

HOODS

15



C O N T E N T S

DECKINGER'S DRIVEL by Mike Deckinger.....	3
-IT'S THE SCIENCE THAT PAYS by Alan Dodd.....	4
AMBITION by Les Nirenberg.....	6
FOURTH DAY by Greg Benford.....	7
NO HIGH DREAM LOWERED by Alan Burns.....	9
THE DISTORTED EDUCATION OF NEOS by Bill Plott.....	11
PSYCHO (a film review) by Len 'offat.....	13
AFTERGLOW by Mike Deckinger.....	16
HOCUS-POCUS by the readers.....	20

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A R T

Cover.....	Dave Prosser
Page 6.....	Les Nirenberg
Page 15.....	Dave Prosser and Joni Cornell

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A lot of the lettercol was cut this issue, and next ish may see a change in the format of this zine. I was considering trying to get HOCUS out monthly perhaps, with much smaller issues. But it's only a thought, nothing definite now. There will be more letters in next issue, I have a whole bundle that weren't used now. But at least I'm keeping this under 30 pages. Yes, the Pitt-con was, fun wasn't it?

DECKINGER'S

DRIVEL

Last issue was pretty much of an experiment to determine just how fans felt about a zine bare of all illos, and free from a page-consuming, ego-boo-blurting, editorial. Besides, the idea for that gag cover on #14 had been gnawing ferociously at my mind and I simply could not ignore it. Now the situation has shifted--slightly. Adorning the cover we have an illo by that renowned stenciled craftsman Dave Prosser, and adorning this page, you have me.

You just can't win, can you.

The heavy paper I used on the cover last time (and this time), while it looks expensive, I managed to pick up at a ridiculously cheap price. The interior consists no longer of the "swamp-scum-green" as Art Rapp calls it, but is simply green paper from which the swamp scum has been distilled out.

Every issue is published at an undeterminate time in a manner which I have no prior control. Some fan-eds, I am told, can sit down for one day, casually type up three stencils, put them away, the following day type up a few more, etc. Not me--when I begin on new issue I can't rest till it has been completed. What little sleep I do get is plagued with nightmares of giant mimeos and receding calendars (a Freudian touch, no doubt, indicating the days slipping past).

I've always liked long letter columns in any zine I get, even my own. Which is why the lettercol in this issue takes up around half the issue. No, nothing will deter me from doing this--my policy is that a lettercol can be the life-blood of the zine, the one redeeming factor of it. Therefore, I like long lettercols, and it will do no good to request that I shorten them.

Also, my rude interruptions with in the letters themselves will consist of double parenthesis like:((and:)). No more of the | and even if other zines use:(and :) as well, I don't care, they look better and don't establish a standard symmetry. Also, I'm dispensing with:Md in those interjections. If you don't know who is writing them, then you don't deserve to read them.

There's a slight possibility that this will be handed out at the Pitt-con. I can guarantee nothing here, but if I do go to the Pitt-con (and I'm all prepared to) and if I do manage to complete this issue before I leave (which I might or I might not) the chance exists I'll bring along enough copies to hand out at the con. There are plenty of fans I know who'll be there I'm anxious to meet, so very little stands in my way. There's also the matter of the postage that would be saved by handing this out there. I'm trying to keep this issue under 30 pages, but there's little indication that I'll succeed.

A few weeks ago I was attending a nearby Art theatre in Irvington which alternates between showing quality foreign films and sexy foreign films. The feature that night was Fernandel's "The Sheep Has 5 Legs" a hilarious french comedy, and Clouzot's "Diabolique" which I missed when it first came out, and had been trying like the devil to get to see it again. The shocker at the end did carry an impact, perhaps not as great as would be expected, having seen so many pictures along this line, but it was interesting to see Simone Signoret in

(continued on p.12)

IT'S THE SCIENCE THAT PAYS

by A l a n D o d d

L. Ron Hubbard

Ah, the name conjures up memories of some of the finest examples of science fiction and fantasy from the past--THE SLAVES OF SLEEP, the DOC METHUSELAH stories and countless other first class examples of writing. But what has happened to him since? The truth is quite as fantastic as anything he ever wrote about in any of his stories.

L. Ron Hubbard is in England these days--but there, that's not the beginning of the story.

Dr. Lafayette Ronald Hubbard does not write science fiction anymore. He doesn't need to; he is one of the world's wealthiest "doctors". Although he has no medical qualifications, he claims he can call himself a doctor because of a science degree he once took in an American university. He discovered, or created "scientology" and dianetics" and these have made him considerable piles of money. For those not versed in his arts, his theory is that by helping people to find out all about themselves, tensions can be relieved, and almost any disease or illness be cured. He and other scientologists have trained patients in much the same way that a psychiatrist questions a patient on a consulting room couch. The main difference is that an instrument of Hubbard's called an "E-Meter" is brought into play.

With this instrument Hubbard believes that patients can find out about their earlier lives, regressions, and histories stretching back millions of years into the past. In one of his books on the subject, there are 42 different case histories of people who previous lives were revealed, one of them learning that some trillion years ago he had been a manta ray...

The Hubbard Electrometer, or The E-Meter is a box-like meter,

fitted with two metal electrodes at the end of a pair of lead wires. There is a visible dial which measures the reactions of the patient; from which readings the scientologists can tell whether or not they're telling the truth, and quite a lot about their past life and troubles. This E-Meter is being sold by the London Headquarters of the Hubbard Association of Scientologists International which is situated at Fitzroy Street, off Tottenham Court, London, W.1 for 36 pounds, or roughly one hundred dollars an instrument.

Tottenham Court Road itself, adjoining this address is the home of several firms specializing in electrical and war surplus equipment, among which may be found many similar, highly sensitive measuring dials, of the type used in the E-Meter, and selling for around 30 dollars apiece. The only known official use for these devices is measuring voltage, resistance, current, radios, etc.etc.

Not that the E-Meter is a new machine by any means, as it was in use in the late 1890s by psychologists experimenting with the reactions of people to different words and phrases. But it was discarded when the device was proven to do little more than measure pressure placed upon the metal handles.

A Harley Street psychiatrist, when faced with Hubbards book on Scientology was reported as saying that the evidence of past lives was, in actual fact the rambling fantasies of people suffering from mental illnesses and psychiatric strains and that there was an unusual repetition of torture themes with someone in each case held in bondage, inflicted with pain, or dying a violent death and whereas it was good for patients to get such things out of their systems, the scientologists could do incalculable harm to their patients through lack of knowledge.

Hubbard is also experimenting further in the world of plants which he is convinced can really hate, especially runner and string beans. He claims that if a pin were driven into a cabbage it would cringe in surprised anger, and his experiments prove plants are really the same as humans. He recently broke off a leaf from a sweet corn plant, and, on looking at the indicator fixed to the plant it showed the plant was clearly dying. When a pin was stuck into a nervous area, the plant developed a neurosis and within 3 days was dead. Hubbard is certain all plants can experience and respond to emotions in various ways.

