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52 PAGES—NO COMICS!

KIPPLE is published on the tenth day of every month by Ted Pauls (1448 Meridene Drive, Baltimore 12, Maryland). It is available for letters of comment, trades, contributions or subscriptions. NOTE NEW SUBSCRIPTION RATE: 15¢ per single copy, or two issues for 25¢. Subscriptions, however, are encouraged more or less only as a last resort. Contributions: articles, columns, etc. are always solicited--the "etc." to include reviews of books or magazines, but not of fanzines (for reasons which ought to be obvious...). Fannish con reports and fan-visit write-ups are not particularly solicited, thank you, but fiction of high enough quality is always welcome. If any budding artist wants to appear in Kipple badly enough to stencil his or her own art, we'll be grateful, but since the editor is totally incapable of stencilling art, we don't solicit illustrations as a rule. WOKLpress

ISSUE No. 9

JANUARY 10, 1961

IT DOTH GROWETH, DOTH IT NOT? Last issue you may recall that I commented that the only piece of material I was sure of having in this issue was Ruth Berman's article. We did manage to find some other things, as you may have noticed on the contents page. George Spencer's piece came as a rather pleasant surprise, evidently in answer to my request for material in the editorial. The symposium was also a surprise to me, as were the reprints, the prozine review column, and the "Conversation With Joe Neophan." The symposium was created around Juanita Coulson's letter, which arrived just a few days after the deadline for the last issue. The round-robin story, uncovered during the filing of a huge stack of fanzines given to me by Gregg Calkins, strikes me as being one of the few pieces of straight fiction printed in a fanzine which is good enough for a prozine. Any

editorial:

readers who, having perused the colophon, decide to submit fiction to Kipple, ought to use this story as a qualitative ruler: if your story, upon objective reading, doesn't seem to you to come up to the standards of "Legion of the Dead," then you might as well save us both the trouble by not bothering to submit it. (This is not intended to discourage

contributions in any way--especially not material which is not straight fiction, such as Buz Busby's fable in Space Cage.)

Once again, I have no idea what the written content of the next issue will be like. No outside contributions are definite, though I suppose we can assume that another installment of "Cryin' in the Sink" will arrive for that issue. Material, naturally, is solicited, and I'll repeat that it would be best if it arrived before the 25th of January. This does not mean that material arriving after the 25th will not be printed in the February issue--it will, in all likelihood, unless it arrives after the first week in February--nor does it mean, Roy Tackett, that letters must arrive by that date. The deadline for letters is right up to the 9th of the month. I hesitate to make any predictions at all about #10, though I will say that it will probably be smaller than this one--a mere 40 pages or so.

TED PAULS

Contributions for that issue and future ones are most urgently needed. People have told me that a regular monthly fanzine of at least some small reputation for printing good material begins to attract lots of unsolicited manuscripts. This hasn't proven out in my case. The number of unsolicited contributions which Kipple has received could be counted on one hand of a man who has lost three fingers in an accident--Spencer's piece in this issue, and Mike Deckinger's article on television in #8, to name all of them. I don't expect to have the greats of fandom banging on my door to get in, but I would have expected more response than just two people. It isn't lack of interest; I don't have to twist arms to get letters of comment, and most everyone is eager to trade. Perhaps the fans I know are just too lazy to polish their ideas up into an article when they can just as easily have them printed as letters. Oh well, I suppose I shouldn't complain. Perhaps you were all hesitant about submitting material because I wrote so much of Kipple myself, and after reading this editorial, you'll all jump to your typewriters and begin writing articles. Perhaps we can make January 23 a national holiday: An Article for Kipple Day.

--Ted Pauls

A CONVERSATION WITH *joe neophan*

You know, Uncle Ted, I've been reading your fanzines pretty carefully lately, but there are still a couple things I don't understand. This Bill Gray fellow, for instance.

Oh? What about Bill Gray?

What's wrong with this character?

There isn't anything wrong with him, Joe. I think he's a bit too over-enthusiastic when it comes to discussing the relative merits of serious versus fannish fans, and of course he's dead wrong about 90% of the time, but there isn't anything wrong with him...

It seems to me that he's trying to start a controversy over a subject that should have long since been dead. This convention fan versus fanzine fan bit is a dead horse.

Ah yes, but Bill Gray isn't talking about fanzine-vs.-convention fans. He's trying to neatly categorize fandom into the "serious fans" and "fannish fan" pigeonholes. A fannish needn't be a fanzine or yayjay fan, anymore than a serious fan must be a convention-going fan.

Gray, in other words, isn't trying to cause a war between two factions; instead, he's trying to create his own factions. I still don't think this subject is worth discussing in general.

There is nothing wrong with a discussion of this type, per se. The trouble here is that Bill Gray is getting downright nasty about it. After all, Dick Lupoff discussed the relative merits of the serious and the ultra-fannish in Xero; he did it in an adult manner and didn't find the need to set himself up as a Superior Intellect and a snob.

You've got to admit, though, that he has several valid points. For instance, here when he terms the fannish portions of fandom "artificially sustained adolescence." Don't you think this is true, at least partially?

No, I do not. As a matter of fact, I would be more inclined to think that this petty bickering about such an unimportant subject was closer to being childish than the typical fannishness. But I do see a point in this particular comment. The commonly accepted stereotype of the fan-

nish fan could be described very well using the very same terms Bill has used to distinguished the current "fannish" fans. The trouble is that this stereotype does not exist, and for all I know never has. Can you name me one, just one, strictly fannish fan?

No, but that's besides the point. You've hedged around the entire point of Gray's article ~~was~~ that fans were childish. Can you possibly disprove this? I mean, I remember the Disclave--

Now, now, Joe. Uncle Redbeard told you never to mention that... No one is trying to say that all fans are always adult. Lord knows there have been enough incidents in fandom to disprove this. But I'd like it noted that the so-called serious fans are often as guilty of these juvenilities as the fannish fans.

Is there anything else you'd like to say about the article before I go on to something else?

Yes. Briefly, this article is far too short to be developed to any extent, a lot of it is erroneous, and--especially--Bill Gray is far too little of an acti-fan to be able to see the Whole Picture. I don't mean to imply that a rather inactive fan has no right to discuss such facets of fandom, but it could certainly be said that he hasn't enough first-hand information of fandom to start improving it to his own benefit. Furthermore, few if any Britishers know very much about fandom or fanzines over here--as Daphne Buckmaster proved very nicely in her editorial which I quoted in Kipple #7.

Well now, there are a couple other things I'd like to clear up. I just finished reading Fanac #66, and it occurs to me that this comment about "artificially sustained adolescence" must have really bugged Uncle Terry Carr. Does he usually get this mad?

Uncle Terry is usually a nice friendly guy, but you must realize that Gray insulted him pretty badly. Not only did he imply that Terry and his friends are fandom's children who are only to be tolerated, but elsewhere in that same issue of Esprit someone called fannishness "in-group gossip". Terry had good reason to be mad, and if he insulted Bill Gray in the process of venting his anger, well, too bad, but he asked for it.

It looks to me as if Carr not only insulted Bill Gray, but also Uncle Redd Boggs and yourself. Isn't that true?

Not particularly. I can't speak for Boggs, of course, but I didn't feel the least insulted while reading that paragraph. Of course, I get the feeling that Terry should have considered what he said more than he did. There is one startling contradiction in that paragraph: "I have yet to see a discussion-zine which contained one whit of genuine literary creativeness or even much care for writing style." This statement is followed by "Pauls and Boggs have on many occasions been quite good in this respect, but never when on a kick of mere opinionating."

But isn't he merely qualifying the previous statement?

No. There is rather a great difference between qualifying a statement--which means to temper it, or to explain its frame of reference--and

Contradiction

changing it. Carr changed his statement by adding that second section.

I see where Carr is probably wrong, but not where he contradicted himself. I mean, he is wrong in saying that no discussion zines have contained literary creativeness, but there isn't any contradiction in there.

The contradiction occurs when he admits that Uncle Redd and I have "on many occasions been quite good in this respect". Up until I began Kipple, I don't believe I'd written anything worth printing, though a number of fanzines have printed my material. It is therefore apparent that Terry is referring to Kipple when he says I've been "quite good" in this respect. Kipple is a discussion zine; it has contained well-written as well as "creative" pieces, by Carr's own admission; therefore, his earlier statement that no discussion zines contain literary creativeness is contradicted. Now do you see?

All I see now is that you are blowing the horn for your own stuff.

Well, if I must bring in outside opinions, let's do it in a big way: "Kipple is the most interesting thing to emanate from the East Coast fanzina since Dhog was a phuppy."--MZBradley; "Kipple will make an appearance in the Fanac poll."--Walt Breen; "A bargain at the price. Kipple is a fine zine."--Steve Schultheis; "Good fanzine!"--Greg Benford; "Kipple continues to be one of the most interesting fanzines around."--Redd Boggs; "...interesting, literate and thought provoking."--Terry Carr himself; "Keep it up, fella."--George Spencer. I could certainly go on and on with this sort of thing ("I dig Kipple!"--Lee Hoffman) but I think I've proved my point adequately. In fact, just the quote from Carr should suffice to convince anyone that Carr contradicted himself--twice.

You sound somewhat mad at Terry, eh?

Now damnit, there you go again. I am not in the least mad at Terry; in fact, I agree with him on the stupidity of Gray's comments. I certainly hope Terry is intelligent enough to realize that I'm not mad at him; you weren't...

One more thing before I go: Why are you on the side of the fannish fans on this question, when you yourself are a serious-type fan.

Simply because I believe the fannish fans are in the right here. I hasten to add here that there are some ne're-do-well slobs in fandom--I have met at least two such as conventions. These are decidedly "fannish fans"--if they ever had a serious thought it would give them a nervous breakdown; in fact, any thought at all might be disastrous. These are most assuredly fandom's "children" and they ought to be treated as such. I won't mention any names, but I'm sure Walt Breen and a few others will remember a certain Aging Female who was the most obnoxious character at the 1960 Disclave. I'm just as much against this type of slob as I am against Gray's type of snob. The point here is that--whether Bill Gray recognizes it or not--all is not black and white--which is to say, all is not snob or slob. Most of the worthwhile fans in fandom fall into one of various middle categories. Wit and wisdom, in other words, are not rigidly segregated.

--Ted Pauls, with Joseph Neophan

christopher morley

AND HIS BEST NOVELS

A few weeks ago I re-read *The Trojan Horse* by Christopher Morley, and it occurred to me that it might be interesting to find out what current critical opinion of Morley is. I asked my English teacher. He pondered for a few minutes, and replied that there really wasn't much of any, good or bad.

When he died in 1957, J. Donald Adams used one issue of his column to write about Morley ("Speaking of Books," in *The New York Times Book Review*, April 14, 1957, page 2). What Adams said there is probably about what most critics today would say about Morley. He summed up Morley's accomplishments this way:

The death of Chris Morley removes from the American literary scene one of its most humbly appealing figures. He was not one of our greatest writers, nor do I think he ever, except in the day dreams of youth, pictured himself as such. But he did write, out of the half-hundred volumes he published during his lifetime (he was born in 1890), three excellent novels (*Where The Blue Begins*, *Thunder on the Left*, and *Kitty Foyle*), some charming essays (those that were not marred by archness), a lot of pleasant light verse, and an enormous number of gay and spirited letters to his friends. He himself thought highly of his play, *The Trojan Horse*, written two years before the arrival of World War II, and in which he believed he had caught the advancing shadow cast by the shape of things to come. If none of his books achieved real greatness, it can unquestionably be said of him, as this paper editorially observed on March 30, that he will be remembered as "one of the greatest minor writers of his time."

