

CONTENTS:

DON'T GET PERCONEL WITH A MIMEOGRAPH by Ted Pauls	2
THE PHANTOM BLOT RIDES AGAIN by Ted Pauls	
WE ALL MAKE MISTAKES, BUT	9
WHEN IS A MOVIE NOT A BOOK by Peggy Sexton	.0
I REMEMBER COMIC BOCKS by Jim Harmon	2
QUOTES AND NOTES by Ted Pauls	
SECOND CHILDHOOD by Ted Pauls	7
MEDIOCRITY RIDES THE AIR WAVES by Mike Deckinger	
THE CHOPPING BLOCK by Ted Pauls	
SPACEMAN by John Bailey	
CRYIN' IN THE SINK by Marion Bradley2	
A SONG OF SIXPENCE by The Readers	1

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DON'T GET PERCONEL WITH A

BY TED PAULS

AND <u>KIPPLE</u> GROWETH: Though I haven't finished this issue as I write this editorial, I'm positive it will be larger than any previous issue. Totally aside from my Esp Powers, this prediction is based on the fact that I've just finished stenciling page 35 and have two four-page letters which I haven't even begun to stencil yet. Too, any letters which arrive within the next two days--December 6th and 7th--will likely be published in this issue also. So my prediction really isn't very astounding...

Letters are important to most fanzines, but to <u>Kipple</u> they are even more than merely "important." Aside from the obvious and much-used plaint that if I didn't get letters I wouldn't have the enthusiasm to continue publishing, letters are important to <u>Kipple</u> because the letter section is a considerable portion of each issue. Why, without letters our issues would waste away to a mere 30 pages or so!

DICK ENEY FOR TAFF? This year I had a tough time deciding who to support in the next Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund campaign. What finally decided me in favor of Eney--and I suppose many others have decided for the same reason--was the Fancyclopedia II. Both Ellik and Eney are nice guys, eitherwould make a fine representative to the British convention. But Richard Eney has contributed so greatly to fandom as a whole in bringing up to date Jack Speer's Fancyclopedia that in my opinion he deserves the honor far more that Ellik. That's why I ask you to vote for Richard Eney. (And please, Dick, don't withdraw this time...).

One thought arises as a result of this year's election, though. Once again we have two trufans running against each other and splitting the trufan vote. Should a convention fan or a fringe fan decide to run, as I'm sure one will, he or she would be able to carry the election, in all probability, in the same manner as Don Ford did last year or Bob Madle two years before. I have nothing against either of these fans, but it would be nice if a fanzine fan won once in a while.

I DREAD THE COMING OF WINTER because I will have to watch television at least two hours every night. I remember the first winter I discovered our television wouldn't allow itself to be turned off. It was about 10:30 at night and I was preparing to settle down with a good book. I got up out of a chair, walked the length of the room on the thick carpet, reached out to switch off the set...and jumped back! Even before my fingers had touched the "Off" knob a blue spark of pure hate had shot out from the set and nipped at my hand. "Static electricity." my father abserved. "No. no!" I shouted. "The set bit me!" "Static electricity," he persisted. "Walking across the carpet did it. Watch." And he proceeded to shuffle across the rug, bend down to touch the dial, and jump back chuckling as the blue spark

shot out at him. He did this demonstration several more times, then looked questioningly at me.

"That's all well and good," I said, "but there's still one thing that bothers me."

"Oh?"

"Why did the goddamn

television bite me?"

I DON'T WANT TO BE ACCUSED OF TED WHITISHNESS AGAIN, but I would like to say a few words about this issue's material. First of all, there are two fanzine review columns present again. I've just about decided to stop fighting this. "Cryin' in the Sink" was originally solicited because, as I told Marion at the time, I would be unable to write an instalment of "The Chopping Block" every issue. Actually, I haven't missed a deadline since Marion's column began. The fact that I don't have to write a fanzine review column seems to inspire me to do so. When I had to write one-before Marion began contributing hers--I was unable, most of the time, to do it.

Otherwise, this issue contains a couple articles I mentioned last issue as well as a couple I didn't. Peggy Sexton's review of "The Time Machine" and Mike Deckinger's article on television fall into this latter category. I consider myself lucky in obtaining both of these pieces and they should be the high spots of the issue--a position I had fondly wished for my very own article, "The Phantom Blot Rides Again."

Next issue? Well, I've got a book review by Peggy Sexton written rather with tongue in cheek, there'll undoubtedly be two or three fanzine review columns, and Ruth Berman has promised an article on Christopher Morley. Anything else which appears in that issue will, at this moment, surprise me as much as anyone. Of course, I asked Ted White for another instalment of "Uffish Thots" some time ago, and I asked John Magnus to write something about a year ago-don't depend too much on him. Harry Warner will probably have something upcoming in a few issues, simply because he writes something for me every year. I've done about another dozen little writing exercises--one of them will appear below--and may devote a couple pages to them in either #9 or #10. Bob Lichtman has said that he'd like to do something for me, and I've been in line with Walt Breen since asking him at the Disclave.

As you can see, we probably won't be exactly hard-up for material. Aside from the things I mentioned, I'll probably have some articles upcoming in future issues, and "Experiments in Esp," though absent this issue, will probably be back as a regular feature starting with the January or February issue -- I want to get some outside contributions to that column lined up hefore I begin it again. So as I said, we won't exactly be hard-up for contributions. Nevertheless, they are appreciated. There are a number of people in my audience that I'd like to see represented in these pages, and if you don't mind I'll mention them here instead of writing a dozen or so personal letters: George Spencer, Terry Carr, Dick Bergeron, Ed Cox, Richard Elsberry, Buz Busby, Dick Lupoff, Redd Boggs, Harlan Ellison and Dick Eney. And if your name doesn't happen to he on this list, don't let that stop you. While it is true that there is no one too big to be rejected by Kipple, it is equally true that there is no one too small to be accepted.

A SQUIBLET OF A NEO-SALINGER: Y'know, I know quite a few girls but I

never seen one as nutty as this Clara lives around the corner. I mean, she's always readin'. Me, I don't read too much except maybe comic books but this Clara reads stuff like "Grime and Punishment" or at least somethin' like that. I seen a book called "Grime and Punishment" on her desk. Yeah, she's got a regular desk. Reads allatime. An' that's not too had but she's gotta always talk about what she reads. She's always talkin' about people with crazy names like this guy Sellinger. She says this guy Sellinger wrote about people like me and then she laughs. I dunno. How crazy can you get?

ON THE PAGES IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING there is an article on comic books as remembered by this editor. Prepublication copies of this article were sent to Kipple's Research Staff, New York Division, and received some very interesting replies and corrections. Larry Ivie wrote a long and interesting letter which will probably appear in the letter column of the next issue; however, for corrections I think I'll rely on the short and more concise notes sent by Dick Lupoff. While reading the following article, bear in mind these points:

- 1. Walt Disney's Comics and Stories did not start after World War II, but before.
- 2. The original Phantom Blot story appeared in the thirties, and the one I remember was a re-drawn, re-written one.
- 3. Mickey Mouse's friend Chief O'Hara was closer to being an imitation of Commissioner Gordon than Perry White.
- 4. Mighty Mouse appeared much longer after Terrytoons Comics than I had said:
- 5. There was never more than one Donald Duck story in Comics and Stories. (41 had forgotten that Bucky Dug was in that comic-this character had completely slipped my mind until Ivie mentioned him.)
- 6. Short newspaper length stories were not an innovation in the comics I mentioned and the earlier ones were reprints from actual newspaper pages.
- Well, I was working from memory. The only place where I had the comics at hand to be sure of dates was on <u>Uncle Scrooge Comics</u>. I am glad that I sent out a couple pre-publication copies (one also went to Ted White who hasn't replied yet). If these mistakes were pointed out in the letter column of the next issue, they wouldn't mean anything, since my article would already be in everybody's mind. Here, on the other hand, readers can keep the corrections in mind as they read the article.

more thing appeared on Dick Lupoff's list, but I didn't include it up above because I'm not so sure it's any more accurate than my original statement. Dick claims that Mickey Mouse's nephews have always been called Morty and Ferdie--never Morty and Monty. Aside from the fact that these names stick in my mind as the original names of the characters, Bob Lichtman mentioned this name change a few weeks ago in a letter. Odd that we should both remember a character which never existed. Can anyone shed some light on this?

-- Ted Pauls

BY TED PAUL

THE PHANTOM BLOT PIGOS again

Ted White is known as "The Man With 10,000 Comic Books"; and Larry Ivie is fandom's Poy Collector. I don't pretend to know even half as much about comic books as either of these two gentlemen, but there is one segment of comic book fandom which both (and a dozen more besides) have totally ignored.

I remember Mickey Mouse.

No doubt many others do too, but they have dismissed Mickey, his sister and brother characters--Donald Duck, Goofy, et al--and all the characters they inspired--Walter Lantz' menagerie, <u>Terrytoons Comics</u>, and so on--as too childish for their attention. There is a tendency to confuse these adventurous characters with the likes of <u>Little Audrey</u> and other insidious hackwork. I resent this.

If Ted White was considered "a little nutty" because of owning 10,000 comic books a few years ago, consider what must have been thought of me when I searched old book stores at the age of 15 for the early issues of Walt Disney's Comics and Stories or the first three issues of Terrytoons Comics featuring the adventures of Mighty Mouse. These comics are no less fascinating than Superman, or Green Lantern. Sure, the heroes were animals—mice, ducks, dogs and cows. But I never thought of them as such unless that impression was forced upon me. They all reacted to situations in the same manner a human being would have: Mickey Mouse undoubtedly at one time duplicated Batman's full repertoire of stunts to the letter.

This is more or less a prelude to this article, which will pertain to the animal-adventure comics as distinguished from the funny-animal comics. Most readers under 25 will probably remember these characters and adventures—certainly all the teenage fans have at one time or another read these comic books. But no matter whether you have read them or not: I ask only that you remember that these were animals only in name and appearance; they had human (or sometimes even superhuman) intelligence, human emotions and human reactions. To the boy of seven in 1949, they were human, certainly no less real that Captain Marvel, or The Human Torch.

I was collecting Walt Disney's Comics and Stories even before I could read most of the words. The first issues of this comic, which was to inspire so many others, appeared just after World War II had ended. Donald Duck, who had (and still has) the leadoff story, was already an established character; his strip had appeared in the papers since 1939 or 1940, and had been proven a success. I never saw the first two or three years of this comic. The first issue I saw was the one for February of 1948, when I was only five years old. I couldn't read too much of it, of course, and it wasn't until two years later that I was able to read the whole comic without difficulty. In those days, the format was: one long Donald Duck story at the front of the comic, a short story featuring The Three Pigs in the middle, and another and shorter Donald Duck story at the end.

In the early months of 1949, two important changes occurred: the first in a long line of serials began appearing in <u>Comics and Stories</u>, featuring Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck and Goofy (who was a dog); and the first issue of <u>Donald Duck Comics</u> appeared. That first serial was called "The House of the Seven Haunts". Talk about <u>Showcase</u> being a testing ground for new characters... <u>Donald Duck Comics</u> appeared only about a month after the serial had been inaugerated; and about six months later, in the last months of 1949, <u>Mickey Mouse Comics</u> #1 appeared. The third member of the trio, Goofy, was not to get his own comic book for eight years, as it turned out.

"Mickey Mouse Fights 'The Phantom Flot'", which Joe Sanders mentions in Xero #2, was not the first story in that series. But it did appear during the first year of publication and I remember it vividly. It ran the entire length of one issue (then 52 pages) and was probably one of the best-plotted stories ever to appear in this type of comic. It is roughly comparable to the "Junior United Nations" episodes in Marvel Family Comics as far as writing technique is concerned. "The Phantom Blot" was a criminal who had hidden a map to something or other in a box camera when capture was near. When he either escaped or was released from prison, he set out to find that certain camera. Having acquired a job with the wholesale firm which handled the distribution of the cameras and a list of the purchasers, he began to steal them one by one and break them open to try to find the right one -- the one in which he had hidden the map, Mickey Mouse was called in on the case by his friend (and imitation-Perry White) police chief O'Hara. During the meeting with O'Hara, the lights in the police station went out and when they were turned on again a warning note was found pinned to the chief's trousers. (Well, I didn't say these stories were plausible...)