Cranky? Who knows for sure? Let's take a glimpse at how this has affected the life of L. Ron Hubbard.

He has scientology centers in almost all parts of the world, in London, Washington, Melbourne, Auckland, Johannesburg, Los Angeles, and Paris, while he himself lives in luxury in England. His current address is St. Hill Manor, East Grinstead, Sussex, England, where he lives with a staff of 15 in a place that used to be the home of the Maharajah of Jaipur. The selling price is estimated at more than 66,000 dollars.

There's money in science fiction it's true.
But there's more money in science.
Especially scientology.

AM BITION

by Les Nirenberg

I've got
to do
some-
thing!

I have
to im-
prove
myself!

I HAVE
TO BE-
COME A
BNF!

First I'll
make friends
with a BNF,
set him as
my idol, copy
his style....

Then I'll
join all
the apas
even
N3F

I'll
start
calling
people
names..

and
raise a
fuss just
to show
them how
individu-
alistie I
am....

I'll be
known as
the most
contra-
versial
trouble-
maker in
fandom..

It will
be pan-
demonium
and I'll
be
famous!

Gee, I'd
better
write to
Ted Pauls
first and
get some
tips!

Les N

FOURTH DAY

by Greg Benford

An old fan with a crumpled hat and faded suit sat in the railroad station. There was a train on the tracks and the pros were getting in it. The baggage men hurried on before them, carrying their suitcases for nickels and dimes. The BNFs got on, heading in before the rest to get the best seats and not scratch the smooth leather of their suitcases, and the lackeys and small-timers followed them. But the old fan sat without moving.

He was waiting. His own bag, looking cheap and beat-up next to the ones the baggage men were carrying, sat at his side. The typewriter was there too, but the case was new-looking, because he never carried it much. He'd always had another stencil to cut, or something. And when the old fan got to New York he would probably have to sell it anyway; Campbell told him editors didn't like that type-face.

It was a jungle, he thought, a jungle of oily typewriter keys and cheap bond paper. Before he'd even been there, the old fan hated it.

"Where did you come from?" I asked him.

"From the Burbee-Laney says," he said, and smiled. He was an old fan, really old, and it gave him pleasure. "Been at it for years."

"Oh," I said with only half-interest in my voice.

"Yes," he said, "I was the last one. The only fan left in the slan shack. I stayed, you see, mimeographing the new fanzines. The young fans loved me for that. I was always ready to mimeo their stuff. Convention propoganda, annishes, monthly zines, SAPS and FAPA and OMPA zines. And I was the very last one."

I was watching the pros get on the train. I wondered what it felt like to write, and not to have to work. They got on, one by one, with their bright new suitcases and slick raincoats and laughed at each other's jokes.

"How long have you been there in the slan shack?" I asked, and then wished I'd called it "1916 Burlington" or whatever the address was, since "slan shack" sounded like a neo. No one said that anymore.

"Years! I watched them come and go. I watched their fanzines and I read them all. The first copy off the mimeo was always mine."

He smiled again.

"My fanzine was the best. Always the best in the slan shack. Ever since I' moved in I've been on top. I'll have to leave that behind, too."

"Leave it behind?" I said.

"They told me around the East, pros don't do fannish things anymore. They're all writers now, all the fans turned pro. I left the mimeo and the stencils and some paper. The stencils and the paper will be used, but the mimeo always stays."

"There are no more of you left?" I asked, while I watched the pros get on the train, and the Red Caps carry their bags. They looked almost like fans, with those funny little hats. Like fans out of some cartoon by Ray Nelson with the stupid caps and tired looks on their faces, following the pros around and taking small tips.

"Only me. When I'm gone the old days will be gone too. The mimeo is all that is left."

"You're finally going with them, then?"

He looked at me. "Yes, I'm going. All four days of the convention I tried. The years of small sales and signed rejection slips and friendly, encouraging notes added up...and I'm going. I hope they take good care of the mimeo."

"What was it? An A.B. Dick?" I asked him. I wondered if he had any trouble with slip-sheeting, like I had on mine.

"Yes. I won't have any need for it, but I hope they don't give it too much ink. That never was good for it. Sometimes the ink would drip down into the bottom and mess everything up."

"An A.B. Dick is a good machine," I said. "They last a long time."

"I hope so. It stayed there for years, churning out the fanzines. The rest of it will be gone, but the A.B. Dick will stay there for years and years. I don't really want to go, but all the pros live in New York now. The slan shack can do without me now. There's not a lot of real fans there anymore, just a bunch of fringe people. But I can't take the mimeo with me--not to New York."

His smile was gone.

The train was about to leave, and I saw some other fans at the other end of the station. They were walking back to the con hotel, in the other direction, for a last look around.

"Well, goodbye," I said. "Good luck out there." I stood up and left, but he didn't notice me.

I walked away, thinking about all the convention slogans of this year, and the things they would mean to the old fan that they meant to no one else. And I remembered the train station, as the people got on, and the way the fans-turned-pro looked at the convention, the fannish looking Red Caps, and the fact that an A.B. Dick will last a long time.

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PROLOGUE: This was first printed in Tom Reamy's CRIFANAC, but has since, been altered quite a bit. It is, in part, a satire on all the "old and tired fan" stories, and to emphasize this, it was first written in a pseudo-Hemingway style. However, it also says something which I beleive no longer applies in fandom--in a way, it is a post-mortem for the fan-turned-pro, because currently, he doesn't seem to exist. And perhaps he never will again. Anyway, I thought it might bear pointing out.

--Greg Benford

NO

HIGH

DREAM LOWERED

By Alan Burns

I write best with the taper going. I find the fluxing of magnetic and electronic currents conducive to thinking fannishly, philosophic. How high the dream of fandom, with the greatest peaks yet to ascend, because the fannish mind is an additive to the ordinary mind like a power for telepathy or teleportation, and yet is infinitely more useful than either, because it makes the unreasonable seem the most reasonable of things. The zap gun and beanie are practically dead, fandom has outgrown them, their reasonableness was their doom. It is reasonable to greet your enemy with a deluge of cold water and brandish your coat of arms in his face. It is thoroughly unreasonable, is it not, to greet him with a handshake and cordial words? Yet fandom is learning to do just that. The days of fueding are over and may never return. Fans may disagree, but no longer senselessly, disagreements now seem to accept a basic premise of mutually agreed-on matters. I had that classic Sandfield/Inchmery fued in mind when I wrote those last few words. I was astounded when fen, instead of flying to the support of one side or the other, jumped in and said to stop the whole thing, pontifically, as did Eric Bentcliffe, or man-to-man, as did Dick Schultz. In short, instead of building up barricades and stocking up munitions I had to tear them down, and now neither of the participants is in fandom anymore, and peace prevails.