That summation is very friendly, very kind, very amiable, very patronizing, and rather stupid. If nothing else, Mr. Adams is wrong in calling *The Trojan Horse* a play; it is a novel. It resembles a play somewhat, because Morley wrote it in the present tense, and, in several places, he indicated the speaker in the drama fashion ("AENEAS: Funny," that's just about the way I felt," for instance), instead of using "he said" and "she said." If *The Trojan Horse* is a play at all, it was never meant to be performed (if it is a play, it is one of the most closed of closet dramas).

Mr. Adams makes a more serious error, I think, in singling out *Kitty Foyle* as one of Morley's best books. It is the story of *Kitty Foyle's* life told in the first person, and it is an excellent character-study. However, the plot rambles, and there is not much characterization in it, except for *Kitty* herself. Further, *Kitty* is such an unpleasant girl, that it is hard, even after learning to under-

SPACE CAGE #8: Lee Anne Tremper, Apartment A-3, 3858 Forest Grove Dr., Indianapolis 5, Indiana; 10¢ per issue or 3/25¢, trades, letters of comments, or contributions; irregular but frequent; 24-pages

Perhaps Lee Anne was extremely fortunate in acquiring several excellent contributions to this one issue, or perhaps SC #8 is a hint of a qualitative change which is taking place in this magazine. Whatever the case, the eighth issue of Space Cage takes a giant step along the road to quality. F. M. Busby's fable, "The Moderate Man," is undoubtedly the best piece of material I have ever seen in this magazine; Dick Lupoff's article on Psycho, while a bit slipshod in spots and a bit over-enthusiastic in others, is an excellent piece of work; a folk song by Ted Johnstone, reprinted from his SAPSazine, is the best in the current series; and a fairly well-edited and thoroughly interesting letter column

FANZINE REVIEWS

THE
chopping
BLOCK

BY TED PAULS

adds just a spark of controversy to the issue.

As you will probably recall, I didn't think much of Space Cage when I reviewed it in Kipple #7 ("The Chopping Block," page 19), and I suggested that Lee Anne cut her schedule so that she could take more time to find good material. This has been done--SC was originally a monthly--and though I'm hardly conceited enough to believe that this change was caused by my review, the results have been very gratifying.

I've already mentioned the excellent material in this issue, and very little else can be said about it. "The Moderate Man" is of professional quality, and in my sincere opinion Buz should try to find a professional market for it. I haven't any definite suggestions--and at any rate I have no intention of becoming an agent--but Playboy, though a difficult market, might be interested in this fable. And certainly a number of political-satire magazines, while they could hardly pay as well as the above-mentioned, would jump at the chance to publish something of this caliber.

There is some other material in this issue, of course, namely an editorial and a fanzine review column both written by Lee Anne. Neither of these come up to the standard set previously by Busby and Lupoff, though they are a far cry from being poor. The fanzine review column, in particular, suffers mostly because of its brevity. I've said this before, but for the benefit of any newcomers I'll repeat that most fanzine reviews under one full page in length strike me as being very poor indeed. A few other times that I've said this, a number of people--notably Redd

Boggs--commented that my. plaint for Long Reviews was unjustified. I don't believe this is the case at all, though perhaps these people did not realize why I felt as I did. The reason is simple: a review--of a fanzine, book, movie or anything else--which does not present a primarily objective view of the subject is 95% worthless; and the rule is that to be primarily objective a review must delve into the subject at length. You must not only say "I liked this," but you must tell why you liked it. You cannot do this in a third or half page. (There are, of course, exceptions, but I can think of only two reviewers who do/did not need a great length to review a fanzine properly: "Franklin Ford" and Marion Bradley. Both are artists in conciseness.) I know, because I've tried it--my reviews in the seventh issue of Kipple were only about a half-page long, and they suffered because of that. There were, perhaps, the worst fanzine reviews ever to appear in Kipple.

I am now going to try to prove a point by example. Under a review of Xero #1 in this latest issue of SC, there appears the following comment: "...and Dick's article (and beginning of a series on comic books) on Captain Marvel is a delight to read." Period. So I ask the obvious question: why? Why, I mean, was that article "a delight to read"? Lee Anne just does not say, and unless the reader has seen the article in question, or is adept at telepathy, there is no way in the world he will know. A longer review would have made it possible for Lee Anne to tell not only that she liked the article (a subjective opinion) but why (an objective fact or a series of objective facts).

It is sometimes preferable not to mention a certain piece of material at all in a review, if one hasn't anything positive or negative to say about it. Such is the case with the editorial in SC #8. I really have nothing to say about it, and if I weren't using it here as an example, I wouldn't have mentioned it at all. How much better not to mention a piece than to mention it and say, "That was good!" or "That stunk," as the case may be, thereby leaving the reader to wonder on what your observation was based.

There isn't much that could be done to improve the appearance of SC, though the proof-reader ought to be given a good talking to. The duplication is letter-perfect, the art is mostly fair to excellent--though Jeff Wanshel's crudely-drawn, simple-lined hem doesn't warrant printing--and the layouts, while they could stand improving, are better than most of those found in the top fanzines--which doesn't say much for the top fanzines, you know.

If this issue is a vision of things to come and not an accident, it is definitely worth acquiring.

WRR #7: Wally Weber and Otto Pfeifer, 2911 E. 60th, Seattle 5, Washington; letters of comment, trades, contributions, but evidently not for subscription; irregular; 22-pages.

I've been waiting for quite some time for a reviewer to note that WRR is not a very good fanzine. No one has, so I suppose it's up to me to brave the slings and arrows of outrageous ex-Cry-letterhacks. Because, though no one but the editors seem to have noticed it, WRR is not a very good fanzine.

The editorial which leads off this issue sounds like a refuge from an early Seventh-Fandom fanzine. The grammar is some of the poorest I've ever seen in or out of a fanzine--several sentences are occasionally combined into one sentence not with semi-colons, or even ellipses, but with

commas! The typing, though hardly this poor, isn't exactly what could be called impeccable, and the editorial personality reminds one of a village idiot.

Throughout the past year or so, WRR has managed to publish some fairly good material, but never with any consistency, and this issue is one of the poorest from that viewpoint. In fact, the only piece of material in this seventh issue that I would consider worth printing is Bjo's "Norris Cartoon Expose," and even that would have been better in a lettercolumn. It is, at best, a rambling column; but unfortunately nothing else in the issue comes up to it in standards of quality. In a good fanzine, this piece would have been the worst in any given issue; here, it is the best.

Actually, though, it would almost have to be the best when compared with the editorial, "10 Most Wanted Inventions" by Varda Murrell, "Ten Least Wanted Inventions" by Mike Deckinger--both of which suffer because good ideas are not exploited to any length--Wally Weber's rambling column, "Banana Split," and a letter section which shows every sign of developing into what Cry of the Nameless was two or three years ago.

Most of Bjo's piece and all of Wally Weber's column are devoted to an incident which occurred at the Pittcon and of which several paragraphs would have been sufficient. I refer to Joni Cornell's attempts to kiss Wally Weber. This incident was just perfect for an interesting squib, and if someone had handled it artfully enough it would have been the funniest item of the month. Terry Carr could have handled it well, as could Turbee, Boggs, or a few other writers. It is painfully obvious, however, that neither Bjo nor Weber had any inkling of how this should have been written. Between them, they devote three and one-half pages to this subject, Bjo trying very hard to be funny--and in a few places, succeeding--and Weber, trying to retain his usual slaphappy manner while desperately, pitifully trying to convince the readers that, though he tried to escape being kissed by a most desirable girl, he is a normal-type person. It takes him two pages to say this, and it isn't at all humorous, though he was obviously trying very hard to make it so.

Varda Murrell's article would be a lot more interesting if it were a lot longer. As it is, she has no time to enlarge and expand her ideas, and practically no time even to make those ideas presentable. Mike Deckinger's article, aside from this same fault, is rather stupid and worthless. It amazes me that Deckinger, a writer of such obvious caliber, could turn out material which varies so terribly as far as quality. That the same person could write this poor piece as well as the excellent article in Xero #2 is incredible.

The layouts are very poor indeed--lettering is scrawled by hand--but they are professional when compared with Burnett Toskey's "artwork". These are undeniably the worst scribblings to appear in a fanzine since the early months of 1957, when Cry was publishing such horrid crud.

To sum it all up, WRR is free but not worth the price. In all of its 22 pages, there is only one piece I would accept for Kipple, and only that after an extensive rewrite. The personality is moronic, the atmosphere absolutely idiotic, the art worthless, and the layout poor. The duplication is impeccable, but that only serves to magnify the faults. If this is what Bill Gray had in mind when he referred to "artificially sustained adolescence," then he was not far from being right.

ESOTERIQUE #3: Bruce Henstell, 815 Tigertail Rd., Los Angeles 49, California; 10¢ per issue, letters of comment, trades, and contributions; evidently irregular; 32-pages.

There are, as others before me have pointed out, two types of crud in fandom. First, there are the first few issues of any neofanzine, which are usually poorly duplicated, poorly laid-out, and contain a majority of uninteresting and badly-written material. The second type of crudzine is more subtle; for the first three or four issues, it closely resembles a Type One crudzine. The difference is that the second type of crudzine never rises above the point of mediocrity, never gains a following, and is never missed by anyone other than the editor when it no longer appears. Twig was this type of crudzine. So was Exconn.

Esoterique, happily, is not. I believe I've had enough experience with fanzines to be able to make an educated guess as to whether a fanzine will evolve into a worthwhile item or remain in the quicksand of mediocrity. In my sincere opinion, Esoterique will evolve into a reasonably good fanzine, once editor Henstell has licked his duplication problems and gotten over his initial over-enthusiasm. This magazine already has a definite edge over many third issues, in the form of a staff cartoonist by the name of Bill Martin. Henstell also uses lettering guides rather than scrawled hand-lettering for his headings, and this would be a definite edge if he was a little better versed in their application. As it stands, the lettering is pretty poor, both on a technical standpoint and from the standpoint of planning and imagination. But he will improve, just as we all have improved. The ideas are definitely there and they need only enlargement and a surer hand to bring them into blossom.

I don't happen to be an advocate of the "Give the kid a dame" school of reviewing; on the other hand, I try not to make an utter ass out of myself by using the Damon Knight approach and show how witty and clever I am at the expense of the item being reviewed. This is absolutely the most deplorably juvenile form of criticism in existence: the show-off review. A surprisingly large number of otherwise intelligent fans seem to favor this type of review. I don't know why...

But as I say, I don't advocate encouraging fans to continue publishing crud. What I do advocate is the encouragement, via constructive criticism, to improve, to be unsatisfied with anything less than "excellent". This is a policy I advocate with regard to the material I accept and reject, the fanzines I review, and the material I write for Kipple. It is even carried over into the mundane world, where it is, at present, more or less an out-of-place philosophy.