"The Phantom Blot" was finally apprehended, and unmasked, but it took 52 pages and a couple of narrow escapes to do it. There were and are faults in this and other Mickey Mouse stories, but they were usually the same faults as in Superman or Captain Marvel stories. For instance, when the hero is captured by his foe, he is not delt with swiftly. Instead, he is placed in a position which the villian thinks will cause a slow and agonizing death—but from which there is always a means of escape. Billy Patson (who was Captain Marvel, of course) experienced this more times than Mickey Mouse. I recall a story where Billy and Freeddy Freeman (Marvel Jr.) were bound and gagged in Sivana's laboratory, and a time bomb set to explode in five minutes. Billy managed to upset some acid on the work table and burn off his gag by holding his face under the dripping stream. He then shouted "Shazam!", grabbed the

bomb, and allowed it to explode across his chest so that no one would be harmed.

The Disney string of comics remained stable for a year or two. The serials in <u>Comics and Stories</u> continued to run and introduced Minnie Mouse, Horace Horsecollar and Clarabelle Cow to the cast, as well as a villianous cat named Black Pete. The Three Pigs story had expanded in or about 1949 to include The Big Bad Wolf, his son L'il Wolf (whose name now adorned the title) and several characters from the most famous Walt Disney production of the time, Uncle Remus Stories. Some additional space caused by the shortening of the lead story was filled by a novel idea in comic production: newspaper-sized shorts, running from three to twelve panels and featuring Donald Duck, Daisy Duck, and Donald's nephews, Huey, Louie and Dewey. At the same time, <u>Donald Duck Comics</u> began to include two shorter stories instead of one long one.

For Walt Disney's comics, this is considered stable.

Up until 1952, Donald's uncle Scrooge McDuck (World's Richest Duck) had been making guest appearances in both Comics and Stories and Donald Duck Comics. In 1951, however, the whole string of comics dropped from 52 down to 36 pages and the individual stories were no longer lengthy enough to accomodate more than one major character. As I recall as my memory scans the long years, the appearance of a comic devoted entirely to Uncle Scrooge was announced in Comics and Stories in late 1951. However, for some reason the magazine itself did not appear until the final months of the following year, 1952. Scrooge, in case you haven't heard of him, had three cubic acres of money which he was always driving himself up the wall trying to protect from crooks. And these crooks were usually a gang called "The Beagle Boys" (who had made infrequent appearances before in Comics and Stories).

I have the first 23 issues of this particular comic at hand. In 1958 I sold most of my collection--minus some of the earlier horror comics, a complete run of Mad Comics, a couple issues of Showcase, and these Uncle Scrooge Comics. In the entire run, only two things take place in the lead stories: Uncle Scrooge saves his vast fortune; nor Uncle Scrooge adds to it. He has, in accomplishing the latter, discovered Atlantis, Shangri-La, The Seven Cities of Cibola, The Philosopher's Stone, The Minotaur, The Golden Fleece, Colchis and the lair of The Sleepless Dragon, The Larkies, King Solomon's Mines, The Lost Tribe of Tibet, and The King of The Golden River. To say that these stories depended on myths for their content would be a collosal understate-ment...

Three other allied comics appeared in 1952. First, there was a <u>Duck Family Album</u>, featuring stories about Donald, Scrooge, Grandma Duck, and Huey, Louie and Dewey. Then came a 25¢ <u>Vacation Special</u> followed shortly by a <u>Christmas Special</u>, both of which became annual affairs. That same year heralded the retirement of one of the semi-regular characters of <u>Comics and Stories</u> who had been with that magazine since 1942: Gladstone Gander, World's Luckiest Gander. Thereafter Gladstone was never seen nor heard from again.

Other characters appeared off and on in various issues of these comics. Gus Goose was Grandma's hired hand on the farm; he appeared about 1950 and is probably still around. Gyro Gearloose, a whacky inventor,

tried out for a couple issues as a fill-in item in <u>Comics and Stories</u>. He was evidently well-liked, for the story shortly transferred to <u>Uncle Scrooge Comics</u>—the first one appeared in #13, May 1956, though he made a guest appearance in #10, June 1955—and remains there to this day. Horace Horsecollar, previously mentioned, appeared for a page or two at three year intervals; his last important role had been in one of the <u>Comics and Stories</u> serials circa 1951. Minnie Mouse was in nearly every issue of <u>Comics and Stories</u>, though often it was only for two or three panels; the same situation occurred with Pluto, Mickey's dog, and his newphews, Morty and Monty. The name of the latter was changed to Ferdie, for some unknown reason, about 1954.

There is still a string of Walt Disney comics. To my knowledge, nearly all of the titles I have mentioned still exist, and several more have been added. Two chipmunks, Chip and Dale, now have their own comic. They were originally invented to pester Donald Duck in the animated movie cartoons. Goofy, as I mentioned before, finally got his own comic, but it was a one-shot affair. And last but not least, Mickey's ever-faithful Pluto got his own comic book.

Walt Disney inspired many imitators, but perhaps the most important super character in the animal-adventure category predates all but three of the Disney comics. Mighty Mouse was first published in Terrytoons Comics (which has caused some confusion by being the name of the publishing company as well as the comic) during the very first months of 1950, and three years later acquired his own comic book. In these two comics, Mighty Mouse had two sets of villians, In Terrytoons, a slick, wolfish cat named Oil Can Harry, a fair haired girl called Pearl Pureheart, and Mighty Mouse himself were very nearly the entire cast in the first four years of that magazine. Few people have recognized this strip for what it was: a parody on the silent movies of several decades ago. Oil Can Harry spent most of his time tying Pearl Pureheart to railroad tracks and driving locomotives down the track, only to be thwarted at the very last moment by Mighty Mouse. Frankly, it was silly as hell. But when, in 1953, Mighty Mouse Comics #1 appeared; that venerable mouse found himself a real challenge in the person of the evil Dr. Ohm and his minions headed by The Claw. Both of these villians of course were cats. (There was considerable symbolism in Mighty Mouse Comics, such as Mouseville being clean and wholesome while Cattown was filthy and loathsome.)

There were more, of course. Walter Lantz had a large variety of characters, though his perennial star is and has always been Woody Woodpecker. Whoever published Bugs Bunny had some memorable characters, chief among them being Elmer Fudd. The remembrances I have related pertain only to my favorites—which, naturally, I remember much better than the others. I wonder, in closing, if Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse have changed as much as, say, Superman?

-- Ted Pauls

DICK ENEY

FOR TAFF

Ted Pauls 1448 Meridene Drive Baltimore 12, Md.



A. Young 11 Beuna Vista Park Cambridge 40, Mass.

WE ALL MAKE MISTAKES, BUT.

A. POSTCARD I'M GLAD I NEVER MAILED

Dear Andy: Disjecta Membra #4 is on the way--this time I'll see that you don't get two copies. That issue is a pretty poor one, all told. White didn't get his fanzine review column in, nor did he supply enough paper for a large issue. Sorry. ## It'll be DC in '60, of course. Philly has had it before and nobody in his right mind would vote for Pittsburgh, so I'm already making plans for the DCCon. I assume Cambridge fandom will be in attendence? Magnus and Hitchcock will probably look forward muchly to seeing you all again, as of course I will. Is Jeany's hair still knee-length? And do you still think you can single-stomachly eat a quart of strawberry ice cream? Please forward this important information immediately.

woklwoklwokl, Ted Pauls

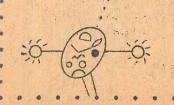
PFGGY SEXTON: The usual criterion for judging a movie which is based on a well-known book is: "How faithfully did the film follow the printed page?" George Pal's production of "The Time Machine" was not strictly faithful to H. G. Wells' novel, but it was scrupulously faithful to the spirit of Wells, the spirit of science fiction, and to dramatic values. In addition. "The Time Machine" had superb color photography, competent acting by Rod Taylor, as the time traveller, the supporting cast, and a REVIEW. striking and appropriate musical score by Robert Garcia. The arrangement of dramatic episodes in the movie did not follow the book. Wells, in his book, has the time traveller rescue Weena from the river after he has spent some time in 9th millenium society. The rescue of Weena is one of the first episodes in the cinematic future. This small license tends, however, to hold the attention of the viewer, who wants and expects some excitement at this point. The movie also shows, very convincingly the event leading to the future on Earth--a global atomic holocaust--and provides the explanation for the presence of the Eloi and the subterranean Morlocks: they are sur-

vivors of the last great war. Romantic inter-

est is provided by the fact that Weena, the Eloi girl, survives in the movie version.

big question is: Did these liberties do Wells a disservice? Think about these facts for a moment. First, nineteenth and early twentiethcentury prose often seems painfully stilted to people in the mid-twentieth century. The screen dialogue preserved most of Wells' ideas, but presented them in language accepta-ble to our ears. Second, Wells' reason for the existence of the two future tribes of people is the gradual degeneration of a soft, parasitic leisure class and the gradual toughening and increasing dominance of prolitarian slum dwellers.

Although we do have the ex-



ploited and the exploiters with us today, the spread of both communism and democracy and the world-wide growth of a middle class has made Wells' social theories out of line with current reality, barring, of course, some extreme upheaval.

An atomic holocaust fits far better into the actualities of 1960 than Wells' slow degeneration theory. Thus, the film version as it stands is more acceptable to a modern audience than it would have been had it followed Wells' original to perfection.

Lest it seem that I am justifying and rationalizing such things as the West Coast abortion performed on "Who Goes There?" some years ago, I would like to lay down a few guides for judging filmed books.

ously, a play of any sort of definitely not a novel. In a novel, words must be spent on descriptive passages, explorations of the characters and their motives, and narrative of events which would be superflous and tedious in a play. A play must move because it is a live art form before a live audience. The only playwright who breaks these rules successfully is George Bernard Shaw, whose status as a true dramatist is in doubt in some circles.

Also, a play for a live audience must be understood to be appreciated and the fourth dimension is a very esoteric concept to much of the general public. The pertinent question here is: Did "The Time Machine" put across Wells' concept adequately in its act of crashing the language barrier? I think it did.

Last, is it justifiable to present a work of literary art which contradicts actuality or probability unless it is made clear that it is speculation (in the second case) or fantasy (in the first)? Remember, one of the cardinal rules of science fiction is: Do not violate a known fact unless you can show that the fact can be violated in a way that cannot be disproved by current knowledge.

Unless it were obvious fantasy, wouldn't it be silly to make a movie in which the Confederacy won the Civil War? Howl away, you unreconstructed Rebels!

I do not feel that "The Time Machine" in its movie version violated any of these critical guides, therefore I wholeheartedly recommend it to everyone.

-- Peggy Sexton

+ + "The kitchen gave onto the courtyard. It was spring and the + + doors were open all the time. There was grass growing near the entrance door. Water poured out of a pail glistened on the stone slabs. A rat appeared in the garbage can. One of the tenants was cooking crabs. With two fingers, he picked up a live crab by the waist. The crabs were greenish, the color of the waterpipes. Two or three drops suddenly shot out of the tap by themselves; the tap was discreetly blowing its own nose. Then, upstairs somewhere, pipes began to talk in various voices. The taps talked. All sorts of moving and knocking started up around the stove."

--Yurii Olesha, in "The Wayward Comrade and the Commissars"

HARM is ever completely disappear, but the Comics Code censorship has maimed the entire industry, if not killed it. I've noticed a number of slick magazines gloating over the number of comic publishers going out of business. Of course, we can hardly expect sympathy for the writers, artists and editors put out of work but one might expect some sympathy for the unemployed printers and pressmen from the national publications.

There's been a lot said about comics censorship--mostly by people with their eagle eye on the First Amendment, but never on the colorful comics page. I've said part of it. The difficulty is the same one they are trying to impose upon the television industry. Ding Dong School is a very good program--I saw it once --but they are holding this up as the standard for all children's TV programs. They used to do this with the late Nila Mack's fairy tale radio show "Let's Pretend." The social workers overlook the fact that these programs are of absolutely no interest to any child over seven. To a healthy, active twelve year old, they are as intolerably babyish as a game of patty-cake.