There is a moral in all this that is not hard to find. It is the old story of the body and its members. In ancient days, so says the proverb, the legs complained that they were sick of carrying the idle stomach, the arms complained that they were tired of preparing food for it, so they went on strike and refused to do anything more, but in double quick time they learned that the idle stomach had an important duty. So it is with fandom. The early quarrels are now done away with, and a maturity has come. This is not because the fueding fen are ageing, even the neofen are a more mature type than before, and come into fandom with a fairly solid background of science fiction, as was indicated to me by the interest and comment that Terry Jeeves' article aroused, when Terry listed his favorite SF and reasons for his choice. The discussion has waxed fast and furious and I don't expect to hear the end of it for a while. Almost every letter I've had has mentioned it at length. In fact, I'd go as far as to say that fandom has rediscovered SF. Even so short as a year or so ago John W. Campbell's title changing of ASF would have gone without almost any comment. Today the fuss hasn't even died down yet and fandom still smoulders with a vague resentment.

So now that fandom is maturing, what is there for it to do? Well, quite obviously when a religion has overcome its initial troubles its next step is to go out and bring in converts. Fandom has much to offer, much more than the beatniks, for example, for it offers the seemingly paradoxical ability to be respectable and live a conventional life, and yet have a mind with freshly original and different ideas.

For when it is considered that only children need to dress up to play a game, adults can do the whole thing in their minds, and, as I said, the zap-gun and beanie, once the uniform of fandom, are gone. I recall at the Worldcon in London everyone was soberly dressed, and the clash of intellects was more like the delicate duel of rapiers, then the wildly berserk swinging of broadswords. The Hieronymous machines on display were examined and tested critically and discussed at length, and no one tried silly tricks like improving the suction of the contact plates with beer. The Worldcon attracted the attention of the British Broadcasting Corporation and their television programme; tonight, ran an interview with John W. Campbell which everyone praised highly. So now that we have solid evidence to offer, we can start inviting people to come along and be one of us for we are very respectable now. For our minds have gone free.

The free mind is the greatest asset to a fan. A mind capable of producing intelligent comments on books and music is capable of taking an interest in the outside world without being swayed by the barrage of propaganda and commercials that the ordinary man finds difficult to resist, and yet resents them. As Asimov's Mule remarked; "The Human Mind resents control". The way to resist control is to have something like Kim did when Lurgan tried to hypnotize him in Kipling's story, he fled into the multiplication table. That's all right for a schoolboy, but speaking personally, I'm so used to using a slide rule that I wouldn't know how to multiply twelve by thirteen. But my mind can readily take refuge in fandom. The only trouble is that the refuge is so comfortable, I'm often reluctant to come out.

So then we have the High Dreams of Fandom in their proper light, the complete disassociation of the thinking mind for the pressures of the normal world so that it is free to pursue to their end all the fascinating speculations that offer themselves for consideration. The old sense of wonder, has perhaps gone, but in its place is something better, the reasoned thinking of a mature group of minds.

--Alan Burns

It is amazing, nevertheless, how many people have felt called upon to voice the most authoritative opinions about the effects of "obscene" writings, including law-enforcement officers, educators, clergymen, housewives, women's clubs, men's fraternal organizations--in short, all those who are least qualified to give an authoritative opinion on a subject of such confusing dimensions and such width of scope, but who, because of their own deep emotional involvement, have felt no hesitation in expounding "ex cathedra" and with omniscient finality on the matter. Among them have even been a few members of the behavioral sciences, though we can say to the credit of professional groups such as psychologists, psychiatrists, and sociologists, who would be best qualified to give such opinions, that very few have ventured to do so.

--Pornography and the Law, by Drs. Phyllis and Ebbard Kronhausen, page 262.

EDUCATION

OF NEOS

By Bill Plott

One of the most dastardly of the authors of this fifth is a one time prostitute whose house of business bears the name of "Mother Goose Melodies". Proof of this comes from her collection of pornography bearing the same title as her business establishment. May I cite an example:

"There was an old woman who lived in a shoe,
She had so many children she...."

Need I say more? Her occupation is verified by the above.

Despite her occupation, which is rather frowned upon by society--depending of course, which society you speak of, her filthiest productions from a faanish are the fallacies she engages in her smutty little satires and parodies. A notable example of this may be found in her space travel ode:

"Hey diddle, diddle
The Cat and the fiddle,
The cow jumped over the moon..."

What greater fallacy is there than a cow nimbly jumping over the moon, without pressure suit and rocket? A second portion of her space travel misinformities concerns hydroponics:

"Missstress Mary, quite contrrary,
How does your garden grow?
With cockle-shells, and silver bells,
And pretty maids all in a row."

As a whole, very few science fiction writers, outside of Aldous Huxley, have conceded that life may be formed from a test-tube, or in this case, a hydroponics tube. That this keeper of hydroponics, one Mistress Mary, is employed by Mother Goose, may or may not be an accurate report, but it does form frightening ideas.

Oh there is much, much more. Her take-off on "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" is very degrading of the poor fellow. I'm sure he thinks

IN HIS SERVICE

Edinburg, Tex.--A young Catholic priest was charged with the attempted rape of a 20 year old college coed as she knelt in prayer in a parish church. Authorities also disclosed the 27 year old clergyman had been questioned extensively about the rape-slaying three weeks later of a South Texas beauty queen who disappeared after she left home to attend Easter eve services at another church in the area.

--The Newark Star-Ledger

PSYCHO. Produced and Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Screenplay by Joseph Stefano. Based on the novel by R*O*B*E*R*T B*L*O*O*M. A Paramount release. Starring Anthony Perkins, Vera Miles, John Gavin, John McIntire and Janet Leigh.

This is one time when the reviewer hopes that his readers have seen the film (or read the book) before reading the review. Not that I intend to give a blow-by-blow account of the plot--and bloody blows they were too!--nor will I ignore Mr. Hitchcock's request not to give away the ending. ("It's the only one we have.") But in order to discuss the film in some detail it will be necessary to refer to the plot as well as the ending, and even a very vague reference of this kind tends sometimes to irk those who have not yet seen or read the item in question.