Esoterique, by this criterion, is a crudzine. The material in this issue is, by and large, not worth printing. The issue leads off with an editorial which is, if not good, at least a notch above most editorials by neofans. Following this is an editorial by Bill Martin which is closer to the stereotype of the neofan's editorial, and then the single feature in the issue which could be called "excellent": Len Moffatt's critique of the movie version of "Slan." This is really a very good review--though I haven't seen the movie and cannot speak for its authenticity--but that really shouldn't be any surprise, for Moffatt is an interesting and literate writer when he finds a subject for which he has some feeling. The next item in the issue is a review of a magazine--Help--which I have neither seen nor heard of before, followed by a page of pseudo-Feifer by Bill Martin. These, like the other Martin

cartoons in this issue, are nicely done, and, regardless of John Champion's comment to the contrary, the detail work is worthwhile.

Possibly the worst single feature in the issue is Ron Goldman's fanzine review column, "Nebulose Reviews." The format is cramped and all but unreadable in spots--but that makes no matter, for these reviews aren't worth reading to begin with. They are short, of course, but far worse, they don't say anything. Is this a fanzine review: "Neolithic, Ruth Berman, 5620 Edgewater Blvd., Minneapolis 17, Minn. Very good ish. Please put me on the list of the PCsoc." What, precisely, does this review say about The Neolithic? Only the name and address of the publisher, and that the issue under review--#4? #9? #45?--is a "good ish," whatever that means.

The other material in this issue is a Grim Tale by Leslie Norris--which is pretty grim, as well as stupid; I read only the first page--and a mediocre letter column. In short, a pretty poor fanzine, having only Len Moffatt's article/review and Martin's cartoons as worthwhile features. But it will improve, of this I am sure, and though Henstell may not be blessed with the supersonically fast maturing of a Bob Leman or a Walter Green (or even a Ted Pauls, if one can believe Ted White) he will eventually manage to bring his fanzines up out of the slime and into the light. Watch this space...

As I said, I don't like to write short reviews of fanzines. I feel that they serve no purpose. On the other hand, there are neofans among my readership--thanks to Terry Carr and Eugene Hryb--and I ought to at least mention some of the fanzines which weren't able to be reviewed at length herein. And so, donning my best Buck Coulson manner...

DISCORD: Redd Boggs, 2209 Highland Place, NE, Minneapolis 21, Minnesota; letters of comment, trades, or tapes of comment, but no subscriptions accepted; six-weekly; 12-14 pages; literate, thought-provoking commentary and reviews, interesting letters.

SATHANAS: Dick Schultz, 19159 Helen, Detroit 34, Michigan; 25¢ per issue, but the editor prefers letters of comment, trades or contributions; quarterly, it says; 34 pages. Above average for a first issue, with some outstanding material, but poorly laid-out with occasional unreadable pages due to bad duplication.

FANAC: Terry & Miriam Carr, 1818 Grove Street, Berkeley 9, California; five issues for 50¢, letters of comment, news, or trades with "selected dependable fanzines."; bi-weekly, mostly; 4-6 pages. Fandom's best news sheet, contains just about every important piece of news in the microcosm. Nevertheless, paying nearly 2¢ per page is kind of stiff.

THE BUG EYE: Helmut Klemm, Uffort/Eick, (22a) Krs. Moers, Uhlandstrasse, Germany; letters of comment, trades, review and, I assume, contributions; irregular; 28 pages; partly in German, partly in English, with a lot of the English unfortunately being Alan Dodd. Enthusiastic, and Helmut Klemm seems like a nice sort.

These have not been fanzine reviews; they have been mentions. I have not actually recommended any of the above four fanzines, though obviously my comments on Discord are a recommendation in themselves; however, none are bad fanzines.

--Ted Pauls

THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF *Comic books*

A SYMPOSIUM

FEATURING

Juanita Coulson

Carl Brandon

Len Moffatt

Harlan Ellison



JUANITA COULSON: I wasn't aware that the strength of Diana Prince was due to physical and scientific discipline. As I remember, this was a virgin birth (or some equally vaguely explained phenomenon)-- Hippolyta was the queen of the Amazons, already endowed with magical powers, and Diana was merely a junior grade goddess. I suppose mythology isn't, technically, magic, but it's close enough to it to meet my requirements. The Krypton excuse is sort of rabbit-hatty, but I see no difference between old Shazam and the gifts of the Greek gods to Diana.

Ted White can catch me on this if I'm wrong, but one specific item about the Human Torch that always interested me was Toro's different color. Toro was poisoned, I believe, either gas, food, or injection, and a transfusion was required to save his life. (Naturally, the Torch was the donor.) Ever after that time his flame was not as strong. The remarkable part of this gimmick was the faithfulness of the cartoonist. There were so many bobbles in cartoon sequences, it was always startling to realize that ever after that incident, Toro's flame was always pure red while the Torch's was shaded.

Ellik trompled on one of my all-time favorites a couple issues ago, and I rise to defend him. Captain America could not only be quelled by a crack on his skull, he could be shot, stabbed, throttled, knocked out by explosive concussion and done to death in all the ways flesh is heir to. It just took a bit more with him because he was supposed to be such a superb athlete. Not until the very late days, the revival days, if I remember correctly, was Steve Rogers a school teacher. In the beginning, he was an Army private and Bucky was supposedly a mascot (about

as logical arrangement as the present set-up on Rin Tin Tin). Interspersed with the spy-catching and crook-punching were typical low humor army bits about KP and master sergeants.

I am always on the lookout for old Captain America Comics, or any of the fellow series, such as The Torch or the Boy Allies or Boy Commandos, although I am not particularly fond of Namor. (Namor was the Submariner, was he not?) Anybody spots these, or has duplicates, please get in contact with me. I have a few copies, but precious few.

The main paradox of Captain America was-- where the hell did he hide that shield when he was in uniform or civvies? The damn thing was about three feet across, it appeared, and although he was a pretty broad-shouldered gent, he wasn't that broad. Perhaps it was collapsible? It was never explained.

Ron's comment about the girls muscling, or powder-puffing, in on the comic heroes confirms my grouch that it was this feminizing movement that finished off a lot of comic characters. I've seen some criticisms of Moulton, but I, and numerous other femme fans, doted on Wonder Woman. That was our comic. The artwork, if improvable, was very distinctive, the fey element was very much in evidence, and the feminist (which the femme fan usually is to some extent) was queen. But I did not enjoy seeing anything like this slop over into the typically male comics. In the male adventure series, I was quite willing to identify with the male hero, and the introduction of a female, far from gaining my support as a customer, usually annoyed me no end. I never forgave the replacement of Johnny Thunder with the Black Canary, nor Pucky with a female...and I see equally ominous signs in the Batgirl complex. Keep the girls in Amazonia where they belong, I say!

Oddly enough, I must agree with Dr. Wertham here. I do think there is a strong homosexual element in these male comics series (or rather, there was), but unlike Dr. Wertham, I don't think this is bad. At the time when these were being read, kids of that age level were thinking as is only to be expected from their physical and emotional development--namely homosexually. The great period of comics series reading was during the gang stage, and I consider a catering to it more healthy than this business of pushing fourth and fifth graders into mixed couples dating when only a scant 10% of the girls are ready for it, and probably none of the boys.

They were also pretty sadistic-masochistic, what with the kid sidekicks existing mainly to be shot, tortured, then rescued and otherwise protected by the adult hero. So what. Kids almost to the last one are sadistic-masochistic, and I'd much rather Bruce work off these feelings vicariously via comic books than go out and pour gasoline over a cat and set fire to the beast. I don't believe the comics stimulated or created such thinking; I believe they provided a very much needed release.

At least, they did for me.

Among the most interesting items of Planet Comics, which Brandon mentions, was the evolution of characters: Mysta really got around. Star Pirate kept changing sidekicks so fast I never did find out what happened to the Venusian pal he had for a while...and for a really wild result and shift and change and whatnot, you have Reef Ryan and Flint Baker.

Now, for you comics experts people, I have a couple of queries. Dean Grennell gave me a whole slew of comics for a subscription and

85% were most nostalgic. The remaining 15% fell into two categories--I don't want them, or I know nothing about them and would like to know more. I have here a coverless item the first story of which features a critter called The Owl, with others being Cyclone, the Crusoes, Stratosphere Jim, Don Winslow, Ellery Queen, Bob and Bill the Scout Twins (yes, that's what it says), and Clyde Beatty. If anyone wants it, I'll gladly trade it for a little background information, and even if they don't want it, I'm curious about a comic I never saw on the newstands.

And does anyone remember the Green Mask? Not the post war one of the vaguely Billy Batscn gimmick, but a very early one...around 1940. This was the first comic I ever read, and I've never found anyone who remembered it. Maybe I dreamed it all.

CARL BRANDON: It is indeed odd how much we can remember with a little prodding. Up until this string of reminiscences began in Kipple, I had forgotten much more than I care to admit about most of the comics characters I venerated as a young child. The Submariner, for instance. I did not even vaguely remember this character until his name was mentioned an issue or so ago...now I can bring him to mind instantly.

I never much liked Namor, as it happens, perhaps because at the same time I began reading comic books I discovered radio. The Submariner was far too close to the stereotype of the radio villain--slick black hair, combed straight back, a slightly oriental cast to his features--for me to 'identify' with him. Actually, to say that he had an "oriental cast" may be misleading. I'm not at all sure Namor possessed slanted eyes or any other feature we might immediately identify as an 'oriental' one. But he was decidedly foreign-looking, if you know what I mean, as of course were the rest of his people. His father, the king of Mu, or Atlantis, or whatever they called that neck of the woods, his evil cousin, Prince something-or-other, who wanted to war against the surface people, the woman he went to for advice, either his mother or sister, I disremember which...all this I remembered in a flash as I read that magic name, The Submariner, in your fanzine.

I'd like to get a hold of some back issues of that comic book. Not to collect, or to tear apart as you have done in "Second Childhood," but to read. I believe I'd enjoy them every bit as much now as I did fifteen years ago, even though I'm 27, fairly literate, and reasonably sane.

And now I see the discussion is branching out to the so-called "funny comics." This isn't a Good Thing, for most of your readers will probably be like me; I discovered comics and adventure-type comics almost simultaneously, so I read very few funny comics. However, perhaps it would be interesting to note that the very first comic I ever owned featured something called a Gandy Goose. This must have been in 1938 or 1939, just after our family moved to Denver. In the town where I was born and spent the first five years of my life--Smith Falls, Ontario, just a couple miles from Toronto--no one was aware of comic books, though I suspect that the Only Newsdealer In Town would have jumped at the chance to get a little business if he had known they existed. Denver wasn't exactly over-stocked with comic books, but then we only stayed in that honorable city four months. We moved around quite a bit for a while, with my father trying to find a job he liked, then when Dad died we (mother, my ignorant sister, and myself) moved to New York City. Here, of course,

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

concluded from page 6

derstand her, to feel any sympathy for her, at least for me.