Anthromorphism has become the by-word of the present comic books. Gorillas are grateful to lions for saving them from the wicked hunters (evidently these writers have never read the original version of what happened to the thorn-pulling mouse). There is growing propaganda for racial inferiority complex—the human race is not ready for space, for the Secret Weapon, to know the Truth. The war comics have become dangerously jincoistic. I suspect letting children read of wars that are exciting and where literally no one is killed or even injured is far more dangerous, than having them read the War-is-Hell E.C. books. Damn it, I know it is!

day of lurid adventure, naked heroes and heroines, and lusty violence. This was a day before the era of the juvenile delinquent, the crazy mixed-up kid. This was the era of Jungle Comics, Planet Comics, Flash, Green Lantern, Captain Marvel, Tom Mix Comics, and of Superman--who alone remains, in faded fashion.

Permember 38

Jungle Comics, with its variations on the Tarzan (or Mowgli) theme had the standard ape-man, Kaanga, the ape boy, Wambi, the voodoo ape man, Tabu. It also had an ape girl, but I can't remember her name. The same publisher (Fiction House) had another ape girl, Sheena, in Jumbo Comics. She survives on television. The stories in this one were tight action, but it was the pictures that were of the main interest. Nearly every page and nearly every frame contained a gargeous woman dressed in nearly nothing, and that skin tight. It's too bad such an educational magazine no longer exists. It was a pleasant way to study human anatomy—a subject that today's kids are learning in a distorted manner since comic book women no longer have leas or breasts.

less some of you remember the similar situation in Planet Comics. Here the standard of story was scmewhat higher. A year or so ago, The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction ran the text version of a Star Pirate adventure that had been used in the Fiction House sports pulp, Fight Stories. Besides the Raffles-Saint of Space, there were Flint Darker and Reef Ryan, Space Rancers. Then--Lost World. This was undoubtedly the dullest of the Planet Comics stories -- Hunt Rowman (who was an archer) and his girl, Lisa, fought intermanably against the lizard-faced Voltamen, ravagers of terrestial civilization, who spoke English sentences with Germanic construction. That is: With construction Germanic, spoke they English. On the other hand, a short-lived series, Futura, was not much better plotwise but it had some of the most beautiful science fiction artwork I've ever seen anywhere -- the artist was similar to Wallace Woods of E.C. and some Planet Stories illustrations, but his style was looser which gave an ethereal quality to the scenes.

In those lusty days, Superman D-C National gave out with something more than, with all respect to Julius Schwartz, the wishy-washy pablum they now offer. All-Star Comics brought all of their super-heroes into one long story--rather like the monsters in a Universal horror picture of the forties, For a long time, the rule of the Justice Society was that a member could not remain in more than a honorary fashion if he appeared in a comic-book all his own. With all that extra income, obviously Superman, Batman, Flash, and Green Lantern did not have to work so hard for justice. But various members dropped out of the society when their regular comic book slots were dropped -- Hour-Man, Starman, etc .-- and the honorary members trooped back; Superman and Datman for one issue, Flash, Green Lantern and Wonder Woman for good. As a matter of fact, long after the day of the masked crimefighter passed, All-Star remained (like FAPA) the last home of the tired warriors, unwanted and unloved. Over the years, some of the members were:

HAWKMAN: masked with a hawkshead helmet, adorned with giant wings, sometimes companion of the similarly-garbed Hawkgirl (also in Flash Comics).

DR. MID-NITE: able to see in the dark, blind in daylight without dark glasses, posed as the blind Dr. McNighter (All-American Comics).

THE ATOM: originally so-called for his small size, but after 1945, because he tapped atomic energy for his strength (Adventure Comics).

HOUR MANs a very early comic character. He obtained one hour of super strength by taking a powder (non-habit forming, I presume); this drug-user suggestively appeared in More Fun Comics.

STARMAN: tapped stellar power with a Starwand (Adventure Comics).

JOHNNY THUNDER: comedy relief, could call on a Genie-like Thunderholt by saying the ancient Celenese magic words Cei-U (Say You) which he only did by accident, i.e., "Say you guys can't do this to me!" (Flash Comics)

THE SPECTRE: Now, here was a character! He was not just a demi-god; he was God! He could do anything-bring the dead back to life, visit hell and heaven, change size, be everywhere, do everything. His only trouble was that he was in love with a girl called Clarence and since he was a ghost (of a policeman whose identity he still maintained) he couldn't hope to marry her. I don't know why-I bet this boy could do anything. However, finally, he talked to God in person (a memorable comic-strip sequence) and God decided to bring his body back to life for the Spectre who nevertheless retained his supernatural powers. But he never did marry that girl.

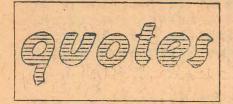
DR. FATE: somewhat similar to The Spectre. (More Fun Comics)

GREEN LANTERN: One of my favorites because he used "will power". I suppose this strip appealed to the future Rosicrucians and psionics-experimenters. Alan Scott was an engineer (incredibly he switched from a railroad engineer to a radio broadcasting engineer, as if the writer of the book thought any kind of engineer was essentially the same as any other one). He found an ancient green lantern and fashioned a ring from it. The lamp had been made from a meteorite in ancient China that had the ability to materially project his will with beams of green light. This mounted up to letting GL walk through walls, set up a force screen to protect himself from bullets or knives --but not anything organic in nature like human flesh or wooden clubs. He could also fly and shoot out rays from his ring to burn, lift, attract, repell. Scott had to charge his ring against the lantern every 24 hours by chanting, "In brightest day, in darkest night/No evil shall escape my sight/Let those who worship evil might/Beware my power--Green Lantern's Light." Frankly, the whole thing smacked of superstition.

In later (and declining) years, GL traded in a derby-hatted cabbie named Dorbie Dickles for a red-haired wench called Harlequin with classes to match-she was a criminal whose whole career was devoted to pulling crimes so fiendish that the Lantern would "marry" her to save the world from them-her price. But GL never did give this broad what she was itching for. I am tempted to suggest that the relationship between Dickles and Scott may have not been all it appeared to be. But then again, now that both GL and the Harlequin are retired, they may be snogging together and recalling that happily monstrous past.

THE FLASH: A play on only one of Superman's qualities--superspeed.

Flash could run through solid objects because "they didn't have time to stop him", spin fast enough to make him invisible (but CONTINUED ON PAGE 18



AND



Quite a little controversy has been building up in Baltimore since the last installment of this column was written. A fourteen year old boy who professes to be an atheist dropped out of junior high school on October 25 in protest of a rule which states that "The Bible or the Lord's Prayer or both shall be used in the opening exercises of all public schools." This ruling has been in effect in this state since 1905, and this incident is the first legal test it has been put to. The boy, William J. Murray III, refuses to attend school if he must remain in class during those opening exercises. His mother, also an atheist, has threatened to go on a "hunger strike" if she is arrested for violating the state public school rule by taking her son out of school.

This story appeared in the papers on the morning of October 27th. It was also noted that William Murray had been "shoved around" by a group of his fellow students after he gave an oral report in class on the social and economical structure of the Soviet government. Further troubles occurred when an idiot teacher asked for a "free discussion" on why Russia shouldn't complain about the U-2 flights. Murray complained that it was contradictory to claim a "free" discussion and then specify which viewpoint the students must take--as, of course, it is. Here again he was ganged up on after school.

Such happenings are rather incredible in what is supposed to be a "free" society, though it might have been expected—at least in part. It is my experience that there is no such thing as a "free discussion" on any controversial subject in public schools. There should be, to be sure, but I have yet to see or hear of one. There is also no such thing as religious freedom in public schools. The only way to guarentee complete religious freedom for all religions—short of teaching all religions in school, which would hardly be workable—is to completely disregard religion in school.

I mean, here we have a boy--admitted by his teachers to be brilliant, possessing an excellent mind--and the only way he can be educated in public school is to conform to the attitudes and beliefs of those around him. This is not merely a guestion of religion, either; as I mentioned above, the boy has been "shoved around" for questioning an absurd contradiction that anyone with a modicum of intelligence would question; and he has been ganged up on for relating a true picture of the social and economical structure of the USSR which did not happen to conform with the pap being fed to the people of this country by their leaders. This sort of censorship of thoughts is another giant step toward the world of 1984 as pictured by George Orwell.

If there is any purpose to this sort of thing, if it does any good at all, it is to point out to the people of this country (who will still

probably be blind) how their petty little society is degenerating. But unless both editors of both Baltimore dailies are somewhat prejudiced, it looks as if those people are incapable of seeing the nose in front of their moronic faces. Here are samples of letters which have appeared since the initial article:

"I think it's a good moral practice to have (Bible reading) start off the day. If you take religion out of the schools, what do you have left?"

"If we allow religious decay to continue in our society we may as well hand over America on a silver platter to our enemies..."

"It is a puzzle to me how a child of 14 could maturely oppose a rule which was passed by intelligent men to help rather than hinder him. Could it be that there is powerful backing on the home front? If so a feel this child should take a few more years yet to think over his opinions, agreements and disagreements, and, when he is mature enough to air his views without 'Mama's backing', the city's school board will be glad to listen and perhaps compromise to an adult's suggestions!"

You see what I mean? No one bothers to comment on the really important aspects of this case -- the censoring of thought by both teacher and pupils as mentioned above. There were repercussions -- strong ones, at that -- but they came not from the "common people" but from the more responsible elements of our society. The state's Attorney General promised to look into the matter, but nothing definite has been heard. On the local level, however, a city law similar to the state law has been ammended so that any student can be excused from the Bible reading at opening exercises if he/she presents a note (from parents) stating that the student holds beliefs contrary to the majority. (You've all noted, I suppose, that this ammendment is worded in such a way as to make it seem that anyone taking advantage of it is a social outcast.) The School Board, under the leadership of Dr. George B. Brain-don't take the surname literally -- was somewhat split and just managed to squeeze the ammendment through. It was not without some outside pressure, however.

The Civil Liberties Union was on the verge of bringing suit against the city. Too, one of the important officers of The American Jewish Congress, taking time off from his study of Dade County (Miami) Florida schools, was pestering the mayor. (For more about the incompetency of Miami officials, see Q&N in Kipple #4 and again in Kipple #6.) Also, a student teacher at the school Murray attends has refused to take part in the opening exercises, and claimed she was being discriminated against because of this.

And my position as re all this? Well, to begin with, I'm not an atheist. I consider atheism nearly as stupid as rabid Catholicism (or, for that matter, any other -ism in religion). I suppose I could be called an agnostic: I'm quite willing to believe in the existence of God, if and when that existence is proven to me. I don't go around shouting prayers in the street; likewise, I don't go around shouting "False! False!" My main concern, as I have mentioned, is to the one-sided discussions and browbeating in school.

--Ted Pauls

COMIC BOOKS:

SECOND CHILDHOOD

BY JED PAULS

It has been fully six years ago that I bought a comic book new, so a couple weeks ago I decided that the time had come to take a look at the field and see how it had changed. One thing immediately became obvious: distribution was rotten. Why, when I was a boy (he said as he pulled on his long, white beard) you could hardly enter a store without being confronted with a display of comic books. Book stores, grocery stores, drugstores, even department stores. There was a stack of comics in every barber shop and two in every pot. In the world of 1960, I had a difficult time just finding the more common titles like Superman. Action Comics, Batman, and World's Finest. I still haven't been able to locate Flash Comics or Adventure Comics.

found, though, I have come to the conclusion that the comic books of today are not so very different from the ones I knew and loved. There is the circus troupe (sorry Marion Bradley--I mean the sideshow) of characters following Superman around and he has a couple of new superpowers as well as a new kind of kryptonite to worry about. Fut the basic characters haven't changed--nor, unfortunately, have the basic situations.

Superman looks the same, and his main problem is still the renegade scientist, Luthor. Batman and Robin have changed only in that anyone casually picking up the December issue of <u>Batman</u> would be puzzled as to the everyday identity of the heroes. They are in costume throughout the thirty-six pages and the names Truce Wayne and Dick Grayson aren't even mentioned. And the Joker is still plaguing the team. The only impression I get from this current issue of <u>Batman</u> is that its editor, Jack Schiff, does not know what went on before he became editor or is going to start reprinting material. In the letter column of that issue ("Letters to the Bat-Cave"), a number of questions are asked of the editor, none of which he answers accurately. Viz:

Q: "How about a story where Batman and Robin acquire super-powers, while Superman loses his powers?"

A: "We'll be giving (this story) to you in the December World's Finest Comics."