For instance, it is very interesting to compare the first scene with the very last scene. The picture begins with an air view of Phoenix, Arizona. The camera moves into a closeup of a hotel window, and then "enters" the hotel room itself--to reveal Janet Leigh, attired in a bra and slip, snuggling on a bed with John Gavin, who is also in a state of semi-undress. It is obvious that they have been there for sometime, doing what comes naturally. From this slow, semi-torrid beginning, which out of context (or, say, as a scene in almost any other movie) would seem quite unoriginal, considering the dialogue which establishes that Gavin is the poor but honest owner of a hardware store in a small town in California, and that Miss Leigh is a poor but honest working girl in an office, both of them desiring marriage, but too poor to believe that two can live as cheaply as one. This immediately picks up in pace and suspense, presenting and developing a situation of unexpurgated horror, augmented by a fine score, and general excellence in direction, acting, camera work, sets, and special effects. All of which leads us--but not gently!--to the final scene where we discover Anthony Perkins sitting all alone in a bare room, wrapped in a blanket, and smiling.... (Actually this is not the final scene in the film. but it is the "last scene" as far as the main character is concerned, and fades out into the final scene, which does not detract in the least, and which, in effect, ties up the "loose ends", for the benefit of those viewers who want nothing left up to conjecture.)

What comes between those two seemingly unrelated situations (hot love and marital frustration as opposed to a "smiling man" sitting all alone in a room) is more than worth the price of admission. True, any competent writer could dream up a story to tie these two scenes together, but, as we all know--Bloch isn't just a competent writer--he is Superb. And so is Hitchcock, for producing a film which follows the book so closely in every detail.

There are some minor changes from the book, but none of them detract in the least from the enjoyment of the film. As I recall, the book was layed in the Midwest, and the film version takes place in Arizona and California, I suppose for the sake of convenience. A policeman figures largely in the forefront of the film. I don't recall this character in the novel, but his presence in the film does help to add to the suspense.

Perhaps the major "change made in the film version was the fact that the character played by Perkins was, in the book, a paunchy middle-aged man. The film version of the character is exactly the

same in personality and motivation as the book character, except for the age difference, and Perkins does such an excellent job of portraying the character, that objecting to making the character a younger man would be pure carping.

A local newspaper reviewer implied that Perkins' "stock would go down" for playing this role, that Hitchcock had done the young actor a disservice by casting him in this role. I can't agree with the idea, not at all. On the contrary, the role proves that Perkins is capable of playing something else besides his usual "nice guy" roles, and should establish him as an actor, as well as a personality. Actually, it was "type casting" in that the outward appearance of the character was one of innocence, a man tied to his mother's apron strings, a homebody, a square, but then it was also a "dual role" for Perkins, as there was more to this character than the outward appearance....

Two items connected with this film intrigue me, one of them in reference to Perkins. I wonder how many fans noted the general resemblance between Perkins and one Wilson (Bob) Tucker-- the younger Tucker, of course. (Though for all I know, Bob may look the same as he did back in '46 at the Pacificon, which is the only time I ever saw him in person.) One can almost believe that for once the writer had something to do with selecting the cast. What a ploy, what a fannish gag...

And speaking of the writer's influence in the movie version brings us to the second item. We all know that Bloch came out to California to work with Hitchcock on the filming of PSYCHO. I had assumed that he would be doing the actual script, perhaps in conjunction with some other screenwriter. But the credits reveal that the screenplay is by one Joseph Stefano, based on Bloch's novel. However.....take another look at the name.....Joseph Stefano. Could it be a Blochish version of our old friend "Joe Fan"? Stf or stef have been around for years as abbreviations for science fiction....well, let's face it.... in this instance, the "screenwriter's" name is almost too coincidental to be true. I can see Hitchcock going along with the gag too. No skin off his nose is the writer wants to use a pseudo for part of his work, and not have his name appear in the credits twice....

So much for conjecture. The film itself leaves nothing to the imagination--unless one wishes to dwell at great length on the conflict--the inner, mental conflict--experienced by the psycho, and thus go psycho himself. It's a gripper, a screaming meemy, a horror piece worthy of the accolade "classic" here and now. Not for impressionable kiddies, or people with weak hearts or tender tummies. No punches are pulled, but unlike the grossly obvious "horror" films done by less talented producers, the grotesque and gruesome business is done in what can only be described as an artistic manner. Artistic in the true sense of the word, not "arty", mind you.

Bloch is Superb, and Bloch combined with Hitchcock is doubly Superb. That ruling that everyone must see this film from the beginning is to be commended, and certainly it is a picture worth standing in line to see.

--Len Moffat

After
Lark



PITCON A JONI CORNELL
COLLABORATION PROSSER 60

AFTERGLOW

by Mike Deckinger

This is not a con-report.

It could not be. Since I've been home from the con, at least ten hours as I type this, I don't think I could possibly write an adequate con-report giving all my feelings towards it.

So rather, this will just be things I feel that went on at the Pitt-con which are worth mentioning. This should also satisfy those who have been demanding more Deckinger in HOCUS.

First of all, allow me to explain the illo on p.13. As the credit indicates it is by Prosser and Cornell. While I was there Joni Cornell (who is a dashing, wild, sexy blonde) offered to do some art for me on an unused stencil that she had. So we went into another room and without benefit of either a drawing plate or stylus she set to work drawing the nude with the flames dancing around her. Incidentally, my ball-point pen was used, in lieu of the stylus. When she had gotten through most of the girl's anatomy Dave Prosser came in with his wife and took over, rendering the girl's hands, the flames, and the BEM at the left of the illo.

Then a day or so later I invited Joni up to (well actually it was down to my room, since my room was on the tenth floor and we were on the seventeenth) my room, and mentioned that I was going to do a pseudo-con report for the next HOCUS called "Aftermath". After thinking this over for awhile she decided that since the fire was in great profusion in the picture, "Afterglow" might be a more suitable title. So while I lay on my bed thinking lecherous thoughts she drew in the title and then left (probably to kiss Wally Weber).

Mike Quill and his puppets pretty well vetoed my chances of traveling to Pittsburgh by train, when they called a strike on the Penn. Railroad, so a Greyhound it was, for 8 tiresome hours.

This being my first World-con I wasn't prepared for what might go on, such as seeing the large sign on the Penn-Sheraton marquee, WELL WORD SCIENCE FICT. CONV. as the bus turned down Grant St. Nor was I prepared for the fans that lurked around at every corner, though I guess Walter Breen of New York was the first one I saw. I checked in, put my stuff away in the room, and went up to the 17th floor where everything was really going on.

I've stayed in more motels than hotels, so while the room itself did not exactly live up to my motel standards, the con rooms definitely did. I thought the arrangement of personnel and equipment up there was very well laid out. Since I was on the non-artists group of the Art Show I wandered into the art room where Bjo and a few little helpers were putting the finishing touches on the walls. I simply could not get over the fact that everyone else there was a fan, indeed, everyone on the whole 17th floor was a fan. It is a rare thing for me to see so many fans together. I sat down there on some window sill, wondering why Bjo didn't have the flaming red hair that I always imagined she would, and I think it was Ted Johnstone who remarked that I was one third of the Infernal Triangle. I never got to find out who the other 2/3 were, or even what the Infernal Triangle was but it gave me something to think over those days.