I agree with Mr. Adams that Morley wrote "three excellent novels," but it seems to me that the three are *Where The Blue Begins*, *Thunder on the Left*, and *The Trojan Horse*. Even though Mr. Adams says that "Morley himself thought highly of...*The Trojan Horse*," which seems to imply that others do not think very highly of it, I would put it first. All three books have good characterization, all three are written in beautiful prose, but *The Trojan Horse* has the richest plot. *Where the Blue Begins* (first printed 1922) is a fable with a plot much like Maeterlinck's *The Blue-bird*, only the blue of Morley's book is the blue of poetry and freedom, the blue at the horizon. The book has all the richness and tradition of the quest-story.

Thunder on the Left (first printed 1925) is a fantasy in which a child is allowed to see the world of adults he will live in when he is grown up. If it were not a fantasy, it might almost be a "slice of life" novel. In *The Trojan Horse* (first printed 1937), Morley takes the tradition of fable and the views of everyday life and combines the richness of both. The traditional fable in this case is the story of *Troilus and Cressida*, and the book views love and lovers, war, warriors, civilians, and pacifists, poetry and prophecy. "We think a lot of Now," says Morley in the prologue, "but isn't Then always getting the better of it? Let's mix them together and make Always." Fable and everyday life--he does mix them together, and he comes up with a very satisfying Always.

It would be interesting to find out if T. H. White read *The Trojan Horse* while he was working on *The Sword in the Stone* (first printed 1939), or if Thornton Wilder read it while he was working on *The Skin of our Teeth* (first printed 1942). White re-told the story of King Arthur as told by Malory; Wilder re-told the story of *Genesis*; and Morley re-told the story of *Troilus and Cressida* as told by Chaucer. All three set their stories simultaneously in the past and present--White says that "Sir Ector, who was an old tilting blue, said the battle of Cressy had been one upon the playing fields of Camelot"; Mr. Antrobus comes home to his house in a suburb of New Jersey after a hard day inventing the wheel; and the people of Morley's Troy get their news from their favorite broadcaster, Ilium, the radio voice of The Evening Trojan.

All three are wildly anachronistic, and Morley is the wildest of the lot (the very dust-jacket of his book shows a group of people, some in togas and some in modern dress, standing in front of a classic temple and several skyscrapers). They all combine Then and Now to make "humanity's two great interlocking privileges, beauty and absurdity." (*The Trojan Horse*, p. 27).

It is patronizing to call Morley "one of the best minor writers of his time," when his time only was the last fifty years. Morley may not rank with the best of all time, but he is probably among the best writers of our time.

--Ruth Berman

Would you want your daughter to marry a TAFF representative? --Brandon

A ROUND-ROBIN STORY

BY MARION Z. BRADLEY
AND REDD BOGGS

FICTION:

*legion of
the dead*

The first thing Ken Rogan believed was that the priest had been right and that when he died he had gone straight to hell and was waking up their. He remembered, afterward, feeling furiously angry about this, in the middle of the pain of trying to breath, in what felt like a tank of furious fire, because he'd never believed in hell--or in heaven either--and somehow it didn't seem quite fair, that he'd gone there after all. He opened his eyes to see the devil himself on a cloud over him (Lukan always roared when Rogan told that part of the story). Then, with the prick of a needle, the pain subsided and he abandoned himself to drowsy musings.

Maybe hell was where he belonged, because in a way he'd committed suicide...snapping the faceplate of his helmet open before the oxygen failed, unable to face the thought of long drifting in space and the horror of slow asphyxiation. Death had been instant, and, up to now, painless.

When he woke up the pain was gone, and the devil's face had turned into that of a man, tanned and deeply creased with a crisscross of lines. He was saying "Can you understand me, this time?"

Rogan said automatically "Sure, I can understand you--" and then he got his first shock. "Hey, what language--?"

"We've had our hypno-learner on you," the man said quickly, "teaching you our language. What's your native tongue, by the way?"

"English," Rogan said, and sat up, glancing around in sudden panic. "Look, where am I? What about the ship, the other guys? How'd you bring me back--or did I dream it, the crash, opening my helmet--"

"There was no one picked up with you," Devil-face said. "Maybe they didn't have the guts. It takes a little nerve to hit the Cold Death, but it's the only way to live through it. I've no sympathy to waste on the cowards who let themselves suffocate in a space suit--once the lungs stop working, there's no way to revive you."

He thought, of course, that he'd been brought back to Earth some way, until suddenly a wealth of small detail bore in on Rogan. This bed or bunk, for instance. It was circular, not rectangular. There were transparent blankets with their own interior warmth. Devil face wore his long hair combed into plastic curls atop his forehead, and his smock had pleated sleeves; no one Rogan had ever known would have let himself be found dead in such a get-up. The room was windowless, but metallic rivets studded a subtly curved wall. All the panic terror drove through Rogan again and he exploded "For God's sake, sir--where am I? What's happened? Who are you?"

With firm hands the man pressed Rogan back against the pillows. "Behave yourself, or I'll get a strait-jacket in here!"

The words were like a shock of icy water. Rogan stopped struggling and gulped. "Am I just--insane? Did I dream--dying in space?" he asked. The man let him go and grinned.

"Insane? I hope not, my friend. Donner would be furious if we wasted resuscitation tactics on a lunatic. No, but revival from the Cold Death is always a shock. By the way, what's your name?"

"Kenneth Drayton Rogan, Lieutenant Junior Grade."

"Aiee! All that? Which part of it do we use when we mean Hey, you?"

"Just Rogan, or Ken, sir." He was beginning to like Devil-face.

"I'm Lukan. Now what's your Galactic Sector? Your Central Machine rating? You don't have an I.D.R. do you? Sorry to bother you with all these questions, but we do have to ask sometime, it might's well be now?"

"Damned if I know. What's all that stuff?"

"I mean, where do you come from, what are you certified to do?"

"I'm an American--hey! I'm not on Earth!"

"You're in space. And if you weren't a spaceman, what were you doing, drifting way out in the edge of nowhere? And what in hell is Earth, anyway?" He paused and said "Don't answer just now, let me get you something to eat."

Over an accumulation of unfamiliar foods, Rogan told the devil-

faced Lukan about the Mars try, the crash, his decision to die quickly rather than suffer slow suffocation. Lukan remarked humorously "Well, if the Legion runs short of funds, we can sell you on the Black Market to a historian." He said, with an incredulous shake of his head, "We set out to pick up men from before the days of the Central Machine ratings, but in you, we seem to have hit the jackpot. Do you really mean--you've had no conditioning?"

At Rogan's bemused denial, Lukan explained.

"Men today are conditioned--conditioned to perfect social adjustment. It's our only way of avoiding crime and anti-social behavior, because we can't police four thousand planets. But a point has come where we are simply outgrowing our worlds, and everyone has been conditioned to a point where the very idea of exploration--although there are a million worlds waiting--is terrifying. I've had less conditioning than most, being a doctor. In my case, a high degree of training substitutes for all but the basic conditioning of adjustment. But even I would be--literally ill--at the thought of venturing outside the known world. The captain of this ship, Donner--you'll meet him later--is--well, a strange anomaly. I can't describe him to you, you'll have to see for yourself. But he had the idea of cruising space to pick up men who had hit the Cold Death and had not been rescued, hoping to form a sort of Legion of Dead Men--as explorers."

Lukan paused, frozen. Somewhere a bell clanged. He turned, and Rogan turned with him, as a face appeared on a screen. He whispered "That's Donner--" as a powerful man's face said "Attention! All stations! A ship from Central Galactic is approaching and we may be boarded. All crewmen at large will take their stations--"

Abruptly his voice and face vanished in a blue glow and a loud voice remarked;

"Captain Donner, and those on Donner's ship! You are in our range, and our stasis field surrounds you, so do not, repeat, do not attempt to warp. This is a special jamming broadcast. You are commanded to stand by for boarding and for routine psych-checks to ascertain that you are not carrying unconditioned men--"

A tingling blueness filled the room. Lukan gasped, cried out in agony, and whispered "I can't move...I can't move...I can't move!"

The stasis field was like a strong tide swirling against him, but Rogan, acting instinctively, found that it only slowed him down, didn't stop him. He flung himself from the chair and surged into battle stance with the long, flowing movements of a diver walking on an ocean bottom.

Lukan was still standing turned half off-balance toward the vision screen, but he managed to move his eyes toward Rogan, and Rogan thought they held a shocked look when they saw him. "You can move!" Lukan said at last, his words slurred as if he had been drinking. "The High Commissioner will be surprised to know that his stasis field isn't complete."

"I can guarantee that," Rogan said grimly. "What will happen when they find me on this ship?"

Lukan tried to shrug and found he could not. "It's Domy--I recognized his voice. He's high commissioner of this exclave. He has, of course, authority to send you to the Center for full conditioning." His voice trailed off, tiredly. It was difficult for Lukan even to work his tongue and throat muscles.

Rogan moved restlessly. "I don't intend to be conditioned. My mind would probably blast their psych machines apart, and I'd hate to see

anybody hurt by flying glass. How do I get to the control room?"

There was a pause, and Rogan realized that Lukan had instinctively tried to gesture. Lukan slurred out directions. Rogan lifted his hand. "Hold it. I got lost at the top of the first companionway you mentioned. You'd better come along with me."

He waded through the blue tide to Lukan, lifted him up on his back. It wasn't easy, carrying Lukan and climbing narrow companionways--the ship seemed to have no automatic lifts--and squeezing through corridors more jammed with intricate machinery than a submarine's interior. But Rogan was big and burly and Lukan was small and lean. Luckily, too, the artificial gravity of this alien ship was several decimal points less than Terra's. It wasn't any tougher, thought Rogan, than the obstacle course he had run in record time at boot camp in Tonopah. But his lungs were drowning for air as he lurched into the control room at last, and eased Lukan into the nearest seat.

Wiping the sweat from his eyes, Rogan looked at Captain Donner. Frozen in his deep foam-padded chair at the central control screen, Donner had his back to Rogan and could not see him, though most of the other officers here could see him. All were frozen in position or fallen ingloriously to the deck, but Rogan read surprise and horror on their immobile faces.

Rogan pushed through the blue tingle of the stasis field to Donner's side. He examined the captain's chair for a moment, tentatively shifted a lever by the captain's left hand, and found he could swivel the chair around to face the room.

Donner and Rogan stared at each other. Donner was a man moulded in bronze, and for this and one other thing Rogan had to stifle a crazy urge to drawl, "Captain Ahab, I presume." For, like Ahab, this man was maimed. Subtle as was the skilled medical art that mended it, Rogan could see that something had torn away the left side of the captain's head; the ear, the cheek, the jawbone, the temple, had been wonderfully rebuilt, but the left eye was still missing. Whatever was left of it was hidden behind a great white patch, an odd, dramatic, almost barbaric touch, positioned as it was against the work of an advanced medical science. The captain's other eye rolled up with difficulty and regarded Rogan with the first hint of wildness and defiance he had seen anywhere in this alien eyes.

"Captain Donner was a great musician till he lost the eye," Lukan said matter-of-factly. This was offered, Rogan knew, as a simple explanation of Donner to him--a courtesy to them both, though no Earth-side code Rogan knew about would have condoned it. Or was it something more subtle--was it Lukan's and this culture's quiet disclaimer for Donner's conduct? Perhaps it was both. Rogan could understand how such a damaging wound would have a traumatic effect on a man, especially when it took away his chosen art, perhaps his livelihood. But what kind of a culture was this where former musicians became space commanders? And he found himself wondering irrelevantly, too, what kind of instrument had Donner played that required keen eyesight of the artist?