Q: "Why, exactly, did Batman choose the bat as his crime-fighting symbol?"

A: "Criminals are very superstitious, and Datman wanted a symbol that would strike fear into their hearts."

Q: "Has Robin ever quit Batman and joined forces with another crimefighting partner?"

A: "He sure has, as you'll see for yourself in the next issue of Batman Comics."

Mighod, even working entirely from memory I know more about this comic than its own editor! Batman and Robin acquired super-powers (and Superman lost his) in <u>World's Finest</u> about five years ago. This was as a result of a mysterious ray of some sort used a a super-criminal from

another planet. As for the bat symbol, the origin story (which had since been reprinted and hence known to me) related that both of Bruce Wayne's parents were killed at a masquerade party by robbers while in bat costumes. The original Batman adventure was, I believe, to apprehend the criminals responsible for this act.

"other boss" is somewhat longer and perhaps deserves some background for those of you unfamilar with these characters: Throughout his long comic book career, Batman has fought a number of criminals. Some of these gangsters even devastated two or three stories before finally being captured; however, since virtually the beginning, Batman has been fighting a character called The Joker. The Joker, though possessing no super-powers, is still a super-criminal in the real sense of the word. Not only has he committed crimes under Batman's nose, but often he takes the trouble to tell Batman what he's going to do beforehand--offers a challenge.

One of the really memorable Batman episodes concerned an odd sort of ray which, having struck both Batman
and The Joker during a fight, exchanged their personalities. When the
pair was revived, Batman fled and The Joker casually began explaining
to Robin what he thought had happened. Batman was finally apprehended
and changed back to his former self. This was, as I've said, a memorable sequence.

The various side characters running through these comics haven't changed too much in appearance, though a number of new
characters have appeared to replace the old, tired ones. Robotman no
longer exists; instead, Action Comics contains Superman and Supergirl
adventures. I haven't seen either Adventure or Detective Comics, but
the plugs in Superman give no hint that Aquaman still survives, nor
Zatara the Magician, (Thank you, Dick Lupoff.) Something called a
"Congorilla" has replaced Congo Rill in Adventure Comics, and a character called "Adam Strange" inhabits Mystery in Space. Otherwise, the
DC-National line of comics is just as I so fondly remember it.

-- Ted Pauls

REMEMBER COMIC BOOKS-

never dizzy) and generally move like a jackrabbit after a jillrabbit. I particularly remember the involved time-travel stories this series spawned, especially in the book-long stories in All Flash Quarterly.

Wonder woman was--and still is--patently feminist propaganda. Diana Prince sprang from a race of Amazons who lived on an island and raised their generations of girl children without ever seeing a man. (Brief Pause...) But Diana saw an aviator--Steve something or other--and decided there was no future in the Amazon Princess business--a dead-end job--and joined the army to be near her man. In her Wonder Woman costume, she was as strong as an ox, able to catch bullets on her bracelets, spin a magic lasso that compelled obedience from the captured--including herself--operate a Mental Radio (with a TV screen) and fly an invisible airplane. In spite of the "love" for Steve (which she hid very well) I still think those

Amozons were a bunch of Lesbians.

Superman and Patman are still around. DC has smoothed out some rough spots in the Superman character (like explaining his costume is made from super-cloth--I remember when Seigel and Schuster showed him fastening his cloak on with a safety pin) but Superman has lost all touch with reality. Today, Superman appears from the first panel to the end performing a never-ending series of miracles. In the old days, he kept his feet on the ground as Clark Kent to believable scenes of newspaper life to back his appearances as Superman, giving them meaning and vermisitude.

Tom Mix Comics were given away for Ralston box-tops via radio, comic books and newspapers. They were half the size of the regular dime comics. They were 32 pages or the size of today's comics. What was probably a one-shot effort lasted twelve issues. Like the Tom Mix radio program, they delt with life on a modern ranch-the TM Bar-as it hasn't really been in fifty years. To the old west was added science fictional super-weapons, airplanes, spies and gangsters. They had a certain charm, these comics, though never the quality the radio program obtained as written by George Lawther.

Probably the greatest comic-book character of all appeared chiefly in newspapers-The Spirit by Will Eisner. He created what might be called the E. C. style in comics-both the science fiction horror story type and the Mad satire. Eisner drawing and narrative techniques undoubtedly revolutionized the whole industry. I firmly believe that The Spirit was vastly superior to Pogo, L'il Abner, Mad, Steve Canyon, Peanuts, or any other comic with an ardent clique of supporters. To my mind, it had absolutely everything you could ask of the comic strip media. Naturally, it is no longer published.

The Spirit was good.

But as for the others, I suppose they seem better than today's effort only because they are seen down the long funnel to my childhood. They were brighter and gaudier. But that's probably all.

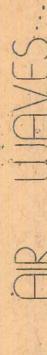
It must be a year since I've sat down and read a comic book. These days when I reach for a copy of Superman, it's the third word in the title of a play by G. B. Shaw.

I must be growing up, and I'm not at all sure it's a good thing.

--Jim Harmon

The number in this space is the number of the last issue you will receive. If that number is "8", you will not receive the next issue of this glad rag unless you:

write a letter of comment; trade your fanzine; contribute a sample of your deathless prose; or subscribe at the rate listed elsewhere. If none of these spaces are checked, it means simply that there is no way to continue getting Kipple; you are being prompt-





I consider it extremely fortunate that many of the early pioneers in the field of television are unable to see for themselves what it has developed into now.

Television was first developed with the idea that it would be used as a medium to inform the public, to transmit news and current events to a public that had hitherto received such news only by radio or newspapers. The idea was not a bad one, even though it was lacking im foresight. The utopian theory of a perfectly informed public, aware of all current events is fine in thought, but emerges as something more when put to practice. Television time costs money, more money than most news programs can afford to spend. The logical step here is to pick up a sponser willing to pay the check, in order to have his particular product glorified on the air.

But since sponsers are unreliable, uninformed tyrants who are interested only in one thing--selling their product--to the exclusion of any philantropic aims, they realized at once that long hours devoted to news might not go well with a viewing audience.

And thus the die was cast and the sponser began to exert his influence, little by little; in bringing about a change in the programming. It should be stated here that this change was not due entirely to pressure by the sponser, and, in fact, it could not accurately be called a change, but more rigidly, an evolution into a different form of entertainment.

The programs offered on tv were supposed to be enjoyed by the lowest common denominator in the audience. With a viewing audience consisting of people having I.Q.'s ranging from 62 to 195 everyone will understand a show directed chiefly at the persons with the lowest intelligence, while on the other hand, a show aimed at the 195 group will escape most of the others. It's as simple as that, and it's this basis on which television is founded today, with only a very few cases in which the show has deviated from the norm.

have our full length movies, or what could laughingly be termed full length movies after they have been ruthlessly snipped by the film editor who must fit the motion proture into a spe-

20

REDIOCRITY R

cial pre-arranged time, as well as insert a number of choice commercials. The fault in this matter is that generally a time limit--either an hour or an hour and a half--is alloted to films which greatly exceed that limit. When this happens the film editor snips away mercilessly, caring little if he destroys continuity, the same way the frequent interruptions do. The only way to combat this butchery is to show long, but worthwhile films, at the end of the viewing day, as a few late film shows do, so that they can run as long as need be without intruding into another pre-arranged show. However, due to the puritanical attitude most film stations have in not wanting to offend anyone, chances are there will never be any worthwhile films shown on tv.

I can think of no better example of the sponser's edict to make a show palatable to the lowest common denominator than in the all too numerous half hour and hour adventure shows, mostly westerns, some even having the audacity to be dubbed "adult" westerns, though in actuality they are about as "adult" as a typical story in a Donald Duck comic. According to the code used by these persons, the hero always wins, which immediately removes any suspense if the hero is placed in a precarious position. It also distorts life to an alarming degree, since in true life, there are many instances where the villian triumphs and the hero does not. On the television series, however, everything's nice and optomistic, and the hero is depicted as a handsome imbecile who seems to have an inborn hatred for money, women and using his brains. The hero is also noteworthy for odd moments in the show. when he likes to relax by lighting up one of the sponser's cigarettes or going for a spin in the sponser's car. He is a completely incredible, cardboard character who is made so unoffensive as to belie all character identification. The situations he is placed in are silly and only secondary, since there is never any doubt that he will win, as her always does. When "Gunsmoke", first came of television it used to delve deeper into the stories, emphasizing the character of the villian as well as the hero, and develop off-heat situations that truly made and impression on the mind of the viewer. Unfortunately, even "Gunsmoke" is sinking into the morass of conformity that all the tv westerns have reached and it bears little watching.

The next fixtures are the panel shows in which contestants try to outdo each other in seeing who can make bigger fools of themselves. In this category we have shows like "The Price Is Right" which proves that you can be a moron and still win prizes, and we have slightly more difficult shows like "Twenty One" and "The Sixty-four Thousand Dollar Question" which force the contestant to engage in some memorizing. These shows, with the exception of Groucho Marx' "You Bet Your Life," are dull, silly, pointless and ridiculous to the extreme. Any audience that would take a depraved delight in watching some bumbling contestant nervously fidget about should be examined.

And last there are the childrens' shows, which aren't much different than the "adult" shows. The newest addition to this line is "The Flintstones" a so-called adult cartoon show which earns the "adult" title on the hasis of ridiculous canned laughter, tired situations, and forced humor.

The deviations which deserve mention are most notably the excellent Plays of the Week, obviously the

LONCLUDED ON PAGE 27

THE

BY TFD PAULS

CHOPPING BLOCK

FANZINE

REVIEWS

XERO #2: Dick & Pat Lupoff, 215 E. 73rd Street, New York 21, N. Y.; copies available for trade, contributions or letters of comment--but no money accepted; irregular; 52 pages.

This is one of an extraordinarily fine crop of fanzines to appear since the last installment of this column. It boasts some remarkably excellent material by Mike Deckinger, Ted White and editor Lupoff, whose editorial this issue could have adorned any top fanzine. Other material includes various funnies such as a crossword puzzle by Frank Kerr, a short piece by Les Sample, and a long letter from Dick Schultz, as well as a serious article by Ray Beam and some adequate book reviews contributed by Larry M. Harris.

wike Deckinger's article may be the hest thing he has ever written--and since I said this very thing a few issues ago about a piece of his in The Neolithic, it would seem that Mike's writing is improving at a tremendous rate: not many writers can claim that every new piece they do is their best yet. The article doesn't really have much to say, as Dick Lupoff points out in his editorial; but what it says it says well, and though Mike hasn't the necessary details to turn out an article as complete as the one Ted White contributes to this issue, he manages to convey the impression of a great fondness for his subject matter.

The other high point of this issue is the editorial, "Absolute Xero". In it, Dick discusses pith-zines versus piffle-zines, and though he says much the same thing I said in Kipple 7 as regards fannish-versus-serious material, he says it at more length and much better than I was able to. What he says--what we both said-is that fandom needs a couple of fanzines where fans can be serious-even sercon--without being branded fuggheads and N3F-types. Fandom has those fanzines. A list of them appeared in the last Kipple (Q&N) and I shan't bother to repeat it here. Suffice it to say that if the five or six magazines which comprise the upper layer of this field continue to appear fairly regularly, it is my sincere opinion that they will come to contain the bulk of fandom among their readers and contributors. In short, not one focal point (as has heretofore been expected), but a

number of fanzines, which, combined, would produce the 'focal point'.

This excellent material is complimented by some fine layouts, especially the one for Ted White's article, and some artwork stolen, swiped and otherwise pirated by Sylvia White-I especially liked her caricature of a mad scientologist with a ragged beard on page 15. On the other hand, most of Dave English's art is undecipherable due to a poor brand of stencils; the heading to Les Sample's article, "Is Ted Pauls A Poltergeist," is a Jean Young-type heading which proves once again that only Ted White and Jean Young can do this sort of thing well; and the format of the letter column is rather incredibly poor, compared to the rest of the issue.

Don't let these altogether too minor liabilities stop you from acquiring <u>Xero</u> at your first possible chance; it's just about the best second issue I've ever seen.