Some people I met by just glancing at their name-cards (or at their wrists, as in the case of Dick Schultz whom I recognized immediately).

Others showed that they immediately knew me by glancing at my name card, while I in turn had no idea whom they might be. One morning I was passing a hall when a rather husky man caught me short in a gesture which I took to be friendly, but he was wearing no name plate at the time, and I hadn't the slightest idea who he might be. So I thrust out my Program book and asked him to sign it. It turned out he was Dave Prosser, who had come to the con with his wife, Dave was also one of the few who turned out the way I imagined he would.

Now I had never met a great majority of the fen at the con, even though I knew, or knew of, just about all. It was fun to build up mental images as to how I assumed these people would look, and it was even more fun to learn how wrong I was for the most part. Certain fen like Ted Johnstone, Dick Schultz, Bill Plott, etc. looked younger than I expected. Joe Fekete, who says he's 19, doesn't look like he's a day over 14. Other turned out the wrong way, like Bruce Pelz whom I'm quite certain I never would have recognized had he not worn his name plate, or Jim Harmon, who just didn't look the way Jim Harmon should. Eric Bentscliffe seemed rather small, in contrast to Don Ford who made such an impression, particularly with his height, when he was in England several months ago. Harlan Ellison was a riot, I don't think I've ever encountered a better spontaneous ad-libber, or a person who is so adept at setting up a sparkling, hilarious new personality as the vehicle for delivering some lusty monologue or jokes (What has 1000 legs and can't walk? Five hundred children with polio. What's the difference between a hormone and a vitamin? You can't hear a vitamin). He, Garrett, and Asimov were probably the liveliest fun makers at the whole con. It was unfortunate that Bloch wasn't there, he would have fit in perfectly with the bunch.

There were many times I regretted having not brought my camera, but probably the biggest loss was at the costume ball which introduced to me some of the weirdest, most cleverly put together, and sexiest costumes I've ever seen. Sylvia White definitely deserved some sort of her award in her abbreviated bikini, for either the sexiest costume or perhaps being the bravest female there. Bjo was delightful in her green outfit with the two pony tail, as I she described to me in an elevator "one on her head and the other where a pony tail usually is found". She also put a little cartoon on my name plate during the fan play, showing a small fan with a three propeller beanie carrying a stack of zines and saying boastfully "I'm not a neo", for which I'm eternally gratefully. Earl Kemp's silver and spangled outfit was easily the most alien-looking there. The silver tinge to his face gave him the appearance of being a fugitive from a monster film and had he advanced on the street, he would have created quite a stir. Equally amusing was the costumes worn by the Curtis family picturing the senses: Sense of wonder, sense of beauty, sense of ?, and the necessary 35-50 cents.

There was also one character there in a Dracula outfit with a black cape, pallid face, and Lugosi-type expression, who didn't win anything, but did cause a lot of fun. I was standing by a bar in the ballroom when Dracula came over to the bartender, who did not seem in to good a mood, due to constantly darting around trying to serve anyone.

"What'll you have?" he asked Dracula tiredly.

For almost a full moment Dracula said nothing, but just stared. Then, he intoned in a heavy voice:

"Blood."

What else could a self-respecting vampire have said to a question like that?

I had originally bought no costume to the masquerade ball, but Jim Warren, who publishes HELP and Forry's FMOF called out me and three others and gave us monster masks, like the kind advertised in FMOF which he said we should wear there. Mine was a heavy job with small slit for eyes, a small slit for the nose, and after about ten minutes wearing it I was blinded, as well as nearly suffocating to death.

When this was over there were a few more variety filler acts scheduled by LASFS also announced that the LASFS films would be shown, so quite a few people trooped to the Duquesne room where the projector and screen was set up. Four films were shown. The first was THE WORLD BESIDE US, an amateur sf film which, while not up to professional standards, was a commendable effort. Then came the Musquite Kid, the new LASFS film which I thought was a riot. Following that LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD, almost an abstract short feature was shown, which began with an ingeniously animated sequence called "rock fight" which Rotsler, I think it was, did the camera magic on. Afterwards there was a commercial (on film) given by the club, while various characters cavorted about in the scenery. After that the projector broke down and several LASFans began frantically calling the lobby. Since THE GENI was the only remaining film left, and since I had already seen it before, I left the room and went searching about, bumping into various old and new acquaintances and accumulating more and more signatures in my con booklet.

Earlier in the day I had been shown a copy of the Bosses Songbook, and after laughing myself hysterical over songs like "Jesus Christ" and "The Twelve days of Marxmas" I vowed I must get a copy. It required some doing but I finally located Sandy Cutrell, paid him 50¢ and came away with a copy. I had several opportunities to go over these songs too, once at the art exhibit with Ted Johnstone, Ruth Berman, Bruce Pelz and several others, again at the banquet where Bill Sarill and I sang "Jesus Christ" till the food arrived, and also at the N3F room; 1622 where Wayne Dickey and I got in several verses and Lloyd Biggle may have joined in too.

I came home with at least a dozen new fanzines--it seemed as if just about every fan-ed there was distributing his zine. I even helped Lynn Hivkman staple copies of the Annish of Jd-A and I must have endeared myself to him by stapling them backwards. But who ever heard of the title and cover on the back, and a full illo on the front? I saw where Lee Tremper still hasn't tackled a facsimile review of H#14 in SPACE CAGE, I'm wondering if she ever will.

The fan play "The Purple Pastures" was a very well done affair, though Bruce Pelz was just about the only one who could be heard clearly in the back of the room, where I was sitting.

I'm not much of an eater, and the main reason I attended the banquet was to see the awards given out and hear the speeches, though after the chicken, and especially the pie that was served, I'm not sorry I attended. The HUGO awards turned out precisely as I had voted myself and it was very encouraging to see a show like TWILIGHT ZONE cop an award, and hear Rod Serling's letter of thanks being read by Asimov. The standing ovation that Heinlein received when he went up to get the award for "Starship Troopers" was a very touching thing and the whole banquet had exactly the right balance of ser-con and seriousness, from James Blish's very important sf speech which deserves wide reprinting, to Isaac Asimov's very witty comments. Afterwards through the grapevine I learned there was a party going on in

the Curtis' room so I grabbed an elevator and took it down, and indeed there was a party in session, with Juanita Coulson singing folk-songs in one room, in a truly beautiful voice and another room containing the liquid refreshments. Hal Shapiro sold me a fannish song book for a dollar, and I was so taken aback to find out that he was not the mean, bitching, conceited fellow that he was supposed to be that I guess I didn't know what I was doing.

