous with the temper of the illo. However, having seen the excellent portfolio he did in MAMMON #3, I would not be in agreement with Mr. Warner about Prosser's lack of ability to draw the human body in motion. That portfolio had some very excellent examples of bodily motion. This cover for HOCUS is more striking in concept than execution yet it is a good cover.

CONTENT PAGE: Golly Mike, this is absolutely the greatest thing since somebody sawed Courteney's boat in half. Wow, 37 nudes done by Kelly Freas, with millions of luscious bubbles by Virgil Finlay. Oh, you are the sly one! Who would have thought of doing this already marvelous contents page in 3-D, Technicolor, Vista-Vision and Todd-AO? [Don't forget Smell-O-Vision--Md].



## ONE

Well heck, Mike, what can one say about a contents page? A contents page is just a contents page. (Well, you could always mention the Freas nudes and the Finlay illos and...—Md).

DECKINGER'S DRIVEL: Since I didn't get #11, this rehash of the contents page didn't hold much for me.

Brother Frank Jares? It seems to me that I faintly remember hearing that name somewhere, but I can't recall where. Maybe it's a case of two people with the same name, but wasn't there a politician by that name? (Perhaps, but Brother Frank Jares is more than a politician.—Md). And if there is a politician who doesn't know how to lie, swindle, and cheat, I have n't heard of him.

ARKHAM HOUSE PROGRESS REPORT: This was very interesting, since Arkham House is probably the last stronghold of fantasy publishing in book form. I only have two of the Arkham House books, but I know they consistently put out top grade fantasy. I wish Derleth continued success, and even more of it.

A CONN. YANKEE AT THE DETENTION: This is a pretty comprehensive con-report, but it definitely lacks something. Of course, it is somewhat disjointed, but that isn't so much a writing fault of Lambeck's, as SF cons have a distinct characteristic of being disjointed. But this report has an air of boredom and dullness, which is a writing fault of Lambeck. It has no snap, sparkle: the personality of the writer doesn't come through, to make this con-report a distinctive report. It has the sameness of so many other con reports. He reports what took place, but even though he walks through the scenes, he is not really there. It needs a personality, an aliveness, a dominant viewpoint. Of course Lambeck may say, "Well it sounds boring because the con was boring." If that was the case, then he shouldn't have wasted his time writing about it.

IS FANDOM SACRILEGIOUS: This was indeed a surprising article. You're going to get some reaction from this article; wails, moans, curses, and whathaveyou. Of course God doesn't recognize fandom and say, "Well, this fellow is a fan, so he is a special case." Fan or non-fan we stand responsible for our actions and words before the Greatest Power in the Univer (or Universes, as the case may be). I had always thought that the term "Ghod" was the fannish way of spelling God, and had no special significance, and I still think this is true. So actually, we come down to the matter of what constitutes "taking of God's name in vain" as the King James version so renders it. It seems to me that the NEW WORLD TRANSLATION OF THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES (Volume 1) sheds a great deal of light on this matter. This edition endeavors to get back to the biblical text of Moses ben Asher, who is considered the greatest Masorete or foremost scribe devoted to preserving the traditional form and pronunciation of the Hebrew text, and who flourished about A.D. 900 at Tiberias in Palestine. The N.W. translation reads: "You must not take the name of Jehovah your God in a worthless way." Of course, it is the Tetragrammaton "Jehovah" (or Yaweh) that is not to be taken in a worthless way, but since we accept "God" as a reference to Jehovah, it too should not be taken in a worthless way. What is this "worthless way"? well, how many times do we say things like "God, but I hate to get up"! We seem determined to bring God in on everything. We try to make him a cohort to our laziness, lust and trivial displeasure. But do we use his name or the term that refers to him to give to our fellowmen a better name, and a better knowledge of him? Can our actions, words, and daily course of conduct under all conditions truly and honestly bear the stamp of God? Is God but a throw-away carton or the



TO

everlasting receptacle of our life and love? The next time you are about to use the term "God" or "Ghod" consider if God would want his name attached to the matter. Mr. Wells made his point quite clear, but it remains up to each individual to be man enough to face that striking point.