DAFOE #3: John Koning, Pardee Hall, Box 555, Case Institute of Technology, 10904 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland 6, Ohio; 20¢ per issue with no provisions made for long-term subscriptions. There is a rather confusing system for crediting letters of comment and fanzines sent in trade, so I suggest you spend 20¢ rather than a sleepless night trying to figure it out; irregular-quarterly; 48 pages.

I believe, only the fourth fanzine John has published; it appears to be at least a sixth or seventh effort, and at that it's better than quite a few seventh issues. I recall the seventh fanzine I ever published--back in December of 1958. An abortive little effort called The Phantom, it was just about the sort of magazine its title would suggest: twenty poorly duplicated pages containing material by George Wells, Mike Deckinger and Rich Brown. These latter two fans would turn a most striking shade of crimson if confronted with their material in that fanzine.

This issue of <u>Dafoe</u> contains a better than average editorial by Koning, an adequate piece of faan-fiction jointly written by Rich Brown and Paul Stanberry, a rather interesting article by my god and mentor, Harry Warner, some excellent fanzine reviews by Eugene Hryb, a parody by Don Franson about which it could only be said that words fail, a Meet Eugene Hryb sort of thing by Koning, and a nicely edited letter column. I know how peeved I get about fanzine reviews comprised of only a listing of the contents, but in this particular case very little else is needed. <u>Dafoe</u> publishes material of consistently high quality, and this issue is no exception.

like to make a few comments about Eugene Hryb's fanzine review column. As I said before, it is a most excellent one. Gene's critical abilities are becoming more evident each installment, though (as I must admit, albeit grudgingly) his first fanzine review ("DWE Denouncment" in Revolution) was still better than most currently running. I wonder, though, why he prefers to figuratively look over Koning's shoulder rather than to enter into fan activity on his own. It seems obvious to me from the little I've read of his writing that he enjoys reading fanzines, and enjoys writing for one. It is equally obvious that if he wished he could contribute greatly to fandom—certainly if he can write other material as well as fanzine reviews he could become one of the better writers in our microcosm. I would personally be overjoyed if he'd give it a try.

The appearance, like the material, is mostly very fine. Duplication is just about impeccable, and the artwork--especially some very fine illustrations by Barbi Johnson--is of high quality. The layouts, though not outstanding, are well done. They would be outstanding if John had a few more lettering guides--three is such a small number to work with The justified margins are the biggest asset this fanzine has: Dafoe wouldn't be Dafoe without them.

HOCUS #15-17: Mike Deckinger, 85 Locust Avenue, Millburn, N. J.; since there has been a size and policy change between these issues, and since Mike hints that the zine may revert to normal or go six directions at once, I hesitate to print either of the conflicting subscription prices. However, a dime should get you an issue no matter what sort of change the next issue heralds. This is also available for exchange, contribution or a letter of comment.; irregular; 26 pages and 6 pages, respectively.

It is no coincidence that the first two reviews in this column were of a strict New Trend fanzine (Xero) and a strict generalzine (Dafoe). It isn't even coincidental that I'm now reviewing Hocus, for this is an excellent example of a fanzine which seems caughttwixt the devil and the deep blue sea. Hocus, strictly speaking, is a generalzine; however—and here I may be wrong—Mike seems to want to chance it into a New Trend zine without quite knowing how to go, about it. It is also of interest to note that the best material in both of these issues is material which would best fit into a New Trend zine. In this category would fall an article by Alan Burns, Len Moffat's review of Psycho, Deckinger's Pittcon notes, a nicely done letter section, and the editorial from the 17th issue.

this material is good and all of it would fit quite nicely into a New Trend zine. Most of the other material is below average to begin with, and it fares poorly by comparison. The editorial of the 15th issue falls far below Mike's considerable standard of writing, possibly because here—unlike the editorial in #17—he has nothing of particular interest to say. The other poor material in this issue is Alan Dodd's supposedly—humorous piece, a fannish piece by Bill Plott which fails to come off, and an imitation Feiffer thing by Les Nirenberg which is (a) erronous, (b) poorly drawn, (c) in bad taste, and (d) dated by 15 months.

There is an exception here. One piece of fannish material—a parody by Greg Benford—is at least as good as the other material and possibly better.

The high point of Hocus, so far is the letter column, which, in #15, contains letters from Redd Boggs, Les Nirenberg, Greg Benford, Ron Dennett, Jack Chalker (Baltimore's Other Fandom) and Harry Warner Jr. Mike's answers and witticisms are sometimes rather fabulous, such as this comment to Boggs: "If God is God he can hardly be judged by our human standards. ((Yes, Redd, but suppose God is not God?))"

Hocus, as it stands, is not a top fanzine, though logic tells me that any fanzine which has been running for 17 issues over a period of two years should be. With a little more work, it could be a top one. I suggest a bit more concern with getting quality material, less foolish editorials and more like the one in #17, and some decent artwork.

The other day we dropped in on Darwin Hett, publicity man for Spaceways Inc., and just in off the Mars-Earth run.

He's a small man, space-tanned and rather anxious to talk arbout the advantages of Spaceway's Mars vacation plan.

We accepted a cocktail and an hors d'oeuvre.

The hors d'oeuvres were odd, and we supposed Martian. We downed one with difficulty.

"Look just like salted orange seeds," we remarked. "What are they?"

"Salted orange seeds," said Hett. "People will eat anything at a cocktail party."

"Really. And these little squares?"

"Cardboard. Gray cardboard cut in squares. Take some and pass them."

"Then these things that look "
like chicken feet -"

"Real chicken feet," said Hett.
"A novelty."

"About your Spaceways trip. Our readers would want to know as bout safety."

"Perfectly safe," said Hott.

"Didn't your last rocket fall into the sun?" we asked.

"We'd appreciate it if you didn't mention that in your write-up. We've managed to keep it pretty quiet so far. Running the schedule we do, you're bound to get a few rockets falling into the sun. No use alarming the vacationers. And we're covered by insurance, of course."

"What about cost?" we asked.

"We have a full range of prices. Of course there isn't much room on a spaceship. For eight thousand dollars we nail you in a crate and unpack you on Mars. The crate is lined--"

"The deluxe trip?" we interrupted. "All our readers are well heeled."

"For thirty thousand dollars you get a pneumatic rockingchair. Besides all-over comfort, this is a big advantage at take-off."

We asked why.

"We take off at seven Gs," explained Hett. "All the passengers in the crates are crushed to death. The deluxe passenger is merely deafened for life."

"From the noise?"

"No. The acceleration at take-off loosens the skin from your bones, causing your ears to slide slowly back on your skull. You can tell old-time space travellers by the fact that both ears are on the back of their head. I'd appreciate it if you wouldn't mention that in your write-up."

We were especially interested in what Hett had to say about Martian Marriage Customs.

"There are five sexes on Mars," said Hett, "instead of the more familar two or three. The procedure is as follows: A Goman takes a Doman out on a date and asks if it will marry it. It says it will if it can get a Flooman to accept it.

"The Doman then has a date with a Flooman and asks will it marry the two of them, provided they can get a Luman and a Toman in on the deal.

"The Flooman--well, anyway, the five of them finally go off to whatever the Martian equivilent of Niagra Falls is. The whole thing is pretty confusing and may account for the fact that there are so few Martians."

We asked Hett what equiptment our readers should take with them.

"It pays to buy a good grade helmet," said Hett. "The cheaper ones are apt to crack, causing a sensation of breathlessness. On Mars you can breath out all right, but you can't breath in again. If you're going out on the desert exploring by yourself, take along enough oxygen. Nothing is more annoying than to find yourself twenty miles from town, writhing in agony because you can't breath. It takes part of the fun out of vacation."

"Is it quite safe to explore?" we asked. "Are there any dangerous animals?"

"No," said Hett. There are none. With the possible exception of the Brain-Eater; a worm-like creature four feet long which moves with lightning speed and inserts a stiff appendage into your ear and sucks

your brains out."

"That's the only dangerous animal?" we asked.

"That's the only one that will come into the house after you," said Hett. "If you go out-doors you have to look out for the Martian Bat. It stuns you with a blow of its beak and then fastens itself to the base of your skull and sucks the life juices out of your spinal colimn. I'd appreciate it if you wouldn't mention that in your write-up."

"What about climate?" we asked.

"Near-perfect," said Hett. Daytime temperatures around 70. Nights are cool and you'll find you want to slip on a sweater or something when the temperature drops suddenly to 150 below zero. If you have a serviceable pair of woolen gloves you might want to take them along."

"We're not going," we reminded Hett. "We're merely writing this up for our readers."

"You might tell your readers not to monkey with Martian drinks," said Hett. "Stick to Earth drinks, which are served in most Martian bars. Especially beware of Martian 'koodl' which doesn't taste very strong but which will slowly filter down through your legs and run out your toes."

Hett offered us another drink but we felt it was about time to be getting back to the office. As we left we couldn't help looking down at our toes.

-- John Bailey

B

mediocrity

RIDES THE AIR WAVES

CONCLUDED FROM PAGE

finest form of its kind ever presented. These plays are well acted, well written and almost completely uncensored, and are designed for intelligent viewers, which gives them a limited audience already. They are one of the few things which television boosters can point to with pride.

IN MY OPINION, something should be done about the deplorable condition in which television flowders. I would like to see this forced sponser domination removed—the sponser should not be free to edit scripts and cut out words that may refer to competitors. As long as the tyranny of the sponser exists television will remain at a perpetual low ebb.

-- Mike Deckinger

cryin' in the SINK

BY MARION Z. BRADLEY

It is a proudrand lonely
thing, to be so far in the
vanguard of fahnish opinion
that you always seem to be
ten years behind the times.
Fanzines, and the patterns of
fandom, run in cycles; and
therefore, like the gentleman and his antiquated overcoat, my personal group of
opinions on science fiction
and fandom have been in and
out of fashion-half a dozen
times.

It looks, now, as if they might be coming into fashion again. All through fandom, in every fanzine you pick up, one sees such slogans as "the fanzine that dares to discuss science fiction", and such zines as Discord, Kipple, Habakkuk, Tesseract and Esprit proclaim stoutly that they are going to discuss ideas and damn the fannish private-party atmosphere. And, until another group of Insurgents come along, it looks as if fandom is going to be fun again for us fans who don't mind being caught with our ideas hanging out.

Since this is not a column of ideas, but a column of fanzine reviews, I will attempt to put across my idea by reviewing a few fanzines this time; and at the top of the list is one I haven't seen before at all, which takes a giant step to the pinnacle of the arch.

FOUR STAR FANZINES

XERO #2: Pat & Dick Lupoff, 215 E. 73rd St., New York 21, N. Y. In some ways this zine reminds me of Harlan Ellison's Dimensions, which, in spite of a few flaws, still remains at the back of my mind as a pretty good pattern for what a fanzine should be. This isn't surprising, for at one spot in the zine, somebody or other mentions forming a Harlan Ellison fanclub -- jokingly, I hope. And like Dimensions, it has its flaws. It's very seriously set up with a full-page list of contents, painstakingly lettered in, and an article by Les Sample is introduced by a full page of lettering guide blurbing; in short, it mimicks a printed magazine, and being done in mimeo rather than letterpress, the imitation doesn't quite come off. But despite the way the Lupoffs take themselves so very seriously as Careful Professional Editors, when one forgets the format and starts reading for subject matter one finds that the laboring mountain has for once produced, not a mouse but a Matterhorn of damned fine stuff, Ray Ream contributes a long, serious and well-thought-out article on fan clubs and what they can, and should do for the preservation of their reasons for being; Mike Deckinger remembers Cantain Video with a conciseness, a clarity and a talent which makes me feel that Mike will be the next recruit in a long and homorary list including Ted Cogswell, Jim Harmon, Dob Silverberg and Harlan Ellison -- he is detting just too good for fanzines, but I hope he sticks around for a long, long time. Passing over the crossword puzzle without comment (but it isn't easy, believe me),

Ted White does an equally good job on Superman, raising a few nectalgic twinges for my own ten-year-old addiction to those colored pages. Les Sample does some humbling along the subject of "Is Ted Pauls a Poltergeist" which left me knowing little more than before, and there is a reasonably diverting, and very capable, book review section by Larry Harris--a writer who does all too little for fanzines--dealing with all the new paperback novels including his own. Not surprisingly, his own was the only one for which he didn't have a good word. (Well, what else could he do?) The issue is rounded out with a rather puzzling letter column; puzzling because -- where the rest of the format is, if anything, a trifle too flossy--it's almost one solid mass of type, letters set off from one another only by a blank space or two, and looks as if the editors not tired of what they were doing halfway through. Who can blame them, with the work that went into the rest of the zine? Incidentally, this one is not sold; it's obtainable only under the old "Free to contributors" arrangement, or for trades. We heartily concur.