Donner tried to laugh, but only gurgled; his chest muscles wouldn't lift far enough. "Yes, I was a dioridna virtuoso--and now I can only travel dark space and listen to the music of the spheres. You are the fellow we seined up from the night, aren't you? Will you come with us, to the end of space?"

Rogan felt sudden sharp disappointment. Donner might be an anomaly in this culture, but he was merely a petulant old man put up against a

real Captain Ahab. Obviously, Donner's was no fiery hunt, but only a boat trip all on a golden afternoon. Music of the spheres, indeed! The end of space--or the foot of the rainbow--what did it matter? What about those hard, solid, tangible million worlds Lukan said were waiting?

"None of us are going to hunt the White Minnow," Rogan said ironically, "if we don't get rid of this Domy who--as Lukan tells me--is cop on this beat. What are we going to do about him?"

As if to emphasize his words, a hollow clang resounded through the great ship. Domy was alongside and had just launched a boarding lock against Donner's ship. In another two minutes Domy and his men would be inside. Rogan looked at Donner's crew, all of them frozen in position or toppled like strewn toy soldiers. Only these toy soldiers, he noted, did not carry weapons. He began to doubt whether this ship--this renegade ship--was even armed. He remembered Lukan's explanation of conditioning: its aim was to prevent anti-social behavior. Obviously conditioning worked: it turned a Captain Ahab type into a mere Pied Piper. The airlock door rang like a brazen bell.

Rogan lurched through the blue haze and wrenched a heavy rod off the wall. It served as a hat rack of some sort, he noted with grim amusement. The boarding party came out of the airlock as he crouched, brandishing his weapon. Three small, mild-featured men, with a soft, professional type leading them. This must be Domy. Rogan didn't wait to find out. He swam through the tingling air at them, wielding his long club. Earthmen would have brushed him aside like a mosquito and jeered at his slow-motion attack. These men, caught by surprise--for they didn't expect to find a man who could move in the ship--and paralyzed by the mere show of anger and antagonism, milled like bleating sheep, hardly raising their arms to ward off Rogan's wild blows upon their curls.

Afterward, Lukan said, "And you thought me a devil when you first saw me! I can't imagine a fiercer devil than you in action, Ken Rogan. I think that with your help--your leadership--we will reach those million worlds. And you will see them all in your lifetime; now that you have been injected with the Immortality serum."

Rogan stared into the vision plate of the first world of the million he would be to see. Under high magnification an alien city arose--tall and airy and tinted. He didn't feel very ferocious, not at all like a devil. He considered thoughtfully. He had died; now he lived again, and he would live forever. He was being borne through the skies to a place that looked like heaven... "Lukan, I'm not a devil," he said. "The facts are clear enough. I'm an angel!"

--Marion Bradley & Redd Boggs

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by GEORGE SPENCER

THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST:

A PENETRATING LOOK, MOSTLY BACKWARDS

Well, Christmas has come and gone once again, and I've endured the same horrors at Yuletide that I experience every year. Who is the idiot who said that experience is the best teacher? Well, whoever it was, he was lying, lying... I always make the same mistakes, especially when it comes to Christmas shopping. And I always wind up, battered and glassy-eyed, in front of that damn tie counter because of all the tens of thousands of gimcracks they have in their newer, bigger, escalator-riddled, cavernous, sleek department stores, there's somehow nothing that quite seems to suit him/her. Either there's nothing good enough for the price you want to pay or nothing bad enough at any price. What department stores need is a good explosives department. Anyway, I always wind up buying ties that are probably never worn and cans of mouldy-looking pipe tobacco and gloves of the wrong size. When I got to return the junk I received, I don't have a receipt. Even if I bought the stuff myself and remember exactly which counter I got it from, they say in their Dale Carnegie way, "I'm sorry, Sir, but we've never handled any merchandise of that (sniff) quality."

Sometimes I think that all this spirit of good will just makes little monsters out of many children. They expect, nay demand, their yearly ton of goodies, and tantrum up a storm if good old Santa (who'd damn well better send that electric train) doesn't deliver. I distinctly recall one Christmas when I was around ten years of age when, after I had opened about three dozen packages and was lost in a veritable forest of wrapping paper, I looked up and said, "Is that ALL?" And the other day I saw a kid in a department store who seemed to be in the know about old Saint Nick. He hit his mother on the hand because "Santa" wasn't going to get him some stupid game that he wanted. What a pair of jaws that kid had! The old lady dropped her packages and tried banging the kid's head against the counter until he let go. Ah yes, the Christmas spirit!

You are certainly familiar with the images they constantly present. (I'm still not certain who "they" are, but they must be from another planet.) The happy crowds mingling and exchanging greetings of good fellowship...? Well, they don't mingle, they mangle. And I can count the number of spontaneous Christmas greetings I heard expressed without even starting. Next Christmas you just try going up to some woman and saying, "Merry Christmas, Madam!" Chances are, even if she answers, she'll back off a bit and start glancing out of the corner of her eye for the manager. Ah, sweet brotherhood!

While I was standing next to the glove counter in Woodies (or rather, trying to stand there--I kept getting swept along the aisle to the shoe department), I saw a well-dressed gentleman looking at me from across the aisle, the way you look at the countryside

from the window of a train by catching glimpses of it between the cars of a train going the other way. I smiled in true seasons-greetings fashion, and later worked my way over to talk to him. Well, it turned out that he was a store detective and was just looking to see if anyone was shoplifting. I talked to him for a minute while my mother shopped for gloves for her mother (who's so ancient she never goes outdoors anyway). He told me that they'd had trouble with people trying on gloves and then walking out with them on. Somehow I got the impression he thought I was just trying to divert his attention while my moll got away with a few pairs of gloves. Ah yes, good-will toward men!

Later, in another store, while she looked at blankets, I sat in one of the leather chairs they have in the television section. In Washington D.C. we have four good television stations, yet every one of the several dozen sets they had turned on in that store was tuned in to the same station. I suppose that shows something, but I'm not sure just what. One man stood there mesmerized during the whole time that I was there (about 15 minutes) and when I came down the escalator from another floor about an hour after that, I caught a glimpse of him still standing there. I imagined him still standing there after the store was closed and dark, his eyes fixed on the blank screen. It's guys like that who are easy meat for pick-pockets. Come to think of it, maybe he was a pick-pocket! Oh, happy Christmastide!

--George Spencer

WORLD OF COMIC BOOKS.....CONTINUED

you could find a comic book on every corner and two in every pot. It was while in New York that I built up a collection of comic books (they are still in my Uncle's attic in New York, come to think of it). I was never known as the "Man With 10,000 Comic Books," but at one time I'm certain I had between six and seven thousand of them.

Other than the ones you mentioned, I wonder what most of the comic books of today look like? If there is still anything in existence which might deserve the title "horror comic" even in its broadest definition, I'd like to tear and compare. The Comics Code Authority killed off just about every interesting portion of the comic industry, including, if I can judge by the covers I occasionally get a glimpse of in book stores, the magnificent artwork. As I mentioned a couple issues ago, Planet Comics was second only to the EC horror comics. (But then, it would have had to be--I don't seriously think any magazine artwork--from Popular Mechanics through Playboy to Good Housekeeping--could come up to the standard set by the EC artists.) There were also a few others--Jungle Comics comes to mind immediately--published by the same company, and using the same artists, which had nearly as good art as Planet. No other comic, save Witches Tales, came even close--"close" as say Adkins to Ed Valigursky.

I really don't think it's merely nostalgia, either, when I say that the stories in the EC horror comics were noticeably superior to any of the others. I do not remember Planet for its written content, and certainly Witches Tales were far from great. But EC had people like Bradbury doing the stories and mighod, most of the plotting was better

than most of the magazine science fiction of the period!

I bought a lot of horror comics, but while I remember many of the individual stories quite clearly, I have largely forgotten the names. Aside from those I have already mentioned, the only names I remember are: Mysterious Tales, Unknown Worlds, The Crypt of Terror, Weird Fantasy, Weird Science, The Vault of Horror, Forbidden Worlds, The Hand of Fate (now there was one helluva comics character...Fate, himself!), Tales of Horror, Tales of Terror, Weird Stories, Terrifying Tales of Fantasy, Shock Suspense Stories. There were countless others, of course, but my memory fails when it comes to naming them.

Unknown Worlds and Forbidden Worlds were companion magazines, ala the EC line. Though they were not notable for the quality of the stories nor for the quality of the interior art, I remember some very fine covers on these magazines. One such I remember particularly well, appeared on Forbidden Worlds: it showed a vampire and a zombie fighting tooth and nail, as it were. The issue of Unknown for the same period showed a girl in a spider web of incredible proportions, and two gigantic spiders coming toward her (and the reader) across the web. I don't remember whether these two comics were monthlies, or whether they were bi-monthlies which alternated.

From what little I can remember of the character, I would say that Ron Eilik is wrong about Captain America being a man of superhuman strength who could be "quelled by a crack on the skull." From what I remember of the character, you were correct when you said ((Kipple #5)) that Captain America had no super-powers but was just an athletic type, like Batman.

There were a fairly large number of characters--both before and after the period Harmon remembers--that he didn't mention:

Doll Man & Doll Girl	Submariner
Captain America	Robotman
Aquaman	The Human Torch
Jon Jonz	Mary Marvel
Green Arrow & Speedy	Plastic Man
Tommy Tomorrow	The Black Canary

And oh yes, in regard to your repeated queries: Tommy Tomorrow was (and perhaps still is) one of the characters in the DC line. He was/is a member of the "Planeteers," something of an interstellar police force. I never much liked the character, which may explain why I don't remember him too vividly.

LEN MOFFATT: I am a daily newspaper and Sunday comics fan. I suspect my favorites are typical of many an sf fan: Pogo, Peanuts, BC, Alley Oop, Buck Rogers (now that Leiber is doing the story, and the new artist is giving the strip real "character"), Prince Valiant, Hubert, Beetle Bailey; listed in no particular order...oh yes, and Gordo. ((Pauls speaking now: my favorite newspaper characters are Pogo, Peanuts, Rick O'Shay, Big George, The Nebbishes, Beetle Bailey, Oscar,

Kippy and, of course, Feifer's strips, though they don't appear with any regularity. "BC", to me, means a cold tablet...please explain.))