A VISIT WITH VON BRAUN by Sneary: That was all too short. I wish Rick had told us more about the man himself. The "A Visit with" bit is rather misleading, since it tends to give one the idea that it was the recounting of a personal visit with Von Braun; but this atmosphere of a personal talk could have been deftly captured if Rick had told us of Von Braun's appearance, his manner of speech, etc.etc.--working these personal touches into the recounting of the subject matter of the lecture. Yet, as it was it was of interest.

SOUND OFF: Well this has been said innumerable times in other places, but I guess it doesn't hurt to say it again. Sort of a pep-talk to the neo-fans. The Prosser illo with it was very good. Sort of wish it had had a complete page, with more drawings incorporated into the scene...wild dancers, pagan alters, and all that jazz.

HOCUS-POCUS: Well I think the best way to do this is to single your correspondents out by name:

Warner: I agree that fat zines of 30 or 40 pages are usually left lying around, while shorter zines are commented on more promptly. Usually what happens is that you put off reading and commenting on the big zine for such a long time, that when you do get around to it, there isn't reason to go to the trouble, because the next issue is already out. Personally, I feel that if a fan-ed gets the urge (and loot) to do a super issue, he might do well to add to this length by more artwork and an extended lettercol. In that way his readers can still comment on the issue without having to make it a life-time profession, but when he crams article after article, story after story, and junk after junk into that one issue, his readers are apt to say, "Enough is enough and too much is too much...and this is too much, so I think I'll have a cold beer instead."

I didn't get #11 so I don't know what Bill Durkom actually had to say concerning the Bible, but if Warner is correct about Durkom's trying to dismiss the Bible as fiction, then Brother Durkom is in need of some long over-due research. It is a current trend among many to adopt a modern sophistry that replaces knowledge of the subject with snide remarks and sardonic wit. But there remains a vast gulf between scorn and scholarship. Mr. Durkom might do well to remember this.

Mr. Warner is quite right that the Bible accounts have good archeological backing. One of the things that sort of amuse me, while at the same time increasing my respect for the Bible, is how secular history finds itself so often trying to catch up with the Bible. A good example of this is what I call "The Case of the 47 Monarchs". At one time there were 47 monarchs or Kings mentioned in the Hebrew scriptures of which secular history had no record, and so in general refused to accept. Secular historians simply classed these 47 Bible monarchs as sheer mythology borrowed by the Jews from their various neighboring nations, or concocted by the Bible-writers themselves. The years rolled by and archeologists dug. Thus forth from the sands of ages came annalistic tablets, boundary markers, inscribed buildings, relics, etc.etc., proving the existence of these monarchs. Slowly but surely secular history caught up with the Bible



# VOTE

as she added the 47 monarchs, one by one, to her pages.

Buck Coulson: Right Buck, sf and fantasy are tied together by a parental binding, and it silly to say that they don't even know each other. Sf is the illegitimate son of mother, fantasy. If Graham Stone is so shook about sf being linked with fantasy, how, pray tell, does he propose to explain the existance of science-fantasy? Of course, one doesn't see much of science-fantasy around today, but hark back into FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES and FANTASTIC NOVELS, and there are many prime examples of it.

Edward E. Smith: If you were in Birminham, Alabama you would have had a joyful heart. A balmy 75 degrees, sun all over the place, lots of seeds still in their greens, and flower seeds going nuts trying to decide whether to sprout or stay put. Like a beautiful spring day in April, yet somehow it got misplaced and popped up on January 10. Look me up if you ever hit this far south, phone TR-emont 93174.

Poul Shingleton, Jr.  
320-26th St.  
Dunbar, W.Va.

I'm getting darn tired of writing letters about HOCUS and seeing neither hide nor hair of them in print. [Satisfied now? There's more to this letter, but I couldn't resist printing just this excerpt to show how absolute my rule is over the staff of HOCUS—Md].

Bob Lichtman  
6137 S. Croft Ave.  
Los Angeles 56, Calif.