ESPRIT #2: Daphne Buckmaster, 8, Buchanan Street, Kirkcudhright, Scotland. From one extreme to the other; Darhne Puckmaster's equally meaty zine is produced almost without physical editing at all. However, the controversies come so fast and furiously that one never feels the lack of white space or decorative design -- though a little heavier paper would be appreciated if Madame Buckmaster could possibly spare the shillings; I find myself unavoidably reading both sides of the page at once. Nan Gerding, in an all-too-rare fanzine appearance, declares flatly that "History is not bunk" and speaks a rare word of defense for that much derided art. Jack Wilson talks about psychosomatics, and there are many, many long letters -- but there is enough formally presented material to keep this from degenerating into a letterzine or private discussion group where the steady contributors talk to one another in a tight little circle. This, of course (as one of Daphne's editorial remarks points out) is the major danger of a think-piece zine; a few controversies get taken up heavily, hashed over and over, with the correspondents replying to one another, disagreeing and agreeing, making charges, countercharges and sidelights on the last letter-writer's letter-before-last; and within a few issues, the new reader is hewildered by a feeling that he has come in in the middle of the fourth of a series of panel discussions. If Esprit can avoid this danger -- and it looks that way -- it will soon have a collection of the best minds in fandom doing their hest for the spirit of the zine.

THREE STAR FANZINES

YANDRO #94: Robert & Juanita Coulson, Route #3, Wabash, Indiana. As I said in the last installment of this column, Yandro comes alone with steadiness and skill; but Juanita's absence at college has cut down on the amount of time they can spend on presentation and format, and as a result, it suffers and so do the faithful readers. This issue—with a two-color Hallowe'en cover of Count Dracula out Trick-or-Treating at the Blood Bank--relies very heavily on a column by Pob Tucker which I seem to have read somewhere else already, and an oversized letter column which made interesting reading but tended just a little toward the defect mentioned above. It's still sizably above the run of the fanzine grist.

DISCORD #7: Redd Boggs, 2209 Highland Place NE, Minneapolis 21, Minnesota. The unkind phrase "diarrhea-colored paper" comes to mind every time I look at this issue of Discord, but except for the title, which I consider noticeably inferior to Retrograde, the color of the paper is all I can find to dislike about this next in an almost unlimited series of titles from the formidable Gafia Press. I requested Redd to remove my name from the masthead (its presence there, of course, was one of his little jokes) so that I could give this zine the truly unlimited praise I think it deserves, without sending like the NFFF praising their own projects...or, on the other hand, like Larry Harris, disparaging a zine because my name appears on it. The stated policy of this zine seems to laud "nonconformity and anarchism; and state that a brick through a window can be a valid form of social protest (am I the only fan with nerve enough to disagree?) but the majority of the zine seems to be dedicated to smashing only prejudices and preconceptions. Redd takes Jim Plish gently to task for not coming up to his own high standards, snarls at Elmer Gantry, and lets several racist bigots hang themselves by printing their fugchead statements verbatim without comment. Discord would be a four star fanzine -- if there were more of it.

TWO STAR FANZINES

SI FAN: 193 Battery Place NE, Atlanta 7, Georgia. Edited by Jerry Burge and a committee of the Southern Fan Group about whom I was so unkind last time. This zine is considerably more like it, though I still don't much care for the thin white paper and the smeary mimeography, which strains my red-rimmed eyehones. Jerry hints at a title change for the next issue, saying he isn't going to become another Amra for the Sax Rohmer fans. He could do worse. The editorial contains several neofannish pleas for material, and little else; Mike Deckinger (for the love of Mike, how do you DO it?) comments on the Future of Fantasy, four or five pages are wasted on a crudely drawn noncomic strip, there is a lot of bibliographic material which presumably makes some people drool with pleasure -- I don't dig it myself -and the lettercolumn features a letter from somebody called Belcher which I presume was not intended to be as funny as it was, lengthily and clumsily chiding Jerry for his "obscenity" and "nudes" -- a letter which I thought the young editor handled with commendable restraint; he could easily have made this character look ridiculous, and the tendency to parody is almost irresistable when attacked like this. His dignity and good sense in dealing with this one character convinces me that one of these days something good will come out of Atlanta, fanwise, after all.

PARSECTION #2: George Willick, 306 Proadway, Madison, Indiana. The masthead also carries the names of Joe Hensley and Lynn Hickman. Most of Parsection is a sort of symposium by midwest fans, kicking around the chewed up leftovers of Earl Kemp's famous symposium. The third and fourth time around, this stuff seems a little tired; but maybe next time they!! find something new to talk about. The physical production, like all Hickmanzines, is immaculate and a little offhand.

DICK LUPOFF

The reason I'm writing is twofold. First,
215 E. 73rd ST. with regard to the matter of The Rumble, I
NEW YORK 21, N. Y. think you see more divergence between Ted's
description and ours--ours, mind you: Pat,
Walter Freen and me, not just me--than actually exists.

that line about the three boods being "visibly frightened"; well, that's a question of observation and recollection, and frankly, I was pretty scared myself and thus not observing too well. Now, as for the question of whether or not there were more than three hoods present...no one, no one knows (except the hoods themselves). We saw three; two were talking to us and the third was some thirty yards or so distant. There could have been a few more, a great many more, or no more within running distance should a fight have developed. I simply do not know; Ted does not know either.

The second point is the comics symposium. There are a number of points which I can clear up, as your writers apparently are working from memory while I have some files of my own, some others available to me, and a letter awaiting publication in Xero 3 or 4 from Otto Binder.

that name arises, let's start by telling Ruthie that it was Otto alone, not Earl and Otto (E-and-Q) who worked on Captain Marvel--very extensively--and who wrote Jon Jarl. Earl had left the team well before that, but Otto kept the joint name for reasons better known to himself than to me.

Moving from Ruth to Ted White, he was right in telling you that the Flame you refer to was really The Human Torch. He should have told you, however, that there really was a character known as The Flame around 1940. He wasn't very good, and didn't last very long. He bore little resemblance and no relation to Torchy.

GEORGE SPENCER

Thanks for Kipple 7. Terry Carr's remark
8302 DONNY ROOK LANE about your layouts joited me into realiCHEVY CHASE 15, MD. zing how good they really are. You've been

improving gradually and—if I'm not mistaken—adding lettering guides until you've got a darn good looking fanzine. (Actually, I haven't purchased a lettering guide since January of this year. But this comment interested me so much that I went through my file of Kipple and counted the number of different styles of lettering, including handlettering and various improvisions. Findings are as follows: four styles in K1, five in K2, six in K3, eight in K4, seven in K5, eight again in K6, and fifteen styles of lettering in the 7th issue! I can see, now, how you would have gotten the impression that I was adding guides.)) There aren't many improvements you could make, outside of adding a cover, and that might

A SONG
OF SIXPENCE

Nolle Ps

not be such a great improvement. There are a couple of extremely minor things which would help, though. First of all, you're getting a bit of offset. Have you tried slip-sheeting? (As the situation stands at present, it takes me approximately two hours to duplicate one sheet-during which time I must turn the crank with one hand and feed the paper with the other. ("Tower: the only mimeograph with the automatic feed mechanism that doesn't work.") Does that answer your question?)

I had another suggestion, too, but I seem to have forgotten it, so it couldn't have been very important. I just flipped through the zine again and am astonished anew at how good the layouts are. No kidding. In fact, for a fanzine which uses almost no illustrations, Kipple is one of the handsomest things I've ever seen. (4I've been telling myself over and over again (while I watch the sun rise over my mimeoscope...) that eventually there'd be a comment like this to make the whole thing Worthwhile. Thank you for restoring my faith in humankind. ## But what's this about "almost no art"? I am absolutely sure that no fanzine in existence has less art than Kipple. Oh, I see... You were thinking about the heading design for "The Top Shelf" last issue as the exception. Well, that was all done with a straight edge except for the beercan and other little funnies I added.)

Ah, I just thought of the other suggestion: Have you ever considered using some color paper other than that buff-color? I shouldn't think it would be much more trouble to use, say, two colors (like green and blue) and use one color every other issue. The buff color you're using is not the most attractive color, especially when it's used with such monotony. (\(\)While it may not be the most attractive color, it is the best available in this city. This particular paper (ABDick Mimeotone) is available here in four colors: tan, yellow, green or pink. The green (which is a very dark green) would look far worse than this buff (tan); and the other two colors are very light and thus would double the show-through. If Ted White was still in town, I would undoubtedly still be using Masterweave, which is just about the best mimeograph paper at any price, though it costs only \$1.33 per ream.)

In regard to your hone-picking with White on the nature of the "rumble," I would say this: Granted, the fans had no right to endanger the life of an infant. I agree with your general outlook in this matter. But: Somehow I get the feeling that you are attributing rational planning to an incident which is essentially irrational. You say that "if there was a rumble shaping up, there were not likely to be only three hoods." Here I think you are reading the connotations of the words "rumble" and "hoods" into an incident which can only be approximately described in these words. You're probably making more of the thing than it was -- namely, just three punks with nothing better to do than give a scare to some people on a picnic. In this sense, I think White is correct in stating that you are thinking in stereotyres. (4Since I was not present at the scene of this incident, I must necessarily base any and all conclusions regarding it solely on the observations of those who were present. If those observations are incorrect, then it follows that my conclusions will be likewise incorrect. At the time I wrote the original comments on this incident (Q&N Kipple #2, also Xero #1) I had seen only The Rumble as my source of information. In that magazine, both "a rumble" and "three hoods" are refered to; it should therefore he quite logical to helieve that the punks were "hoods" (which is actually only another way of saving "jd") and that there was a rumble shaping up. ?)

MIKE DECKINGER In regard to the white fixation with negro girls: while 85 LCCUST AVE. I've encountered very few white men myself, going a-MILLBURN, N. J. round with negro girls, according to the newspaper accounts I've read, the white southerners feel it's per-

fectly alright to rape negro girls, even though they have no intention of marrying them. ({I know you didn't mean anything of the sort, but it does seem as if you're saying that white men who rape white women invariably end up marrying them...) I wonder if Conner is of the ilk that believes negro girls are feminine enough to warrant raping, but still not worth marriage?

While George Spencer's remarks concerning film stars sound logical on the surface, there are still examples where they wouldn't apply. Granted, one shouldn't boycott a star's film, simply because the star has a tendency for radical thinking, but then George, what about the cases where black-listed screenwriters are permitted to do screenplays. A good example of this was Preminger's hiring of Dalton Trumbo to do the screenplay for Exodus. Trumbo was one of the infamous twelve who took the fifth amendment at the Congressional hearings about a dozen years ago, and thus far the ultra-American, American Legion Magazine has advised everyone to hoycott the film, because it's possible Trumbo was a communist, and is using the medium to expound on his views toward communism. I find it hard to believe that radical commie and other subversive propaganda could be written into a picture in the first place but that's what they say. There is of course no evidence that Trumbo ever was a communist, or that he has written such a doctrine into the screenplay, so I intend to ignore the American Legion remarks, as I generally do anyway.

LES NIRENPERG
I agree with Marion Bradley when she says this bus1217 WESTON RD. iness of dating is wrong. Kids today have indeed
TORONTO 15, ONTARIO been brainwashed. Too many of them are concentrating on developing a phony outside sugary personality. This can only lead to emotional troubles. I'm really amazed at the
scores of kids (especially girls) in school who seem to have this thing
about joining clubs and trying to prove that they are popular and have
good personalities.

This fetish for personality is nothing new; it's been developing for years. I remember a girl who was selected as the most popular girl in school (when I was going to high school) simply because she rattled 3/4 of the cuys in the Student's Council. All this because she was trying to develop her personality and become popular.