Since I could not possibly distribute all the ego-boo that deserves to be here, what I'm going to do is give a list of all those people whom I got to sign my con book. So if you met me and you're reading this look for your name. Anyway, my con book autograph section reads as follows: Dick Schultz, Ed Meskys, Bob Lambeck, Norm Metcalf, Andrew Reiss, Jerry Page, Bruce Henstell (who's rapidly becoming another Harlan Ellison), Al Lewis (California), Les Gerber, Emile Greenleaf, Bruce Pelz, George Spencer, Bjo, Judith Merrill, Bill Plott, Lee Tremper, Ted Johnstone, Walter Breen, Andy Main, Ron Ellik, Jeff Wanshel, Ted White, Joe Casey, Art Hayes, F.M. Busby, Elinor Busby, Les Nirenberg (yes, he is real), Boyd Rasmussen, Dave Prosser, Walt Cole, P. Schuyler Miller, R.W. Dickey, Jan Brodsky, Randall Garrett, Wally Weber, John Koning, Jack Harness, Edward E. Smith, Buck Coulson, Juanita Coulson, Alma Hill, Bill Sarill, Eric Bentcliffe, Dick Eney, Ruth Berman, George Nims Raybin, Janie Lamb, Donald Anderson, Barbi Johnson, Belle Deitz, Willy Ley, Sandy Sanderson, Joy Sanderson, Don Studebaker, Peggy McKnight, Sidney E. Porcelin, Ed Wood, Forrest Ackerman, Dean McLaughlin, Hal Shapiro, Dick Lupoff, Pat Lupoff, Don Ford, Hal Clement (Harry C. Stubbs), Ralph Holland, Ed Emsch, Art Rapp, James Blish, Avram Davidson, Larry Foscove, Bill Ellern, Joni Cornell, Ellis Mills, Robert Madle, Fran Krueger, Ken Krueger, Bob Pavlet, Lloyd Biggle, H. Beam Piper, B. Joseph Fekete, Harlan Ellison, Joe Christoff, George Seithers, Betsy Curtis, Lynn Hickman, Steve Scultheis, James Warren, Phyllis Economou, Sandy Cutrell, Frank Prieto, and Hans Stefan Santessan.

There were others of course, but I was unable to corner everyone, and I feel that this list is not lacking in quality or fannishness at all.

I had been planning to hold a gathering in my room but besides me there were only 3 other fans in it, Joni Cornell at one time, and Ron Ellik and Peggy McKnight at another. Lloyd Biggle had offered to take a poloid picture of Joni Cornell and me together but I could never get all 3 of us together in one place.

Most of the program I enjoyed tremendously, though I did feel that fanzine editors panel was disappointing. This was probably because it was canceled from its original scheduled time at 11:00 pm on Sunday night and held Monday afternoon instead. I had read so many glowing reports of the fan-ed panel at the DETENTION that I was hoping this would be similar. But then there was always something to do, and when there wasn't Harlan would get up and auction something or I suppose Garrett would start singing some more dirty songs (he probably knew more than anyone else there).

But, as I said, this is not a con report. It may seem like one, but I don't feel it really is. And next year I am hoping to be in Seattle if I can manage. Perhaps Joni Cornell will have the opportunity to really kiss Wally Weber then.

--Mike Deokinger

H O C U S
F O C U S

Redd Boggs
2209 Highland Place, N.E.
Minneapolis 21, Minn.

That green blotter paper of HOCUS #14 gave the magazine a rather turgid appearance, and the lack of lettering guide headings and artwork made the pages a bit daunting to read. The cover was kind of amusing, but it seemed rather foolish to waste that heavy cover stock (which if you bought it must have cost a pretty penny) on such a gag. ((No, not really. The fellow at the stationary store was going to get rid of a whole pile of that paper anyway, and rather than make no profit at all on it, he offered to sell the pile to me for 75%. So naturally I accepted the offer)).

Best thing in the issue was Berry's "book-review" which was carefully and cleverly worked out, even though I know little about Gerber's prowess with a Zap-gun.

Franson's article is about ten years too late, isn't it? Such articles were quite common circa 1950. I certainly disagree with Franson that Planet's editors could separate genuine humor from corn, and that the Vizigraph contained "fine examples of writing, unexcelled wit, and deep original thought". I don't remember reading any-- and I say this remembering that some of my friends of yesterday and today contributed a great many letters to the Vizigraph. One of the things that I'm proudest of is that I never wrote any letters to the Vizigraph, even though I admit I contributed a few idiotic letters to Sgt. Saturn and others.

Rog Ebert's fanzine reviews, "Ars Gratia Ego" has a clever title there. Rog makes a number of good points here and there, but this department was really too short to make an impression. He seemed to do his best job on Rod Waggoner's article in YANDRO. ((Unfortunately that was Rog's first and last column for HOCUS, now that he's taken up a new fanzine of his own, STYMIE, he reports that he just doesn't have time for the reviews.)).

Devoting half an issue to letters strikes me as too heavy emphasis on the past but most of the letters were interesting. I'm not very familiar with the "collaborations" between Lovecraft and Derleth that AH has produced, but other than that, such HPL works as Marginalia and Something about Cats strikes me as legitimate productions, and not "literary ghouliness".

Alan Dodd asks whether Von Braun would "hold the same exalted position in the U.S. that he does now" if the German rockets had hit American cities during World War 2. Possibly not; it would have been more difficult to be realistic in that case. I'm not sure whether Alan objects to the U.S. employing Von Braun in the first place, or raising him to his high position. I would hope that we'd at least employ him not matter what his rockets had done, and if he did good work too, I would hope that we'd give him the recognition he deserved, not treat him as a slave. While they didn't suffer so much from rocket bombs, the Russians certainly suffered as painfully from German aggression as the Britons did during the war; yet they were not too proud or vindictive to accept help from captured German scientists. ((I would think the term "accepting help" is a bit mild, Redd. The captured scientists were probably ordered to aid the Russians in the construction of bombs or missiles, or else be executed. Under

these conditions only a fanatic would refuse)). I don't blame Alan, or any other Britishers from feeling as they do, but hatred of this sort is, in the long run, just as "wicked" as designing the V-2s in the first place. If Europe would forget all its old grudge maybe there would be no more use for V-2s. Old hatreds are understandable, but it is difficult for the outsider to see the reason for remembering blood spilled in the dark past.

The fillers "His Eye was on the Sparrow" and "Where was God" reflect almost as naive an attitude towards religion as some fundamentalist Christians have. I was amused to see one of them credited to a paper called "The Liberal"; has liberalism come to such low ebb that it is in the hands of people who think they are striking such a low blow at "the superstitious nonsense called religion" by printing such bilge? If God is God he can hardly be judged by our human standards. ((Yes Redd, but suppose God is not God)) I'm sure tiny infants think their parents are mean and arbitrary too. "Parents are supposed to be so big and smart and know everything. So why did Mommy come out in the street and grab me and whap the tar out of me pies?" ((There is a difference between "making mudpies" and taking a life, or through neglect permitting the life to be taken. Your analogy does not form a proper progression pattern)).