The reproduction of #12 was, whether due to improvements in technique on your part or the use of blue paper instead of white, much better than the last issue. [This was due to both of the aforementioned reasons—Md]. There were no absolutely unreadable spots, but several places were teetering on the brink of illegibility. Is it still the inking problem? [Probably—Md].

Cover lettering was very nice, but I didn't particularly care for the illustration. This is not unusual; I don't care for Prosser artwork much at all, not because of his drawing technique, which is superb, but because of his subject matter.

Rather barren of interior artwork this time, I see, I suggest you try to obtain fannish cartoons, which fit in anywhere, without having to relate to the surrounding text, and are comment attracting in themselves.

From a guess (and probably a good one) I'd say you were rather bereft of things to discuss in your editorial this time. [I always am—Md]. A shame, for your rundown of the comments on #11 doesn't show up your personality much at all, and editorial personality is important.

Derleth is of interest, but this reads a leetle too much like an adver-



# FOR

tising plu to suit me. How did you come by it, Mike? ¶Easy, I just wrote away to Berleth requesting an article and he was nice enough to forward this to me--Md¶. Still & all, what Arkham House does is of some importance (however great or minor) to stf fans.

Lambeck's con-report finished up better than it started, but I think its effect on me has been spoiled somewhat; just before reading it now, I had wended my way through 35 pages of John Berry's con-report, which is doubtless the best one to come out of the Detroit conclave. I therefore am unable to judge objectively.

George Wells shows up as a rather crass fugghead in this item of his. Good grief, fandom is hardly the place to bring up religion and what-does-God (which I capitalize because it's a rule of English)--think-of-fandom? As George evidently doesn't know, most fans are athiasts or agnostics (including myself) and don't give a good Ghudamn. Also, George is taking fannish gods and their followers a good bit too seriously: some fans will claim Ghu, Foo-Foo, Roscoe, or even themselves as Ghod ¶Yes, but some fen are--Md¶, but this is more on the nature of a fannish joke. It's not serious in the least. Someone should send George the writings of Roscoe, or something like that, to enlighten him.

Sneary was interesting, and uncommentable as usual, but who in this everlovin' world went through and CORRECTED HIS SPELLING? ¶It was me who did it me, after all, you wouldn't want people to go around saying HOCUS wuz illituritt, wud yu?--Md¶.

Art Rapp is interesting (Art never writes an uninteresting article) even though he is just re-stating the obvious. I particularly like the allusions to the fandom of his day...fabulous Fifth Fandom and its focal point Spacewarp.

I particularly agree with Warner on the question of fanzine size. If the zine in question is quite frequent, I'd prefer to have it down around 30 pages or so, so that commenting on it doesn't become a nuisance (CRY is an exception, in my book, as is App). But if a zine is on a quarterly, or frankly irregular schedule, I don't mind issues of upwards of 50 pages in the least.

Rick Sneary  
2962 Santa Ana St.  
South Gate, Calif.

All I've heard about the ISFS is mention of it in a letter from Bentclift. He repeated that Scudla had written him that it was un-true that the ISST was a red front... Eric was not convinced, as Dr. Weir (I'm not sure of the spelling, but he's a well known British fan and BSFL member) has stated that it was. I've received a Christmas card and a stamp catalog from Versons, but no letter from anyone. Everyone seems to have stoped, and I've become that much more discouraged. I'd rather work with a active Red, than a inactive Conservative--fannishly at least. ¶Not me! Even if the Red was a fan (which is unlikely) you'd still be tagged as being a commie-sympathizer, and maybe even a commie yourself. This is not the best publicity you can get, and I'm sure would be a great hinderance to anyone in the future. I'm quite satisfied to stay away from Communists, whether they're engaged in fandom or not--Md¶.



Regarding BRILLIG, the Post Office confiscated #7, and as far as I know nobody saw it...all because of the cover. And I don't know what was wrong with that. Bourne had to submit the next couple issues to the Postmaster before he could mail them. I know of a few other cases where mags have been seized, but it all depends if anyone looks at them, and who does it. It's all rather silly, as well as all censorship that is done on an arbitrary basis. (I agree. How can a Postmaster say that Lady Chatterly's Lover is pornographic to everyone who receives it, just because he happens to be particularly prudish himself. With the mail deliveries as poor as they are today, the Post Office should spend less time reading dirty books and more time delivering the mail--Md).