But what I'm trying to say is that this business of developing a personality has been driven into kid's heads, through advertising, television, and by their parents; and they've lost just about everything as far as realizing basic values is concerned. And I'm not talking about the jds, but about the "good kids." These are the same kids who jump off bridges because they've got pimples. They are far more dangerous than the jd-types because they harm themselves and kids as a whole, and may become twisted inside while maintaining a cool, calm exterior. The inside is rotten while the outside looks grand. Their children will be more easily succeptible to traumas and such from taking examples from their parents.

On the other hand jds raise hell, but on the inside I'd say they were better adjusted than the 'personality kid'. Except for the odd one who is a nut anyway, and would still be a nut whether he was a jd or a Personality Kid.

HARRY WARNER JR. Ted White's column is unusually interesting this time. 423 SUMMIT AVE. I wish I could agree with his remarks about sex, be-HAGERSTOWN, MD. cause sex problems could be greatly eased if Ted's

suggestions were adopted by the world. Put I'm afraid it isn't quite this simple. One simplification that I dislike is the one that describes the sex urge as analogous to hunger. It just isn't so; you must eat to stay alive and you can stay alive indefinitely without sex and even without any discoverable subliminations. Another doubtful thesis is that every "satisfactory form of sublimination" warps the personality. I have known priests, nuns, homosexuals, old men who concentrated on tiny girls, and various others who definitely didn't engage in orthodex sex who were much happier than some healthy, "normal" men. I imagine that Ted endorse pre-marital sex, not pre-martial as you have typed it, because of the difficulties that the latter would involve for those who can't meet the physical requirements of the armed forces. But there are more difficulties here; some people, like some birds, seem to be by very nature and instinct monogamist, and monkeying around with different partners until the time came for marriage might set up more personality troubles than it would cure. I've always. suspected that jealousy and monogamy are realated and are proof that in an ideal world each person would pick one mate early and stick to that mate to the end; even the worst philanderer can become as outraged as Othello if his current woman happens to take an interest in someone else. Rather than try to reform society's thinking about sex mores right away, I think the best thing would be strong efforts to bring contraceptives out of their secluded existence and to introduce completely frank and thorough sex education course in high school, starting in junior high.

Maybe there isn't time to do so, but it seems to me that one way the newstand operator could solve his magazine problem would be by glancing at his display rack every time that he sells a magazine, to see if any more remain, of that particular title; if not, scribble the title on a slip of paper, and turn the slips over to the distributor's driver the next time he arrives. (4Though a number of retailers would probably consider this a waste of time and not worth the trouble, it is still the most workable solution I have seen suggested to date.)

Your esp data this time sounds pretty shaky to me. Raltimore' has an important fire several times a week, you're enough of a fire by buff to mention it in letters to individuals several times a week, and it's only logical that the two events should occasionally coincide. ({Reading the rather incredible news that Baltimore has an important fire "every day" in a letter from Rob Lichtman rather croggled me, but then of course Pob doesn't know much about Paltimore; however, you, of all people, should know enough about the city and its fires to avoid making the statement that Baltimore "has an important fire several times a week." Of course, from the viewpoint of a reporter, any multiple-alarm fire is an important one -- which is to say a newsworthy one. And undoubtedly if one of this city's lesser fires were transferred to Hagerstown--which is, after all, much smaller than Paltimore (about one twelth it's size, as a matter of fact ...) -- it would then be an important fire. In fire-buff circles, however, an "important" fire must be at least three-alarms, and only then if in a factory or building establishment. The type of fire I was talking about -- and the type that occurred while I was writing Donaho and Sarill -- is a six-alarm fire. It so happens that there hasn't been a six alarm fire since June 21st of this year, and the last important like (8 alarms / was in August, Since 34. aria de la secono dela secono de la secono dela secono de la secono dela secono dela secono de la secono de la secono dela secono dela secono dela secono de la secono de la secono dela secono de la secono de la secono de la secono de la secono dela secono de la secono dela seco

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then, there hasn't been a fire worth its salt. +)

do so if the fans walked away peacefully.

MIKE BECKER

I'm not too sure that—to get my four cents' in on the 5828 CONWAY RD. semi-rumble—the fans concerned in the incident would BETHESDA 14, MD. have been risking the life of an incident by fighting any more than by leaving. The gangs in New York may be different from those here and in Pittsburgh, and in any case, each batch is different; but those that I've run across—or, more properly, those that have run across me—have been even more willing to fight if their opponents show signs of backing down. Particularly if they are showoffs, and their intended victims are not visibly sick, aged, or otherwise infirm, they get great pleasure out of "showing those yellow hastards how to fight." I don't think that the hoods would have harmed the child in any case, haide from accidental harm incurred during a fight; few have the stomach for that sort of thing. But if they had been disposed to hurt the baby, they would have been just as likely to

ment on Ruth Berman's letter. I do like Unknown-type fantasy, and don't admit that it was written for an audience "with limited ability for imagination." Granted, a poor story of this type can be more sickening than almost anything else--"The Mislaid Charm"--and granted that even some of the enjoyable stories are written for the audience you describe and fun for little other than light enjoyment; still, many of the stories of that type--particularly de Camp and Pratt's, and some of Sturgeons, such as "Shottle Pop"--are first rate. Not "great literature," perhaps, and certainly palling if read to the exclusion of everything else. But even you apparently read stories for the fun of it--witness the first sentence of your Deathworld review--and many of the Unknown-type fantasies are exceedingly enjoyable.

REDD BOGGS · Allowing for the fact that Ted White may not have 2209 HIGHLAND PL., NE quoted Bill Conner with complete accuracy and may MINNEAPOLIS 21. MINN. not have conveyed all the unspoken connotations of what he did say, Conner certainly does sound "confused," if not sick, It hardly matters whether he said it to be deliberately insulting and contemptous or as a serious and considered analysis of the Paulsian attitude. As for "the fascination southern white males develop for Negro girls," I doubt whether it is generally based on an appreciation for exotic beauty. Many males, especially those brought up in a rigid class structure like those of the south, traditionally assert their virility upon women of the lower classes because they are considered "fair game," as women of their own class are not. For the same reason servant cirls were "fascinating" objects of 1 . C. C. C. C. C. interest to the centry of old England.

"which exists purely as a vehicle for the exchance of ideas" if of course traditionally to be found in FAPA, the prototype being Jack Speer's once famous duo, <u>Sustaining Program and Matters of Opinion</u>. It is more rare in the general fanzine field, but as you point out, it is by no means unknown. I'm not sure that I'd consider the fanzines you name as "purely" vehicles for ideas, but most of them do talk about ideas in the way Daphne Buckmaster seems to have meant. It's interesting to note that there's no British fanzine mentioned on your list aside from Daphne's own fanzine, <u>Esprit</u>; thus, it's hardly to be wondered at that she was unaware of the phenomenon.

Somebody was generalizing that

"People with inferior minds talk mostly about other people; those with ordinary minds talk about things; and those with superior minds talk ahout ideas." This may be true to some extant (and of course it's a nice observation to drop into a conversation because you instantly stamp yourself as in the "superior mind" category since this is an idea). Most people evidently have ordinary minds -- always talking about cars. But it hardly holds true about fandom. (4No intellectual, emotional or sociological generalization which is apparent in the mundane world would hold true in fandom. There is a great difference between, say, fifty fans and fifty ordinary people picked at random, on all three of these planes. This is because fandom, unlike philately or crocheting, attracts a specific type of individual. ## Your comment that "Most people evidently have ordinary minds" strikes me as being screamingly funny. To me, "ordinary" has always meant "average"; since the average of anything is determined by the majority, it therefore follows that the majority ("most people") are average.) I think it beyond doubt that British fandom has a higher average IQ than American fandom, and yet the fans over there spend most of their time in fanzines talking about people--their experiences at cons and on trips to London, Belfast, etc. ({It may well be true that Pritish fandom has a higher average IQ than American fandom, but why do you think it beyond doubt? No one really knows, because no one has ever bothered to find out--it is probably impossible to find out for sure, especially in America where students entering various levels of school and applicants for various jobs that require IQ-tests are not told their IQ. I personally have no idea what my IO may be, though I have taken several different types of In-test--do you know your own?-)

"The Monkey's Viewpoint": From what little I can remember of a few college courses that touched on the matter, I suspect that a good many of the statements made herein are obviously untrue. "No monkey ever deserted his wife," of course, since mating among monkeys is not developed to the point where there can be such things as "wives," but I'll wager that monkeys desert mates and offspring--supposing for a moment that there are family groups strongly developed in which males are responsible for "supporting" offspring. While a monkey obviously doesn't "build a fence 'round a cocoanut tree," surely the concept of ownership appears among some of the higher primates, and if it does, the fences are there, visible or not. There is indeed a logical contradiction here: the concept of monkey "wives" presupposes the concept of ownership, and if it is not yet extended to the idea that cocoanut trees as well as females "belong" to somebody, it proves nevertheless that the three monkeys discussing things in that tree are wrong and that man did descend from them after all. His institutions are found in embryo among them. (41 believe you are taking this piece entirely too literally. Monkey "wives," for instance: while of course mating is not developed to that point, I think the writer had it in mind to make this poem easier for a human being to read. People habitually think in terms of "husband" and "wife"; I have heard people refer even to dogs and cats in this manner. People just do not express themselves in terms of "mates" when the words "husband" and "wife" are so convenient. A good writer, realizing this, would use the human terms even for non-humans. ## Now, to the more scientific aspects of your comments. Though I don't know much about monkeys -- I've read about a dozen books on zoology, containing perhaps a total of 3.00 pages on monkeys -- I'd be inclined to question whether or not the higher primates have any conception of personal ownership. As I recall, gorillas (the highest form of monkey, rof course) live in clans of three or four dif-

ferent family groups, as for instance a "pride" of lions. In such a case, the concept of group ownership would replace that of personal ownership. There are some species of monkey and ape which are "solitary" animals, though offhand I don't recall any. Apes definitely live in either family groups or clan groups; babboons live in even larger clan groups which are termed tribes; most of the smaller monkeys live in large groups, possibly on the premise that there is strength in numbers. I think the Orangutan of Borneo and Sumatra is a solitary ape, but I'm not sure. Walter Breen knows more about this than I do, I believe--perhaps he'd fill us in?)

Marion Bradley, as ever, has the courage of her convictions and has never had much to do with the all-femme projects she condemns in "Cryin' in the Sink," but I think that, as ever, she over-states her case. Femizine and such projects were not all that bad, and Femizine, at least, was quite successful for years. As for "the mundane wives" who "collect ina little group and talk about clothes and kids," I must admit that I've done my duty (if such it is) in talking about such things with at least one mundane wife, even if I'm not a femfan such as MZB is talking about. ({Or any other kind, eh?}) I didn't really have to, but--I hope I can say this without being misunderstood--I was fond enough of this lady to enjoy talking to her about (her) clothes and (her) kids. After all, mundane wives aren't all. dull, just because they're "mundane."

Marion as always is pretty sharp in her analyses, but I can't agree with her comments on The Neolithic. I do agree that Neol doesn't quite live up to its promises, but when Marion says that Ruth Berman "slipshodly narrates part of her Pittcon report"...! I honestly don't think Ruth could write "slipshodly" if she tried. In any case I think Neol is much better than either you or Marion have said. ({I often disagree with Marion's estimate of the fanzines she reviews--I feel, for instance, that Discord, a Three Star Fanzine, belongs in the Four Star Category; that The Neolithic, a Two Star Fanzine, merits three; and that New Frontiers and Yandro deserve lower ratings than they've gotten to date.))

ART CASTILLO

I must say this Conner character is one of the 507½ GREENWICH ST. funniest ignoramuses ever to adorn a fanzine let-SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF. ter column. He reminds me somewhat of the fuggheads who used to write in to Hickman's JD on the "racial problem," some of them unconditionally convinced that Negroes exuded an especially unpleasant body odor which set them apart from polished and scrubbed Caucasians. But this is just the sort of pathological conviction that crawls around unseen in the skulls of otherwise sane and sensible people until something that touches their own inner insecurity brings it out in the open.

ity or the notion of an "innate" preferance for Caucasians would not be supported by any field anthropologist with an IQ over 110. I cite Mead, Benedict, Redfield, Malinowski, Radin, among others. I find Conner's dull-witted generalizations especially irrelevant in view of the fact that 6 years ago I was living with a Negro girl, quite dark, with predominately negroid features. There was nothing "exotic" about it: I simply loved her as a personality and considered her an excellent lay and that was all there was to it. At that time I also happened to spend 7 months living in the Black Belt of Chicago, the toughest neighborhood in the North, and was accepted as an "outsider" which is more than I can say for an inverse situation in white suburbia.