Les Nirenberg
1217 Weston Rd.
Toronto 15 Ont.
Canada

Don Franson was good. As a matter of fact he was very good. His piece was the only bright thing in the zine.

Hey, I guess I'm an anarchist. I agree completely with Diok Ellington. But it would take hundreds or even thousands of years to change the thinking of people so that they would act decently or unselfishly towards their fellow man ((if ever)). This is why I'm continually defending Jesus of Nazareth in arguments/discussions on religion. The man taught a very sane and beautiful way of life in which each man respected his fellow man and loved him as a brother. ((I imagine most mental institutions have their share of inmates advocating similar policies)).

Paul Rehorst is full of crap. Why shouldn't we be friendly with known communists? What possible harm could it do? If a friend of mine happens to be a commy, I don't care, as long as he's a decent guy and doesn't try to hard to heap communism on me. ((If he doesn't, then he isn't a good communist)). It's stupid to take a person's political views personally.

Warner: If somebody called me a Blothead, I'd think it was a compliment.

Dodd's dislike for Von Braun is understandable. Don't forget the great mass of anti-German (not so much anti-Nazi) propaganda which was directed at us during the war. It's very easy to hate a nation more than a political system, so propagandists use the easiest way. This is being done today, as witness Western feelings towards Russia. Hate for Russia itself, is not as great as hate for Germany was, I don't think. People are becoming more aware that they should dislike the political system more than the country.

The trouble with Christianity is the Bible, which contains a lot of good things, but is taken too literally. Let's hire a good editor (like Harlan Ellison) to read it over and fix it up.

Greg Benford
10521 Allegheny Drive
Dallas 29, Texas

Franson is entertaining with his PLANET STORIES letters. I remember well those letters; they always struck me as being 99% composed of letters from Southern California fandom, revolving around Vorzimer & clan. The 7th and 8th fandom set seemed rather suited for PLANET STORIES, since both seem to have been operating on the same level of intelligence.

Rog Ebert is a fairly likable fmz reviewer. He may be right about my being pushed out of VOID, but I believe my influence will be felt after awhile. Right now the zine is changing rapidly from the pseudo-GALAXY style and format which had plagued us on all sides to a more relaxed, fan-oriented zine. I have some stuff coming up in future issues, if Ted will ever get out all of the annish.

The excerpt from The Liberal is rather stupid, I thought. Perhaps God is not a kindly do-gooder, as the writer seems to look upon Him, but rather, perhaps, He is merely another creature, albeit on a higher plane than we, and is not all powerful in physical matters. ((Or, to advance it one step further, perhaps he doesn't give a damn about us)). Admittedly, modern (and past) religion is in something of a mess, but this little sermon hardly refutes anything vital to faith.

I liked ON THE BEACH very much, but the whole thing seemed a bit contrived--after all, no matter how impossible it might seem to survive, I tend to believe sheer instinct would drive someone to build a bunker and secure supplies of oxygen and nitrogen, etc., and wait it out. I know I would have tried, and if the rain had eventually taken the dust out of the air, it might be possible to live again. At any rate, someone would have tried. Even if it couldn't work, I tend to think a mass movement would have taken place to escape somewhere. People just aren't as rational and fatalistic as Shute ((or Kramer)) seemed to imagine. What's more, the realization of the death of the rest of the world was not impressed upon the people--messages just stopped coming in, that's all. Such things as this don't tend to impress one emotionally with the death of the whole human race, and it certainly would not have been enough to induce such fatalism. ((I think I disagree with you here, indicating that the rest of the world was dead by the cessation of outside radio contact is a skillfully subtle way of pointing out the fact that there was no one left alive to operate the radio equipment. The biggest fallacy I thought, was the lack of bodies)).

I would have more respect for Dodd's argument on von Braun if he simply said "I don't like him because he shot at me, and I couldn't shoot back", for that's what it is, you know. He speaks of the Krupp empire, and Kesselring, and then says "every other Nazi" from the world wars is back in power. But this nonsense, because these and a few others are the only ones who have achieved any power. What's more, there are many industrial giants in England, I could imagine, who rather enjoyed their increased profits during the war, and they remain in power. It is easy to say Krupp & cohorts supported Hitler out of sheer evil intent, but it much more likely that they conceived him to be a powerful stopgap to the dangerous leftist movements of the 20s and early 30's, and thought he could protect their economic and social interests. ((Or, give them the need to construct more bombs and other weapons)).

Also, this "scientists are bad because they build bombs" thing, which is so prevalent, seems somewhat awry. I don't claim that all moral blame is to be placed upon others, but carping about scientists

could be more productively focused on generals or politicians or just people ((meaning that generals and politicians are not people?)), since they are all more or less responsible for the current state of affairs. Without atomic weapons, remember, we'd be vastly outnumbered by the Soviets and China, and any principles we stand for would go by the boards.

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Ron Bennett
7 Southway
Arthurs Ave.
Harrogate
York., England

The biggest snag I've discovered about being a completist--I'm a Bradbury completist you know--is in finding space for the books and mags when one moves house. ((Well, you can always move the house out along with you)). The problem is very real to me--I'm moving shortly.

Yeh, we all think Campbell is wrong over here too. It seems to be an occupational hazard in American pro-editing that you end up crazy. ((And doesn't this apply to fanzine editing as well?))

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SFC Arthur H. Rapp RA36886935
FB, 1st Msl Bn, 40th Arty
Fort Bliss, Texas

Upon receiving HOCUS #14, I had a vague recollection that I hadn't seen any issues before that. So I crept on hands and knees under my bed where I keep a crate of fanzine (haw, I bet you think I'm kidding) hauled it out, fished through the stack (wh ch my superhuman mentality has prompted me to file alphebetically by title) to see what was the last issue of HOCUS I'd gotten.

Well surprise, surprise!

The investigation turned up HOCUS #11, and #12, both of which I'm willing to state through a lie-detector I'd never laid eyes on before. I think, Mike, you should give up making those snode remarks of yours about the Post Office; surely if they are so efficient that they can take the issues you entrust to them and not only deliver them to me, but sneak into my room, under my bed, and file them alphabetically in my fanzine file, the poor maligned mailmen are performing a service far above and beyond the call of duty.

The only problem is; how do we stop them? After all, they ought to slow down in their appointed rounds at least long enough to let me look over the zines before placing them in my files. ((I really have no idea how to combat service like this, but I'll think about it)).

The Prosser cover on #11 is one of the two or three finest demonstrations of what can be done on a mimeo stencil by an artist with patience and skill, that I have ever seen--and I've seen most of the attempts made in the past fifteen years or so.