Stone is wrong that fans do little more than adolescent antics. As with all things, there is a middle ground. Most leading fans have always taken their hobby seriously, but still enjoyed themselves at it. Fan conventions are a little wild, but so are conventions of about every other group I've heard of. The serious work is done in quiet, and in small groups, and doesn't get the write-ups. I would like to see a little more serious writing in fanzines, but I'd also like to see more fun in Aussie fandom.

The current HOCUS (#12) is the best yet. Your new typer works wonders. A little trouble in inking still, but the looks are up 100%, and while not compared directly, the layout seems better too. This is only natural, for the more issues you put out, the more you learn.

Your material is up too, though with Bloch last time, the improvement isn't so great. Derleth is an old Pro, and naturally can write well whenever he wants. Reading the article gave me a chance to sound well informed. Just the other day I was at Ackerman's and some one asked if Skull Face & Others was still in print. And I was able to pop up and say I had just read Derleth's article where he said it was going to be dropped from the next catalog. (HOCUS is indispensable--Md)?

I'm really at a loss for comment on Lambeck's con report. If it is good, and agrees with all I remember...I do not remember Bob, but then the name meant nothing to me then, and I have a hard time remembering names. I do remember passing a fan on the way to breakfast that morning, so I have a vague picture of him. I was also up in Ellison's room for a while, but I didn't know half the people there. One thing that was said at the fanzine panel that impressed me greatly was a remark of White's, to the effect that up until a few years ago, the people that came into the field were science fiction fans. They were drawn together mainly because of sf. Now a lot of fans coming in are fanzine fans. They have seen other fanzines and want to write or edit their own. The result is not necessarily bad, but it results in a different, often a less serious type of fan.

You will probably get many comments on Wells item. It's wonderously strange. Almost no one else but Wells could have written it, and have it come off this way. You can't tell, seeing it is by George, whether he is serious and muddled in his thinking, or trying to write humorously, and fails to come off it. Is he serious? Is he being cynical? Is he for real?

It is pretty well excepted that fandom is not very religious. In most polls the agnostics outnumber any one faith, and the Druids have outnumbered some more conventional faiths. There are of course many good churchgoers, including Catholics, and a few ministers have been fairly active in the past. But generally religion has played little part in fandom, and in recent years, most fans have minded their own businesses and faiths.

The answers to George's questions have to wait till the individual fan answers the question of whether he believes there is a god. (If so, which one)? Then too, whether he believes his god can see him, or into his mind. If he can see him at all, he should be able to see the inner-man, so it doesn't matter what a person does, but what he is. If a fan doesn't believe, it doesn't matter what he does. But please, the "Laws of God" are what man has told us. The only "laws" we know are those of nature. And if the wonders of the laws of Nature are not enough to make one believe in God, what are the words of man?



And what does George mean about fans being "suicide prone"? In the past 15 years I know of three such deaths—yet I've read that suicide is the 10'th most common cause of death in this country. If he means that fans are the kind who think about killing themselves, that is another thing. It is possibly true. Lots of fans are moody and introspective at times in their lives, and may have thought of death at their own hands. But it still seems a rather irrelevant side issue.

But, on to other things. The Von Braun article was not so dated as I feared, but was more technical than I'd meant. As I know nothing about the facts—to the extent about writing about them, I'd meant to deal more with impressions and opinions. I imagine Alan Dodd will be unhappy with my praise of him, as he seems to hate Von Braun so much. I don't see it myself. One has to go along with one's country's movements, and he was rather young at the time to have had any idea of bucking Hitler. [What Dodd or Von Braun?—Md].

Jennings remarks are generally true, but there are a few exceptions. If a fanzine has a select circle of regular writers they can come out irregularly and still retain continuity. An example that comes to mind is PEON, that had a series of column writers, that wrote whenever Riddle was ready to edit. HYPHEN is somewhat like this too.