I too remember Robotman. In fact, I vaguely remember the very first book or strip or whatever it was. Don't remember the android term being applied to him, but I recall only the first of the series. Guess I went into the service shortly after Robotman's first appearance. I managed to keep up with Astounding and read books and other things when available, but I never became a comic book buff. Getting back to Robotman, I remember being pleased with the idea. It seemed more like Real Science Fiction than did Superman. Guess I've always been critical of Superman, even in my naive youth. I remember drawing or writing a parody, called "Stuperman" (how clever and original, wot?), in which Our Hero was the exact opposite of Superman. Stuperman was fat, pot-bellied, wore the Superman uniform and, as I recall, fell kersplat (but not fatally) when he tried flying by jumping off a building. He did manage to save the damsel in distress (or whatever cornball situation I had contrived) but was generally a fat, sluggish bumbler. To strain my memory on how Robotman came to be, it seems to me he was an ordinary human being--handsome young scientist, or something ordinary like that--and his body got mangled in a car accident. Put his buddy transplants his brain into the metal robot body, so he really wasn't a robot in the true sense of the word. Seems like they were able to disguise the metal body so he looked like a human being, and I think he slipped out of his "human suit" when he went chasing after crooks as Robotman. Seems like I remember some pathos in connection with a girlfriend whom of course he couldn't do much with, being metallic and all, but I may have been reading that into the story line, having a penchant of pathos, as all clowns have...

HARLAN ELLISON: All this talk of comicbookery is welcomed, as I fell prey to the old hunger just a few months ago before I was re-married and moved back here to Evanston. Ted White--who lived in the next building to mine in Greenwich Village--came back from Falls Church, Virginia one weekend, and brought with him several cartons of old comics. Sylvia White could write an amusing and character-revealing (mine) letter on my reactions. To say I whooped and capered and beamed, clapping my hands in childish glee, would be to understate monstrously. I went berserk and wound up buying a larger stack than I had any right to buy, on the pretext that I was giving them to my newly-acquired 12-year-old son. In reality (he said, employing the phraseology of the comics), I was buying them to read myself.

Did you know that Will Eisner, who did The Spirit (not only, as Jim Harmon recalls, for the newspapers, but for a Spirit comic) now does a monthly "preventive maintenance" magazine for the US Army called PS, and he still draws like the old Will Eisner. When I was in the militia I would look forward to the damned pocket-sized mag each month, just to dredge up old memories. You'd never think draining a deuce-and-a-half's crackcase could be made enjoyable, but Eisner's droll and inventive drawings make it just that. Eisner also drew--before The Spirit--a "mystery man" character (which was our name for anyone with a mask and/or super-powers) called Uncle Sam. The drawing was not as sophisticated as Eisner's later work, and the continuity of the strip was illogical to the point of absurdity, but in those 1939 pre-war days of strange, twilight rumblings from Europe, his characterization of the Nazi element as "The

"Black Legion" was very close to social commentary. I re-read one of these this morning in National Comics and while I found it of course adolescent, it carried me back, which is, I'm sure, the value of all this nostalgia.

On the more commercial side of the ledger, I got the idea about a month ago to do a nostalgia piece on comics for Rogue or Playboy or Esquire (whichever would jump at it first) in the vein of the pieces Esquire and Playboy did some months ago about old-time radio, the Esqy piece on bubble gum cards or the Playboy item by Ray Russell several years ago concerning the Johnson-Smith mail order catalogs. So Ted White and I decided to collaborate, and I took it over to Playboy's Don Gold (Ray Russell no longer being with them) and gave him the old Hollywood story-conference brainstorming technique. I unwrapped my attache case full of old Jumbo Comics, Doll Man, Flash, All-Star, Nickle Comics, Star Spangled Comics, Mystery Man Comics and what have you, and he snapped completely. The poor soul went cavorting about the office clutching the frayed edges of my number 4 Batman, shrieking about how glorious and wonderous they were, and like that. Then he settled down and told me he was sorry but my friend Charles Beaumont had just sold them a piece along the same lines (well, not exactly; he had done one on comic strips, from The Yellow Kid to Peanuts, with a chunk inna center annent comic books), it was in galleys, and would show up in the March 1961 issue. Which leads me to believe (bearing in mind the fact that Freeman and Marshall, who do work for Rogue, had suggested the same damned thing about two weeks before I got to Evanston, entirely independant of my researches) that Charles Fort was right, and when it's "steam engine time" the steam engine will get invented: when it's culturally time to start reading and reminiscing about the comics of the late 30's and early 40's, every slob who can wield a pen will do a piece in that line.

So at present Rogue is dickering for the piece, and will probably say no because some of the people in that office are "afraid" of nostalgia pieces for one or another personal reason, or because Playboy is doing it and they're terrified that someone will say they're imitating their competitor. In which case Ted and I will offer it to Esquire (which is 98% more prestige anyhow, despite Playboy and Rogue's mounting sales), who will probably say no because Philip Wylie or Albert Schweitzer or Dame Judith Anderson is doing a piece on comics. This is the reason guys who make their living behind a typer want to open a vein.

I am delighted with all the comic memory stuff flitting around, however, and if anyone is publishing any of this sort of thing, I'd appreciate their putting me on their "you'll get it" list, with the understanding that if a synapse trips I might contribute a letter of comment or (should I go into a state of catalepsy) even write an article myself. (I suppose I should mention here that Harlan's address is: Harlan Ellison, 139 Callan Avenue, Evanston, Illinois.)

What I'd desperately love to see would be a definitive piece on Simon and Kirby who did The Newboy Legion, The Boy's Ranch series, Manhunter, Sandman (after a while) and the Sky Masters newspaper strip. These two were tops! They had it better than anyone. I remember the stuff they did for Star Spangled Comics (featuring The Star Spangled Kid and Strikey--the latter who looked like a pansy prizefighter with a head of receding curly yellow hair) and it was quite enthralling. Their plots were tight and lucid and had a ring of verisimilitude the others could not touch,

their drawings were clean and inventive and memorable. They were, to me in those days, the kings of the comics, and they could do no wrong. I haven't any of their stuff on hand at present, though Ted White undoubtedly has a complete file (grrr!) but I'll make anyone in the audience a promise: if they will furnish anywhere near a referential set of any one or two (or more) series' by Simon and Kirby, I'll do them a fanzine article on that series that will stand them on their ear...an article about half the size of this fanzine! The comics will be handled with care, will be returned, and everyone can be happy ever after. In fact, I think we are building up a rather large and worthwhile bibliography and critical addenda thing on old comics; the sort of backlog of reminiscence that some smart writer is going to cull for a non-fiction study of the phenomenon. I'd like to be the guy to do it, but with the press of work what it is, I'm sure someone else will beat me to the punch.

I've long held with the opinion that Dr. Fred Wertham (the ass who almost single-handedly got "our breed" of comics killed and helped institute the Comics Code Authority with his rabid fanatical lectures and his book "Seduction Of The Innocent"--an hysterical and erroneous tract, at best--in the 40's) was a dangerous whack (and his recent attack on "The Untouchables"--despite my agreement with him in principle as regards this sick and dispicable TV assault--in Ty Guide) who so badly needed institutionalizing that there was no point talking about it, but even though the idiot is considered the authority in this authority-loving land where violence, j.d. and the corruption of tot's morals by comics is concerned, he had a point. (The longest sentence, the most involved syntax, and the murkiest phraseology since Hugo's "Hunchback of Notre Dame.")

The point Wertham made was that there was a great deal of suggestive matter in the comics, and I checked back to see. He was right. Take one issue of Doll Man Quarterly, for instance. In the summer 1942 issue, in the lead story alone, by William Erwin Maxwell, a story of 13 pages and 111 panels of illustration (including the display panel on the first page), without a particularly prurient turn of mind, I found:

- 10 examples of the outlining of the female vaginal area
- 18 flagrant examples of the sensuous outlining of breasts
- 6 instances of the art delineation of female nipples
- 8 examples of a woman's skirt disarrayed to shows her upper thighs
- 1 example of a woman's skirt disarrayed to show her garters
- 3 examples of the detailed outlining (through dress) of the female buttocks
- 16 examples of the drawing of male buttocks and privates (outlined through clothing) of the type found in homosexual posing-strap-type magazines
- and four contextual examples of sadistic or lascivious advances made on a woman by men or midgets posing as kids

I can see where Wertham got his material. Now even granting artistic liscense, and saying, "Well, hell, that's how the cat draws," you've still got a pretty sizable batch of suggestive drawings there. This was not true with many of the comics of that period, but of this group (the Arnold-edited ones) the ratio was too high to ignore. I rather suspect that if Wertham had wanted to research his case a little better (instead of leaping at old dogs like Crime Does Not Pay Comics) he could have based what he said more soundly in truth. None of this detracts

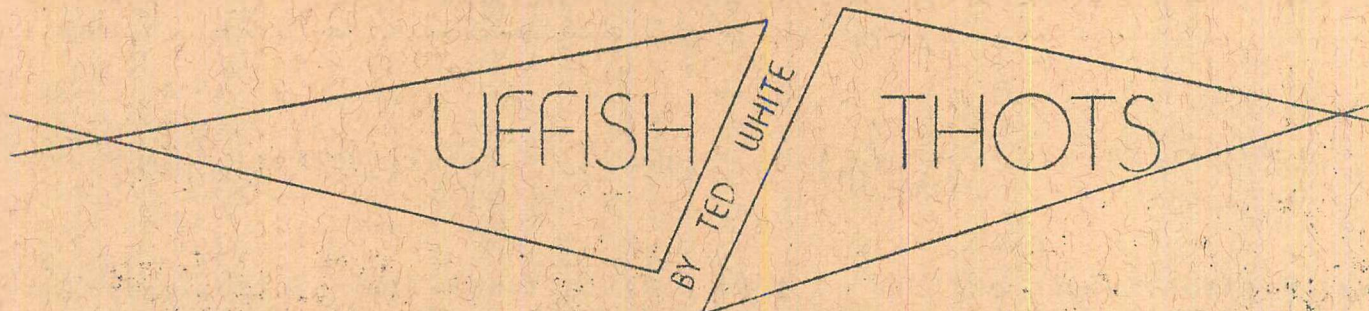
from the value of the two big groups of "wholesome" our-type comics, the Superman-DC-National comics and the Fawcett Captain Marvel books. Just as with the stf boom of the 50's, the schlock publishers killed the golden goose.

K

quotes FROM THE QUATWHUNKERY...

Tex! Textron Quickdraw! You've come back to Yucca-Pucca Gulch...// "You bastard," said Julius Ceasar.// Aside from that, Mr. Ben Gurion, why don't you like Mr. Eichman?// Let me give you a great big fat sloppy kiss!// Did they think I would kill you for \$5,000? By George, come to think of it, that is a lot of money!// This is Stuperman, the foe of evil men everywhere, friend to the helpless. In reality, Stuperman is a meek, mild-mannered paper-box maker, Len Moffatt.// But I tell you, I'm NOT a haystack!// I'm gonna be dead; I KNOW I'm gonna be dead. It isn't my lucky day.// I think we can safely answer "no" in the affirmative.// People don't generally die as often as they change their jobs.// I wonder if there's enough tea left in here to throw out?// And this is our little bungle of love.// I named my parakeet "Cheech."// Do you prefer girls in bed or on the rocks?// An octopus has eight testicles.// And God spake unto Moses, saying, and I quote...// The ink can says "Shake well before using." It neglects to caution "Make sure cap is tight before shaking."// The winters were long and very cold in the Big Smokies. They were pretty lousy in the Little Smokies, too. That's why we lived in the Catskills.// Sunday morning in Arizona is just like Sunday morning in Connecticut only more bowlegged.// You can be as tall as she is--stand on her knee caps!// Bridge out! Slow to 60!// On one's hand it is much better to have fingers than toes.// PERSONAL: Young lady with short right leg would like to meet young man with short left leg.// After all, is it every story that ends with the hero tacked on a cross?// A glass of water? I said I was thirsty, not dirty!// My pillow is stuffed with pig-feathers.// I visualize the sex urge as a disease.// I can type a hundred letters a minute. The only trouble is, I can't make them into words.// I want to build myself a workbench, but I don't have a workbench to build it on.// I've got a picture of the Statue of Liberty raping a tugboat.// "Why is the sky blue?" "Because it isn't green!" "That just shows how stupid I am...I thought there would be a more complicated reason.// "The earth can't feed this many people." "Then why don't you leave?"// Exercise will kill germs, but it's very difficult to get them to exercise.// We have no statistics on the number of women in Athens, as they were not considered worth counting.// I distinctly remember the world shaking at my birth. On the other hand, it may have been my mother laughing.// He was so moral that some people thought he was only fooling.// He is said to have sinned occasionally, but never quite got the hang of it.// On his fourth voyage, Columbus sailed along the coast of Central America trying to find the mouth of the Ganges river. It wasn't there, somehow.// Thanks to Jack Douglas, Charles Schulz, Mad, George Spencer, and various unremembered fanzines, as well as the evil mind of Ted Pauls.