Possibly I was fortunate in heing raised in a neighborhood that was two-thirds "colored". With lucid clarity I can remember that during my childhood it never even entered my head that negroes existed, until someone finally, at the age of six, told me the facts of life.

"drugs", anything if taken in excess can be considered a narcotic. One of the most amusing pastimes is to follow the ins and outs of the U.S. Pharmacopium which "officially" lists which drugs can be peddled by pharmacists and which are illegal. This is published every five years and sometimes rum and brandy are on the list and sometimes off. I knew. a fellow who could get "high" on aspirin, and of course the spices in grandma's cabinet offer untold possibilities. You can get high on water, if you drink enough of it at one time. (4I find this rather difficult to believe, though of course I have no idea what you mean by "enough of it". I suppose, though, that it might be possible to retain enough of any of the chemical additives used to purify water to have some effect. I shudder to think of the amount of water-drinking this would entail. Let's be good science-fictioneers and project a future society in which everyone considers only alcohol and opium socially acceptable. A desert prospector crawls up to the front door, his bloated tongue dragging on the doorstep. "Water! Water!" he rasps at the horrified housewife who opens the door. She shreiks: "Sam! Sam, phone the police! There's a junkie out here!"

BOB LICHTMAN
Your "New Trend" for which you blow the big horn
6137 S. CROFT AVE.
in this issue's Quotes & Notes, isn't really
LOS ANGELES 56, CALIF. that new. In one form or another, it's nearly
always been around. If you ever get a chance to

read through some issues of Vom, you'll find lots of serious, non-sfnal discussion. And Gemzine has delt with this sort of thing for years and years. In fact, a lot of FAPAzines have concerned themselves with the problems of the Real World. (-My point was that never before had there been so many of this type fanzine, especially in general fandom. Not only that, but these discussion magazines -- actually Lupoff's term, "pith-zines" is better--are mostly the top magazines of the day. This is not merely my opinion: In "Cryin' in The Sink" this issue, Marion reviewed three pithzines; two of them rated Four Stars, and one of them Three Stars. (Admittedly, I thought Discord and Esprit should have been inverted, but even if this were done it would not change this basic fact. The fact that I often disagree with Marion's opinions of the fanzines she reviews does not make these opinions any less valid, as we are usually looking for different things in fanzines: whereas I review a fanzine in most cases by its objective quality and how well it compares with other fanzines, Marion adds to this the more subjective elements such as the promise shown for future issues (conversely, when I review a fanzine there are no future or past issues; just the one at hand), and the objective of the fanzine. No one can say which of these methods is the best one, but I suspect that the best of all possible reviews would be a combination of the two.)-) Kipple isn't the only monthly fanzine in the croup you selected, either; Ruth Berman's The Neolithic is also a monthly -- it says so on every issue, right up under. the title. ({I don't want to quibble, but a fanzine which appears twice. in August is not a monthly. Too, issues of NeoL appear at varying times of the month, whereas Kipple appears on the tenth. Period. I certainly don't want to give the impression that I'm putting down Ruth or her mag; I just wanted to clear up your misstatement;)

there's a fire every time you write about fires in a letter to someone is hardly indicative of any connection of the two events. In a large metropolitan area such as the one in which you live there must be at least one fire every day, probably more. ({Actually, if you count just any old thing, there are anywhere between 10 and 100 fires in a 24 hour period in this city. This includes brush fires, automobile fires, dwelling fires, and dumpsters. During the busy hours (which vary but usually extend from 4:30 pm to 7:30 pm) there are usually 15 or 20 pieces of apparatus out of service at any given moment. (The entire department of this city contains 58 regular engine companies, 30 hook-&-ladder truck companies, approximately 25 pieces of special equiptment (floodlight trucks, high pressure hose companies, chemical engines, etc.), 15 chiefs, and about 25 pieces of reserve equiptment.) If a box is pulled, anywhere from five companies (suberban areas) to twelve companies (extreme areas of danger such as the waterfront and commercial districts) will respond. This is known as a "first alarm". Multiply this by six and you have an idea of the size and extent of the fires which occurred while I was writing Sarill and Donaho. ## Oh yes, in regard to the number of companies out of service: more firefighters decide to quit their jobs during the first two weeks of May than at any other time. This is the time of brush fires. This may be pretty hard for a visitor who has walked through the downtown area of Baltimore to believe, but there are vast stretches of woods and fields within the city limits. Periodically these areas burn up. One such -- a wooded area of approximately five square miles a few blocks from 1448--was destroyed in May of this year. Firefighters from nine companies remained on the scene from noon until nine o'clock at night before the fire was out, This probably won't seem very important to one accustomed to have vast sections of Angeles National Park destroyed every once in a while, but believe you me it's absolutely one of the worst parts of being a firefighter. Any firefighter would prfer a good fire in a wharehouse or such to a woods or dump fire. ##Mighod, hadn't you ever been warned not to mention fires to me? If I hadn't stopped myself before I got warmed up, I might have gone on for two or three pages.)

I am quite sure that my writing you about fires right now isn't going to cause a fire here in Los Angeles. This is because it's been raining all day. Of course, there's always chemical fires... ({What makes you think that a fire won't start just because it's been raining all day? It doesn't rain inside the buildings in LA, does it?)

Anent Cochran's comments regarding book banning, it seems to me that in high school what you may or may not read for a book report in an English class depends a lot on the English teacher. For instance, last year there were two teachers teaching English to seniors. One of them was a rather old fuggheaded bitch, who would only let the students choose books from a straight and narrow list. The other teacher, whom I had, thank ghod, would let you read nearly anything you wanted, provided it was by a British author. During the year in that class, oral and written book reports were given on such nasty, obscene, pornographic things as "Brave New World," "1984," "Lolita," "Doctor Zhivago," "Lady Chatterly's Lover," "Grapes of Wrath," "Elmer Gantry," and on and on. In the other class, the reports ran more to stuff like "The Pickwick Papers" and "Vanity Fair". Of which: yech!

LEN MOFFATT I enjoy a variety of subject matter in fanzines, as long 10202 BELCHER as science fiction and fantasy are not entirely neglect-DOWNY, CALIF. ed. Fans come from many walks of life and what they have

to say on disa and data reflects this -- usually in What I think is an interesting manner. Writing or drawing for fanzines tends to loosen inhibitions. I think fans will speak more freely in the pages of fanzines than, say, when they are writing a letter to a relative or a friend in mundania -- and generally speaking, this is good. I don't particularly mean the free use of four letter words, but freedom of expression and thought. That's one reason I've stayed in fandom all these years. Fanzine writing and publishing is one of the few fields left where there are no taboos to worry about. The danger of science fiction discussion getting crowded out completely isn't upon us yet. As has been pointed out, the worse shape the professional field gets into, the more s-f discussion you find in fanzines. There have been times when I felt sef was being neglected by fanzines, but always, somewhere, mags could be found where science fiction was one of the main themes, if not the main one. As long as it is s-f which brings new fans into fandom, the discussion of s-f will not cease. When there are no more promags, no more worldcons and regional cons, no more s-f clubs, then maybe the time will come when fanzines will be strictly fannish, ingrown, lacking entirely in s-f discussions. On the other hand, perhaps because of this lack, some fan or fans may very well start publishing an "All S-F" mag, if only to be different from the other fanzines.

"The Rumble": Basically, I agree with Ted White that the fans should not have given up their picnic spot so easily. (I'm assuming they had a legal right to be there and were not trespassing.) Even if more than three punks showed up they should have held their ground -- especially if some of them, as Ted indicates, Knew How to Fight. But, yes, the child should have been removed from the scene immediately -- one of the cirls could have done this, so that if the thing did come to blows the kid would have been out of danger. Of course there's much more to it than simply deciding to stay, and fight if necessary. I had several points in previous commentaries on this incident, and perhaps the most pertinent one is that if you are going to be in a neighborhood where you are likely to run into "hoods" you should plan ahead. If you have to be there for some reason and have to have a child with you, then decide ahead of time who is willing to defend themselves, and who isn't, and how best to accomplish said defending. But I don't really blame the group for retreating. They could do nothing else as they were not sure of themselves; that is, those who might have been willing to make a stand (while someone removed the child--and called the police) weren't sure they could depend on any others to help. With no prepared plan of defense it wouldn't have been good strategy to risk taking on the punks. Of course it is possible that if those willing to defend themselves did stay put, and aif it came to that -- fight the runks (he it three or more) the others might have pitched in to help. Naturally it is all conjecture now. And hindsight is always better than foresight.

As for killing, I don't go along with the idea of extermination in the sense given here. Killing the kids only makes the other punks more certain than ever that all the world is against them. There'll be no hope of changing the attitude of those misguided juveniles if we take the position that those who best represent the stereotype should be killed. Defend yourself against them, sure, and if in the process of "dirty fighting" you do kill them, well, tough luck, but there are several ways of rendering an opponent useless without actually killing him. Sometimes, in the heat of battle, the rendering may be harder than you intended and he damn near dies—or does die. But that's the chance he has to take if he wants to be a

"tough quy", and the inadvertant killer, who was acting violently in his own defense or the defense of his loved ones or friends, cannot be morally blamed. Legally he might have to stand trial, but his chances of being convicted are small.

RUTH BERMAN Aren't you the boy who was in the news a while 5620 EDGEWATER BLVD. back because he seemed to have a poltergeist? MINNEAPOLIS 17, MINN. ({At your service, ma'am, }) Well, what did happen November 2nd? ({That day was distinguished in the annals of the Baltimore Fire Department as a singularly dull and uneventful one.)) It is possible that your psi powers started the fires, but there are two other possibilities. One: You, as an acti-fan (you are, aren't you? How else do you have the motivation to put out a large monthly zine?), probably write letters to fans most every day, So any day there is a fire, you perceive it, subconsciously, and then, while writing the letters; the subject on your mind comes to the top of your mind and you write it down. Two: You perceive the fires with precognition, have a subconscious urge to warn people, and, not knowing consciously why you want to tell about the fire, simply write a letter. I notice that the cases all happened in the fall and spring. In fall there'd be more chance of fires starting because of people's burning leaves. If there's a similar seasonal increase of fires in the spring. you would have that knowledge in the back of your head and be more likely to write about fires in those seasons. In other words, if there is a spring as well as fall increase in fires, it could be coincidence. (4A good theory, but not a factual one, First of all, whereas there are of course more grass and woods fires in the early spring and in the fall, these have nothing to do with fires in homes or churches. The worst time for serious fires in Paltimore is January and February, especially at night. The only other time when an important fire is almost hound to occur is during Fire Prevention Week. ## While we're on this subject, though, I might mention a couple other insidents of this nature. These aren't very important, and are almost surely coincidental, but... On leap-year day of 1960, three hours after I made my first and only long-distance phone call to Harry Warner, an eight-alarm fire destroyed a furniture wharehouse at North Avenue and Madison Street. The year before (June 29, 1959) a fire destroyed a large laundry building at North Avenue and Madison Street -- this was the day LA-fan Don Durward visited me while passing through the city.

AND I ALSO HEARD FROM:

Peggy Sexton likes Kipple, thanks me for some second-hand ecoboo (I had quoted both MeZ Brandley and Redd Boggs on her capabilities as a writer when soliciting material). I'll take this chance to note that copies of your fanzines would probably he appreciated at Box 866, Hebbronville, Texas. +++ Betty Kujawa was squeezed out again, by George. It isn't that her letter didn't arrive in tame--on the contrary, it arrived November 25. But what with a four-page letter from Redd Boggs and a four-page letter from Len Moffatt, something had to go; it was Betty. +++ It was also Dick, as a matter of fact; Dick Elsherry, that is. He wrote a very interesting letter on Bloch and his writing, the Japanese movie "Roshomon," and Ron Ellik's "Fan Story." +++ Dick Schultz sends filthy lucre in an effort to break down my informal book-keeping, and says "I think I'm going gafia." +++ Don't give up; think of the thrill of fighting your way from the AIAHF to the lettercolumn proper...

FROM: TED PAULS 1448 MERIDENE DRIVE BALTIMORE 12, MD.

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And Yours

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