Robert D. Leonard Jr.  
1630 Farragut  
Chicago 40, Illinois

I think I'll say right now that I don't like this Brother Frank Jares bit. How about telling us more about him? Is he for real, that is? [Yes, Brother Frank definitely is—Md].

The Arkham House article was interesting, but of little use to me personally, since I don't buy Arkham House Books. Good to see that it's going well though.

Part II of the DETENTION report is not bad, well detailed and complete, but it is rather dull, although it picks up at the end. I told Bob in a letter that I thought he had a tendency to name drop, that is, to bring in names like Rick Sneary and Seth Johnson without actually saying anything about them.

George H. Wells tries to show that fans are sacrilegious, but I think he's missed the point. If anything, fans are atheistic. Which is, as someone has said, short for autotheistic, no doubt. Bob Lambeck's con report and others make it plain that very few fans, if any, bothered to attend religious services in Detroit. Also, I seriously doubt if any fans worship gmu as God. I think, rather that someone's pulling George's leg if they told him that. For some reason he seems to have trouble believing that fans are above average in intelligence. I always thought it was that people of higher intelligence were attracted to fandom by its general nature. Perhaps it also attracts atheists by its very nature. This situation is deplorable, we must discuss it more.

Rick Sneary's article, is good and interesting, but I think the title is a little presumptuous, after all, he didn't actually visit with Von Braun.

Art Rapp's article was a good job, but it seems to me that it's out of place in HOCUS. Most of the people in the lettercolumn are old fans, and I even see the work of a vile pro. Whom does Art hope to convert?

The letters weren't very interesting, except in spots, mostly comments on the last issue, which I didn't see. Also, I don't like the arrangements of the longest one first and the shortest last. [Well that was purely arbitrary, I feel there weren't enough long letters last issue, which is why there are so many in this particular lettercol. I rather like long lettercols, and from what I've gathered, so do most fans—Md].



Alan Dodd  
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Hoddesdon, Herts.,  
England

That new blue paper makes a whale of a difference—why it's like a totally new fanzine. Prosser's cover is very effective, but don't you think the central character appears to be somewhat sexless? Sort of an extra-terrestrial dog-catcher for humans, you might say. Aren't you stepping on dangerous grounds by saying Brother Frank Jares is stupid? I reckon he's probably quite a clever fellow. [Sorry, I didn't mean to imply that he was dumb on anything like that, naturally he's a genius—Md]. How is it you manage to get professional writers like Bob Loch, August Derleth, etc.etc. to write for your fanzine? [Easy, I just request material from them, what other way is there?—Md]. I don't know much about Arkham House, I fear, but it would seem Derleth is Arkham, and if what he says in his article is true, then more power to him to continue with his one man business of his. I thought he had a great crew of people working for him—doesn't he write any books himself, these days though? [Yes, I believe he's working on a new Solar Pons book: The Reminiscences of Solar Pons and he also writes historical novels—Md]. I'm all in favor of Arkham House, but I wouldn't want to see a fine author wasting his time entirely on administration work. However, Good luck to him, and long may Arkham House survive.

In Robert Lambeck's con report he mentions they introduced Poul Anderson—he's the strongest man in the world, isn't he? [Nope, Paul Anderson is—Md].

I see Ted White remarked at the con about his deploring my reviews of crud movies—but does that mean that a review of a bad film is itself necessarily bad? [I wouldn't think so, you can always get a fine writer writing excellently about a poor film—Md]. Whether a film is good or bad is a matter of opinion more than anything else, I reckon, and writing a review of a film depends on the opinions of the writer on the film—not whether other people think it is good or not.

I deplore Ted White marrying Sylvia Dees and taking her away from the rest of fandom. I deplore his beard also. In fact I have a good mind to send Brother Frank Jares along and have him deplore his beard hair by hair. Brother Frank had a good beard the last time I saw him by the way. But he was going bald. Worry, you see.