EDITORIAL NOTE: The following column is composed of excerpts from letters written between March 1959 and February 1960. Some of it has appeared in the pages of my magazines before--though never in Kipple--and some of it has not. At any rate, some of this column will be new to everybody and most of it new to nearly everyone. --Ted Pauls



"ELLISON FANDOM": The so-called "Seventh Fandom" was not "Ellison Fandom." It was a lot of things, and one of these "things" was an unusual manifestation known to his friends as Harlan Ellison--to his enemies he had more colorful names... But you might as well call that particular uprising "Grennell Fandom" (because it was formed at Dean's feat by a bunch of worshipful fans--Ellison, Harness, Ish, Magnus, and others--at a Midwestcon and through correspondence), or even "Nydahl Fandom."

I say that because the key fanzine following the death of Quandry was Vega, published by Joel Nydahl. Joel published Dean Grennell's first fanzine appearance, and very soon was publishing Marion Bradley, Gregg Calkins, and Bob Tucker--in that order. Also appearing were Harlan Ellison, and your old neighbor, Marian Cox. The annish (which was also the final issue, as things turned out) included Boggs, and a host of other BNF's. From the fifth to twelfth issues (published monthly until the pause before the 100-page Annish) Vega was the top fanzine going. And that annish was not just thrown together like a 100-page SAPSzine--it was the ultimate distillation of fannish goodies.

Harlan Ellison's Science Fantasy Bulletin/Dimensions, which never quite made the monthly or bi-monthly schedule he boasted for it, and whose annish was three years late--THAT SFB/Dimensions--was another damn fine zine, and during its more often appearances at about the same time Vega was on the rise, it was an important zine. Each issue was so big that it might have been considered comparable to the average zine's annish--and the 'names' Ellison crammed in were almost unbelievable.

But the important factor in all of this was that "7th Fandom" worshipped the 6th Fandom of Quandry; each editor strove to outdo his peers in creating the sort of zine he thought would most perfectly emulate Q. "7th Fandom," like its predecessor, was "fun-loving." It strove to "replace" the Quandry era--not to supplant it. This is quite important: the names changed, but the goals remained similar. Sure, there were clods, but there were more clods in Q's time, fans forgotten today. There were even good fans forgotten today; who remembers Duggie Fisher, or his Odd...? (Yet, in that zine Elsherry made his famous Nolacon report.)

In fact, as we've drawn further from the real era of Quandry, we've come closer to realizing the goals of that Fandom. It is like the British, reading of US conventions, putting on even more fan-

nish ones, in the hopes of "coming up to" US standards.

Quandry-fandom was a cruddy era by today's standards, with only two to five really decent zines, and a tremendous number of absolutely unreadable crudzines. (They'd make your 1958-ish Hi look like Gestetnered perfection in comparison, Ted...is that a graphic enough picture?)

If you want to make a case for a separate 7th Fandom--the real article, and not the self-named group who were only tail-enders to 6th Fandom, trying to take over where LeeH left off--you might try Psychotic. It was distinctly different in flavor, and yet I still think of it as the last dying gasp of 6th Fandom...

Magnus' SF, oddly enough, was quite uninfluential--as he will himself admit. This was due to a rare fluke: the first issue made the best impression of all; subsequent issues, although intrinsically superior, were anti-climatic. SF lasted as a monthly for only a short period, and due to its cramped format and local talent never really inspired much fannish thought or action. When it went full-sized and became Varioso (nee Vamp) it became a much more interesting zine--but at the same time it became extremely irregular, and still managed not to really establish itself.

The Cult is quite a separate phenomenon from "7th Fandom." The "7th Fandom" movement started in 1953 and died by the beginning of 1954. Psychotic was the established leader by mid-1954, and Abstract had arisen to combat it. Vorzimer was the key figure in establishing the Cult, which he did in August and September of 1954 (contrary to what the Fancyclopedia II says). The Cult was made up, almost without exception, of the "next generation" of fans after Ellison's crew. The Ellison bunch started in fandom in their separate ways in the midst of Quandry and were WKF's or neo-BNF's by 1952 and 1953. The Cult group, by and large, started out in fandom around 1952 and 1953, and were only beginning to make names for themselves in 1954--late 1954. There were exceptions; we had Russell Watkins, self-appointed censor of 6th Fandom, and Magnus was first on the waiting list--but most of us were "the vanguard of 8th Fandom"--or so it said...

As to FAPA's 700-page peaks, these all followed 1955. The 1955 con in Cleveland marked the reinterest of LeeH, and when in 1956 DC gained control of the FAPA administration, and the Shaws were bring down 100 pages a mailing alone (and I was usually contributing as much, with the other DC FAPAns doing a larger than previously-normal share as well), the mailings started breaking 600 pages and higher. The peak was reached in 1957--well after the total death of "7th Fandom" and during a period when precious little fanac was to be found outside the apas--and that by waiting-listers who ceased such activity when they got in.

You'll find it hard to convince me that "7th Fandom," the Cult, and the huge FAPA mailings were all part and parcel of the same "Fandom." They couldn't be any more unrelated if they tried...

BOB PAVLAT mentioned that no one in WSFA could come up to Magnus' standards of criticism when they (WSFA) began the reissue of Speculative Review. I don't think Pavlat need feel quite so inferior to Magnus as a "critic." His reasons for his values judgements are probably as though-out as Magnus', and his perception is probably as good, if not as trained. Magnus appealed (as any good critic will) more for the manner in which he wrote than for what he actually said. Style, here,

is paramount, and Magnus' I-see-all perceptive dogmaticism is more likely to impress the by-stander with his actual critical abilities than will a more unprepossessing critic's.

To go into this matter of style more closely in two unrelated cases: first, Bob is quite right in not noticing most subtleties in style--they're too subtle to be important. For literature such as science fiction, an ability to handle words competently without attracting undue attention is an asset. Most science fiction could have been written--as far as style goes--by one man. Moreover, style is easily changed. Heinlein would seem to have a unique, instantly identifiable style in stf. But read his Bradbury type story in Saturn. It was so un-Heinlein-like that many readers (Pavlat among them, as I remember) panned it out of hand as a bad story--probably because in their minds it did not justify the Heinlein tag: it wasn't the type or style of story the byline had led them to expect.

Style intrudes into my consciousness in one of three instances: First, because it is bad--the writer is an amateur, perhaps; second because it is good--I marvel over an extremely well-chosen word or phrase; third, simply because it is different. Heinlein's style is noticeably different--analysis will show a "conversational" style, largely aided and abetted by first-person narration, with reliance upon a few stock "Umm, yes"'s and such similar devices. But it works... I personally disliked Damon Knight's "Dio" (in Infinity) because the story was almost entirely told in present tense, which while for a supposedly valid reason (to suggest, as I remember, the timelessness of the characters in the story), too often simply interfered with my reading, the unfamiliar construction sounding jarringly off-key.

For bad style, I refer you to those works of amateur which are occasionally printed, like Peyton Place, or the first section (book one) of Ferris' Harrison High. (The latter is not that bad a book, however, despite the over-emphasis at first on locker-room sex; it is painstakingly accurate, and the first section was apparently written while the author was in high school. The second section shows a time-lapse and greater maturity in style on the part of the author.)

And for good style...well, at this point to each his own. My tastes are probably phillistine in this respect: I think Hammett had exquisite style, and that Raymond Chandler often came closer to writing the "Great American Novel" than anyone else. Recently I've enjoyed the twists of style in a book of Robert Benchley's which Bob Briggs sold me a year or so back. Benchley enjoys twisting cliches into non-sequiturs which are screamingly funny in a quiet way.

--Ted E. White

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QUOTES & NOTES

BY TED PAULS

As of this ninth instalment, this column's range has been expanded to include a number of things heretofore discussed in the editorial (which has shrunk to a mere page, as you will have noticed). I'll probably still quote items from various sources to comment on them, but henceforth this column will consist more of "notes" than "quotes". Aside from replacing the more interesting sections of the editorial (i.e., the sections where I don't talk about my own material), this column will take over the function of "The Top Shelf," which henceforth ceases to exist as a separate column. This will make a much longer interesting column, rather than two or three short ones in each issue.

DUCK, MURRAY LEINSTER! A couple weeks ago I purchased the paperback edition of "Colonial Survey," entitled "The Planet Explorer." Passing for the moment over the inappropriate title given this paperback edition, I would like to comment that while this is certainly not a bad science fiction book, it most certainly did not deserve a "Hugo". The nominations must have been sick for that year; or perhaps the entire field was sick. At any rate, in "Colonial Survey" we have an excellent example of the end product being worth less than the sum of its parts: four stories ranging from good to superb are combined to make one book, which, while logic demands otherwise, is neither superb or particularly good. The writing is fine--certainly as good as anything Leinster has done--the stories are interesting, but on the negative side the characterization is faulty (for a reason which I will explain later) and the background is full of large holes.

The four stories in this book were originally published in Astounding Science Fiction over a period of years. They were originally unrelated tales and the central character was different in every one. What Leinster has done is to change the names of the central characters in three of the stories in an effort to make the readers believe that all four of these stories are incidents in the life of the same man--Bordman. (His first name isn't given anywhere in the 170 pages.) But characteristics and personalities don't change with name, so what you actually have is one man with several different personalities in evidence throughout this book. While the characterization may be well nigh flawless within the separate stories, it is rather confusing when considered as a whole. And you must consider it as a whole, because though it is never referred to

as such anywhere on this book, it is the obvious intent of the author to represent "Colonial Survey" as a "novel". Leinster--or the janitor at the Avon Building--has written some inserts which explain (or rather try to explain) what happened to Bordman in between stories. These are hopelessly dull and remind one of author's footnotes in a technical journal.

The background, as I said, is none too good. In "Combat Team," for instance, Bordman has a running ideological dispute with the other major character of the tale, Huyghens. Huyghens claims that robots are making humanity soft and brainless, while Bordman claims that said robots are performing a Great Service and like that. This is all well and good, but robots aren't even mentioned in the other three stories! Why are they suddenly such a grave problem in "Combat Team"?