I didn't care for the ghastly swamp-scum green paper you used in #14.

Perhaps it is because #14, alone of the three issues had no serious constructive article in its contents. ((Well, I'd say Franson's article was at least semi-ser-con)). This confirms a long-held thesis of mine--that running humor will delight your readers, but unless you supplement the funny stuff with serious discussion, they'll forget your zine as quickly as they forget the daily newspaper. (By the way, Franson, Berry, and Nirenberg were all three excellent. I don't mean to downgrade them at all by classifying humor as less memorable than sercon stuff).

As someone who earns his living shooting off these crazy Buck Rogers rockets, I might point out to Dodd that von Braun was one of the principal designers of the corporal missile, which the British Army is now depending upon as part of its arsenal in case they ever need to shoot at enemies of the Empire. Let's face it, von Braun, for all anyone knows, might be just as happy producing his stuff for a Nazi dictator than an American democracy, but he is obviously a monomaniac on the subject of space travel, and all he cares about is getting his rockets into space, not what people do with his incidental discoveries along the line.

But if Dodd is going to hate Von Braun, shouldn't he also hate such people as Faraday, who discovered the electromagnetic phenomena which ultimately enabled the Germans to develop radar, and thus use their guns to shoot down British bombers over Europe; or Henry Bessemer, who invented guns that armed Hitler's armies; or James Watt who invented the steam engine that became the locomotive that pulled the trains that carried the V-2s from the factories to the launching sites? Maybe he should deplore the British Museum reading room, where Karl Marx wrote Das Kapital and thus has perhaps set things up for World war 3, which will make WW2 look like a Sunday school picnic.

If I'm not mistaken, it was an Englishman who during the Boer War, developed the process of preserving food in tins, an invention that has probably won more battles for Britain than any direct death-dealing weapon ever devised. Yet I'm sure anyone would look askance at a former enemy of England who regarded the inventor as a war criminal. The poison gas Lewisite, the prop-synchronized machinegun for aircraft, and the plastic explosive used for blowing up enemy bridges and stuff, all were invented by presumably respectably Britons: does Dodd feel that all these people should be regarded as outcasts of humanity because of their responsibility for the death of numerous fellow humans in the course of carious wars?

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Jack L. Chalker
5111 Liberty Heights Ave.
Baltimore 7, Maryland

Now this is the United States of America, and we have the right to say or beleive what we want. I'm not disputing that. But when I see that an editor has not just said "I don't beleive in God", as many do, but keeps on and starts to REBUKE and MAKE AN ABSOLUTE FOOL OF GOD AND THE PERSONS BELEIVING IN HIM, I get the opinion that person stinks. ((While all you self-appointed spokesmen for the deity have castigated me for uttering such blasphemy, I still have heard no complaints from either God himself, or Jesus Christ. Since it's perfectly wrong and irrational for me not to beleive in God, I presume the silence, on the part of the above named persons indicates their approval in my anti-religious views. Until I hear from complaints from those I allegedly insult, rather than self-appointed spokesmen, I will not change my opinions)). I don't hold this against you have mention your views on religion elsewhere to me. That's your privilage and my opinion of you and your end are not of value here. ((Talk what you want about my views, but let's leave my end out of this, ok))? But by putting that "Your name is J. Christ, esq." on your "why you are receing this" list is not my idea of a joke. ((Why not, can't you conceive of a New York lawyer named Joseph Christ))? It's my idea of a dirty insult to the persons of this country who do beleive in God (and that's their privilage too). ((Why are you complaining--~~was~~ that line checked on your copy))? I can't imagine anyone so common as to make fun--no, to actually ridicule--one per-

son's set of value, his beliefs, his whole way of feeling. ((Why not, isn't it done every day))?

The reprinting of the paragraph from The Liberal, obviously written by a man who has no sense of values and no common sense whatsoever did not belong in an amateur publication, least of all your own. ((Why))? It sounded vaguely communistic, for one thing, and it was full of holes, for another. ((Or maybe it was so well written that the only way to criticize it would be in abstract, unapplicable terms)).

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Harry Warner Jr.
423 Summit Ave.
Hagerstown, Maryland

((Harry is ressurecting old stationary, apparently. This letter was typed on a greyish paper, with a blue printed heading: Dixie Fantasy Federation, and under it: Earle Barr Hanson; President, Joseph Gilbert; Secretary, Harry Jenkins; Treasurer, and an advisory board of: Fred Fischer, Harry Warner Jr., Art Sehnert, Jack Speer, and W.B. McQueen. Harry, how old is this anyway))?

I liked Francon's article immensely, and only wish that he'd gone ahead and used the names that belong to the quoted items. Everyone in fandom wrote things in the past that he'd like to wipe out of existence, but there's no reason to be ashamed of them. Until some prozine starts up one of the hectic-type letter columns again, I might suggest that fans would do well to keep in practice by peppering up their letters to fanzines a bit more, and taking more care in them.

The Berry item impresses me as the funniest thing he's written since the Detention. Not the best in an absolute sense, since he's turned out a lot of very fine, more serious material lately. Les Nirenberg's story makes an odd contrast: it's quite well done, but after reading it I hastily turned back to the Berry story and re-read parts to get back into a good and jolly mood again.

The Von Braun argument is one that could involve all sorts of added areas, if fans really got interested in it. For instance, someone might point out that the British are reacting that way toward him because the British Isles are almost the only spot on Earth that has not known the horrors of actual physical presence of war for centuries and centuries; every other nation, including the United States has had its own territory as a battleground, while the British have escaped everything except air raids. Let me hasten to say that this is not my opinion, or at least an awfully misleading section of part of my opinion, but I doubt if that occurs to the Britishers at all. Another point is that the United States may feel less angry with Von Braun than England, because the U.S. is like Germany; a basically militaristic nation that delights in American Legions and war games and Independence day Parades and ultimatums to Russia. The British go to every extreme to avoid a war, then fight it because there is no other way to survive; the U.S. jumps into one ever quarter-century because it sees what it considers to be a cause of war. As a result, a genius at creating a weapon of war is much admired, subconsciously while the war is on, and openly when it's ended. The U.S. has fought most of the world's important nations, including itself, except Russia. Should we feel towards the Britishers as the Britishers feel toward von Braun because of what happened here in 1812?

////////////////////////////////////

YOU ARE RECEIVING THIS BECAUSE:

- (1) We trade.
- () Why don't we trade?
- () You sub to this.
- () You have some sort of ego-boo in here.
- () This is a sample, how about retaliating with a letter of comment?
- () How about contributing something?
- () Your name is not J. Christ, esq.
- () It could be.
- () Advance to GO. Collect \$200.

Much Pitt-con egoboo in here, vast yu there, Charlie?

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