"Could anyone ask for anything more from life?" asks Rick Sneyary of Werner Von Braun in his article—yes, the children, the babies, the women and the men who were killed without being given a chance at life by Von Braun's rockets, could ask for more. They could ask for retribution. [They'd have a better chance of getting it from Berry than from Von Braun—Md]. Something that has been due Von Braun for a long fifteen years. The day of reckoning will come one day and the price this "pleasant voiced" murderer will have to pay is going to be a big one. I never cease to be amazed at the American attitude to this man—perhaps they can be forgiving because they never had to face his weapons of war. I hope neither Russia nor America ever reaches the moon, the men they are using to do it have blood-stained hands—they have no right to grasp a new world like the moon. I only wish a third party not employing any Nazis could make it to the moon—but there isn't one. No one else has the money. So I hope nobody reaches the moon—there's no one else I'd consider fit enough to be responsible for getting there. I hope the Moon keeps its secrets and I hope that if ever nuclear war does break out between Russia and the U.S. rocket bases, the first to die—slowly, from radioactive poisoning, is Von Braun. I can think of no one who deserves it more. [I wish I could say that I disagree, but I don't. I certainly hope that the U.S. does reach the moon ahead of Russia, whether we have Nazis working for us or not, but once there, maybe we can rid the Earth of these madmen once and for all. Since America has never been attacked by foreign powers the way England and other countries have, it's hard to work up any dislike for the Krauts, but there is every justification for it. And I'd advise everyone to read the latest issue of Dodd's CAMBER for a more thorough and comprehensive account of Von Braun—Md].



John Berry  
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I was veeey pleased with this issue, generally, it was what I would call a "sound" issue; ie, it had balance, which is much neglected by many fan-eds. A glance at the contents page will show what I mean, von Braun, God, a Detention report, a sensible fanzine pubbling article by Rapp, an item for collectors by Derleth; drivel; and a neat lettercol....like I said, this I call balance.

Lambeck dealt efficiently with the Detention Report, although probably because of space requirements, it seemed rather the sort of thing a reporter would write. This isn't exactly meant to be a compliment, I mean that it was just a bare statement of everything that happened (reported accurately too) without a sufficient personal feeling. Some fans like their reports that way, with times 'at 10:10 I had a second breakfast with the Coulsons' etc.etc., but we fans are pretty closely knit, and should accordingly write about fannish incidents with such considerations in mind. To sum up: in my opinion Lambeck did a competent job, but it read as though his boss was going to read it, not his fellow fans.

George Wells brought God into the fannish scene. Personally, I am by faith a protestant, but I'm afraid that I never go to church, because I can't see that religion works. When you look at the shocking state the world is in now, the air we breath being polluted, the threat of an H-Bomb wat at any time, perpetual wars, murder, rape, arson right down the scale, I get the impression that all praying that's been done hasn't helped one bit. I am quite happy that some people are religious, and follow their faith with fervour, but I hate them trying to push their religion down my throat....'If you aren't in our outfit you won't go to Heaven.' Therefore, beyon a personal expression of outlook, such as I have just inflicted, I don't feel that fanzines should care about God...anymore than in tennis or fishing or chess or any other of the countless hobbies. By "care about God" in the last sentence, I mean expounding religious theories in fanzines.

Was interested in the Sneary von Braun report....such a lot of nonsense about Von Braun has been written in fanzines in recent years, especially British fanzines. I'm not going to repeat my opinions here, but they aren't as extreme as those I've read in British fanzines.

I can pay you no better compliment, Mike, this was a well-balanced, above average fanzine, showing a deft eye for controversy.

Honey Graham (the femmefan, notthe cracker)  
1515 Hopkins  
Berkeley, California

Bob Lambeck's con report made me feel as if I had been there, it was a very good down-to- Earth account of what happened. Well written, and full of things that make a convention worth remembering. I also enjoyed Art Rapp's article very much. I have always enjoyed articles better than fan stories, it is a strange quirk of mine, I guess.

On the personal side, it looks like more and more fans are moving out here to the "strong-hold" of fandom, the Ellingtons will be arriving in another week or two, and of course Bill Donaho and Dan Curran are now living a few blocks away, and what with the Gibsons and the Andersons, not to mention the Carrs and Ron Ellik, we are finally putting Berkeley on the map. I should say that some worthwhile thing should be turning up from this neck of the woods, but I guess we are all too lazy. (Not from the California zines that have been passing by me, would I say that Berkeleyites are lazy by any means--Md).



Norm Metcalf  
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Florida

Prosser certainly has some excellent drawings as far as subject matter and detail go. His aliens are sufficiently humanoid to have some sort of identification with the human race possible.

Lambeck's con report was enjoyed. Everyone has a different slant on cons, and each saw different goings on, so each has something unique to offer. Lambeck yet isn't on the level yet to compare with Berry but is more laden down with facts which are quite suspect at times with some of the things which appear in other well known journals.

Wells makes about as much sense as the average issue of The Sick Elephant. This isn't too surprising considering the overlapping directorate. (Huh?—Md). What is an editor for, if not to edit? Try it on the Wells article, and see what a difference it would make. (Yes, but you could always run into the trouble of over-editing—Md).

Sneary is interesting as always, but what happened to the Sneayisms? Part of the charm of the article has been lost.

Art Rapp does an interesting plug for pubbing your own zine. But then, Art usually has something to say, and does so.

Clay Hamlin  
28 Earle Ave.  
Bangor, Maine

What is more fitting than that I should give praise where praise is due, and with issue #12, there is certainly a large measure of

Like for instance Dave Prosser. Any fan will admit that he is talented, and his work in cutting stencils is that of a craftsman. Still that is no excuse for some of his subject matter. So naturally it is a pleasure to report that this issue's illustrations from him were the usual excellent job, and well enjoyed.

Then of course, being a stf fan for some thirty years standing, the article by Derleth on Arkham House naturally pleased me immensely. The most critical and well written article by an outsider could never carry the stamp of authenticity that this did. And having a small but choice collection of Arkham House books, it's nice to discover that this publishing company, at least, is still in existence and will continue to do so. The timetable of future publications is exceptionally valuable to me, naturally. You sort of scored a scoop on all fanzines with that presentation.

Off hand I'd consider Bob Lambeck's con-report the best I've ever seen. Oh, it may not be the best written from the standpoint of style, but its actual coverage of what went on is at least as good as the best presented elsewhere. I think the highest praise I can give it is to call the report an excellent job of factual reporting, which even allows the personality of the author to come through. What more could be asked?

You did come up with something fairly uncommon. It is a bit confusing, or at least laughable to continue an article from page 15 to page 7. But what the heck, since the pages were numbered it isn't important.

Let's ignore the article by George Wells. He seems to argue in circles, and doesn't really say anything.

Rick Sneary's article on Von Braun was read and duly enjoyed. Nothing really new there, but worthy of publication anyway

And then there was Art Rapp's article SOUND OFF. Now surely this is nothing.



really new in the way of writing in fanzines. But for some reason that I can't yet explain to myself, Art puts a sparkle in his writings. It is just something that causes you to look for deeper meanings in even the most superficial of statements. He has something to say and he says it well.

Jack L. Chalker  
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First and foremost I'd like to say something about your zine's artwork. Prosser reminds me of Pickman in PICKMAN'S MODEL (by H.P. Lovecraft) in that he is an excellant artist, drawing what he wants to draw, but not what he should draw. He would be great if he rid himself of his pencilled nightmares and settled down to real art and cover and illo material, rather than his version of Pickman's Model.

The Derleth article was informative, and surprising in that I had planned to get SELECTED LETTERS OF H.P.L. and while I still do, that shocker was worse than a dozen horror stories: \$15.00 a copy.

A VISIT WITH VON BRAUN was nothing new, but George Wells IS FANDOM SACRILEGIOUS brought out an interesting topic, though it was hazy and poorly told from the beggining. SOUND OFF was excellant, though if I had the money for a mimeo, I'd have to get a new typewriter, etc.etc. and since I don't go around buying bowling balls I might have trouble with an otherwise wonderful proposition.

Archie Mercer  
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North Hykham,  
Lincoln, England

Prosser's a good artist, there's no doubt of that. Personally, I wish like hell he wasn't, because his subject matter tends to be obnoxious. As per the cover. The one inside--the satyr or faun or Pan whatever, is not so repulsive, admittedly, but the perspective seems off.

By contrast, the written contents surprise me by their quality AND readability. The summing-up of the previous issue in the editorial is an excellant idea. The Arkham House report is of interest, even though it reads obscurely in parts. For instance, what's the difference between a "non Arkham House book" and a "Mycroft & Moran book"? Or is the former even less Arkham House than the latter, and if so in what way?

Lambeck's con report I thought would turn out to be feeble from the way it opened, but it turned into an excellant bit of reporting that filled in several gaps that I haven't seen covered elsewhere. I'm glad this episode was uncut. Wells article; IS FANDOM SACRILEGIOUS depends partly on what one means by sacrilege and partly on what one means by fandom, but mainly on what one means by is.

Billy Joe Plott  
P.O. Box 654  
Opelika, Alabama

To me, August Derleth's article on Arkham House was the best thing in the issue, though not as contraversial as Lonesome George Wells bit.

Whether or not fandom is sacrilegious is highly debatable. I would say



both yes and no in answer to it. George has made some good points in reference to ghod, etc.etc. which we all use frequently without thinking. I think fandom has fallen short of the many commandments that were given to man.

Fandom doesn't care if it is religious, sacrilegious, or what have you. Fandom seems to consider religion an unorthodox subject usefull to pass the time in a discussion, and nothing more. This is quite evident by the remarkable amount of fen who consider themselves athiests. God certainly cares; if he didn't there'd be no reason for living, no reason for dying, not even a reason for existing.

Sneary's bit on Von Braun was interesting, but I still think that Dodd gave a much clearer picture of the missileman in CAMBER #11. I can't agree with everything that Dodd said and quoted about Von Braun, but I can understand the British point of view. I think the Britishers neglect to realize that everyone must be given equal opportunity to correct their mistakes, and they are a little harsh in their condemnation.

~~~~~

Tony Ruddman  
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Schnectedy 7, N.Y.

To this scribe, the best feature of this ish was Lambeck's con-report. Arkham House: A Progress Report was a very interesting thing. I hope that such a worthwhile venture will continue.

Wells would have done better to flip a coin to decide the religiousness of fandom.

Rick Sneary did a good job on what might have been a dull report. Von Braun has a point when he states that the progress of the U.S. Space program depends on what the Russians accomplish. It's a hell of a way to run a defence department.

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There are many others I'd like to print but there is no more room left dammit. But a quick run through: TED JOHNSTONE liked Art Rapp's article and the Prosser illos. Wants to know what FCH stands for. Fanzine Clearing House, Ted. Also wants to know where his local polling place to vote for Brother Frank is. In Mordor, of course. PAUL SHINGLETON Jr. thought Lambeck's con report was the best, wants to see more illos, and reminds me to spell Silverberg's name right. DON DURWARD illegally sends a letter in a copy of QUIXOTIC, says he liked the con report, the editorial, and would like to see the first part of the con report. Sorry Don, no more copies left. DONALD FRANSON reports that the mimeoing is better, says to George Wells that "fans are friendlier than you'd think possible, under the circumstances". Says Rapps article was the best thing in the issue, and he likes long letters. DICK SCHULTZ liked the cover of #12 but says Prosser has done better. He likes the new lettering guide and wants me to add hand-drawn headings. Oh, Dick, you don't know what you're asking for. Says to Lambeck: Virginia, not Steve Schultheis helped count votes and Harlan Ellison was the first one to bait the fan-editor's panel. Thinks Art Rapp is off on a fannish crusade, and Prosser's satyr could do with a stomach. R.W. DICKY enjoyed pages 13 and 14 of HOCUS X which he found in HOCUS #11. Says fandom doesn't give a damn about defence. Of what, fandom? ART HAYES says the repro is better, was interested in hearing what Seth Johnson said at the pro-eds panel and hopes that Von Braun will be at the Pitt-con. MARION ZIMMER BRADLEY wants to know if the madman in HELL'S FIVE HOURS was Vic Ryan, I hope not. BOB LAMBECK says George Wells is emotionally mixed up. NIK-ITA KRUSCHEV says fandom is a capitalistic plot, and that's all the room there is now. AU REVOIR----



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