These are some of the faults in "Colonial Survey". I've just pointed out the more obvious ones--I assure you there are others. There are also some fine qualities; but are there enough to offset the liabilities and warrant a "Hugo"? I think not.

THE LATEST CRY OF THE NAMELESS arrived December 21, and I wish it had arrived somewhat earlier. I should like to have discussed Les Nirenberg's one-page filler, "I Think, Therefore I Fan" in my "Conversation With Joe Neophan". I mean, Joseph Neophan (who lives in the attic of 1448 and is a cockroach) would have been stupid enough to misunderstand Nirenberg's piece as thoroughly as he misunderstood Terry Carr's squib in Fanac #66. He would have said that Les was hitting below the belt, that he was insulting me, Art Castillo, and Bill Donaho. This is what he would have said. Of course, he would have been wrong. Or would he....?

After reading the piece over several times, I am ^{NOT} sure just what Nirenberg is doing. It's satire, of course, but on what? Les manages to get in a couple digs at Donaho and intellectuals as a whole; part of it was evidently inspired by the editorial in Esprit #1; yet, on the other hand, it may be a satire on Bill Gray's article in Esprit #2, since it quotes a few lines directly from that article. Then again, Kipple might be in a more direct line of fire than I originally thought, because I am the person who kept insisting that a discussion fanzine would fill a need, and Les lays this line on rather thickly.

At any rate, I don't think anyone need be offended by this filler, though if a less expert hand than Nirenberg's were doing it the idea might be offensive. The only thing I would desire is an explanation of just what it is all about. It reads like a satire on a satire on a satire...

IT OCCURS TO ME THAT THERE IS A LIMIT to the amount of interesting talk which can evolve from something like this recent interest in comic books, though to look at the last few issues of Kipple (including this one) you might not think so. So I would like to request that a new subject be brought up, and I would further like to suggest that that subject be gum card fandom. How many of you remember collecting gum cards? I recall that I had three very large cartons full of them, as a result less of buying than of winning them.

We pitched gum cards, just like pennies. I suppose most everyone has pitched gum cards at one time or another. Any number of kids from two on up would throw the cards up against the nearest flat surface (a

brick wall, garage door, etc.) and whoever's card landed with an edge closest to the wall won all the other cards. This game directly evolved from the "big kids'" game of penny pitching.

There were primarily two types of gum cards: one which came with gum--these were usually slick-surfaced, and beautifully colored--and a second which cost something like five cents for twenty. These were printed on very poor quality cardboard in only two colors--reddish-brown and white--and came in perforated strips of twenty, which one usually managed to tear in half instead of on the perforations.

We used gum cards like money, to buy any items we might desire from friends and even strangers. It was absolutely essential, in our neighborhood, never to leave the house without thirty or forty gum cards. You'd usually meet someone with a yo-yo or a snake to "sell" and make a satisfactory transaction. We never assigned any real values to these cards, but some were worth more than others. For some reason I never found out, two types of card were particularly valuable: the Space Ranger series on long, thin cards; and the square blocks which featured a story about feudal communities, jousts, Hannibal crossing the alps, the Crusades, or some other scene of the pre-New World world. These were worth about forty regular cards, such as the serial cards featuring Hopalong Cassidy, The War in the Pacific, Custer's Last Stand, etc.

The only other very cheap cards that I remember were "Indian cards" printed in three or four colors on something resembling laundry cardboard, and also sold in strips. These cost twice as much as the brown and white ones--ten for a nickle--but were much better in the ways of stories and drawings.

There were many many different types of cards. A lot were western scenes and stories, but the Korean War was going on at the time and so quite a few pertained to weapons and combat tactics, as well as war stories. There were cards which depicted baseball, basketball and football players, and there was a series of very large gum cards featuring the important radio personalities of the late 40's: Bing Crosby, Martha Raye, Bob Cummings... A little later came "Look And See" cards which depicted famous educators, inventors, political figures, philosophers. There was also a question pertaining to each of the men or women and the answer was printed in such a way that it was made visible only by surfacing a piece of red cellophane (included with the card) over it.

I think, however, that the cards I preferred above all others came in the early years of the last decade: automobile cards and license plate cards. These were distinctly different cards and the only reason I place them together is that they appeared almost simultaneously. The automobile cards depicted old cars, dream cars, and sports cars on the front in several colors, while on the back such information as the purchase price when new, the mph as well as miles per gallon, and a brief description. The license plate cards depicted the license plates of all 48 states as well as twenty or thirty countries. Colors, spacing, all was exactly like the original in every detail. On the back of the card there was various information such as the population of the area, its size, the capital city, etc.

Anybody care to contribute their thoughts on this subject?

the effects of NUCLEAR WEAPONS

This article is composed of several sections of a large pamphlet published by the Center For the Study of Democratic Institutions. Copies of the entire pamphlet can be obtained by writing the Center at Box 4068, Santa Barbara, California. Single copies are available free on request, after which copies are 25¢ per copy. --TPP

BY HARRISON BROWN
& JAMES REAL

Thermonuclear weapons range in explosive force up to somewhat more than twenty megatons, corresponding to 20 million tons of TNT. These heavy bombs can be carried by B-52 bombers. The size of bombs that can be carried by missiles are at present smaller. Minuteman and Polaris will probably be able to carry one-megaton warheads by the mid-60's. Soviet ICBM warheads and Atlas and Titan will probably be able to carry warheads ranging from five to ten megatons.

When a ten-megaton warhead is detonated, roughly a third of its total energy is released in the form of heat and light. The bomb material and surrounding air are heated to extremely high temperatures, and the resultant fireball grows quickly to a diameter of three and a half miles. The heat flash persists for about twenty seconds and on a clear day can produce third degree burns out to about twenty miles and second-degree burns out to a distance of twenty-five miles from the explosion. A ten-megaton burst in the atmosphere thirty miles above the earth could set fire to combustibles over 5,000 square miles on a clear day.

A surface burst of a ten-megaton bomb would produce a crater about 250 feet deep and a half mile wide. The zone of complete demolition would be about three miles in diameter. Severe blast damage would extend to about nine miles from the center of the explosion, and moderate to major damage would extend out to twelve miles, or over an area of 450 square miles.

It is likely that firestorms will result from a thermonuclear burst over a large city. A firestorm is a huge fire in which cooler air is drawn to the center of the burning area, elevating the temperature and perpetuating the conflagration. Winds reach hurricane velocities. The holocaust consumes the available oxygen in the air with the result that persons not burned to death may die of suffocation or of carbon monoxide poisoning.

The explosion results in the instantaneous emission of nuclear radiation in quantities that can be lethal at distances up to two miles, but since persons in that area would be killed anyway by the blast and thermal effects, this is not an important factor. Far more dangerous is the radiation from the radioactive products which are produced in the explosion and which are scattered over the countryside as "fallout."

More than 200 different radioactive species are formed in the explosion of a thermonuclear weapon. These attach themselves to the inert debris which is swept into the air by the explosion and which forms the familiar mushroom cloud. The heavier particles of debris fall back to earth within the first hour or so. The lighter particles are carried downward and, depending upon the wind conditions, will be deposited over an area fifteen to thirty miles wide and 100 to 500 miles long. A thermonuclear bomb exploded at low altitude deposits about 80% of its fallout locally in this manner. The balance is injected into the stratosphere and is distributed globally. About one-half of the fission debris carried into the stratosphere of the Northern Hemisphere falls to earth with a year.

The local fallout from a ten-megaton explosion could, if spread uniformly, produce lethal levels of radioactivity over about 5,000 square miles of land. Thus, in the absence of some protection from radiation, there could be many deaths far from the center of the explosion. Indeed, in the event of a large-scale thermonuclear attack and in the absence of radiation protection, far more deaths would result from radiation effects than from heat or blast.

TEN MEGATONS ON LOS ANGELES

In an attempt to comprehend the order of magnitude of the effect of a thermonuclear explosion over a major metropolitan area, let us imagine that a ten-megaton warhead is exploded in the civic area of downtown Los Angeles. The bomb hits during the working hours of a weekday and the attack occurs sometime in the fall--this last in deference to the strategic supposition that a nuclear war will be launched only after the crops are harvested and put underground by the attacker.

The blast effects would exterminate virtually all but the most deeply sheltered living things within a radius of five miles. Blast casualties would be severe up to a distance of ten miles. But the phenomenon that would complete the devastation of life in the entire area would be fire. The area would be one great sea of fire, which would burn until there was nothing more to consume. A good proportion of the metropolitan area's three-and-a-half million cars and trucks would be lifted and thrown like grotesque Molotov cocktails, to spew flaming gasoline, oil, and automotive shrapnel onto and into everything in their paths. In an instant most underground gasoline and oil tanks would rupture and explode within the blast area, and a large proportion of the remainder within the firestorm radius would follow, each in its own particular manner--pumps and pipes sheered and, finally, higher and higher ambient temperatures which would soon expand, rupture, and explode the remainder.

Beyond the blast radius, the remaining area of Los Angeles is occupied by relatively few first-class concrete and steel buildings; a much greater proportion is the debris of an industrial society: auto junk yards, lumberyards, row upon row of cheap flammable commercial structures. But

most important, this remaining area is comprised of over 50% brush-covered hills and scrub forest. Anyone who has participated in the fighting of a California brush fire and who is acquainted with the remarkable explosive nature of the oil-carrying greasewood, sumac, and scrub pine is surprised and frightened by the volatility of the material even when it is wet. The novel aspect of a thermonuclear conflagration, however, is that most of these highly flammable materials would break into intense flame simultaneously--a phenomenon never before achieved either by man or by natural causes.

There are relatively few facts about large fires. Several firestorms were produced by the incendiary bombing of German cities, and one such storm occurred after a fire raid on Tokyo. An atomic bomb created a firestorm at Hiroshima, but not at Nagasaki. It seems safe to speculate that in Los Angeles at least a twenty-five-mile radius and an unknown distance beyond it would be, within minutes, engulfed in a suffocating firestorm that would persist for a long time. It seems unlikely that there would be appreciable rainfall for weeks or even months; thus, the basin fire would proceed in all directions with no interference from man or nature.

It seems clear that in the event of such an attack there would be virtually no survivors of the blast and thermal effects, with the possible exception of a few persons who had made elaborate preparations for surviving the catastrophe. Their shelters would have to be very deep and provided with a built-in oxygen supply and cooling system. Unless they were able to maintain themselves in such a shelter for many weeks, their chances of making their way to relative safety would be slim.

Although the Los Angeles situation is an extreme one, the vulnerability of other major metropolitan areas differs only in degree. If firestorms are indeed the rule rather than the exception, as seems likely in view of the huge quantities of flammable material that exist in all cities, they can expect the survivors of a direct hit to be few in number. Civil defense preparations in our major metropolitan areas would appear, under the circumstances, to make sense only if we were willing to rebuild those areas to provide for deep, extensive, and sealed underground quarters. An alternative would be to provide for rapid mass evacuation to the countryside, where shelters need only protect against fallout. But the time for such evacuation following warning of an impending attack would be so short that the technological problems involved in moving the people would appear to be considerably greater than those involved in providing deep underground shelters.

In any event, it is evident that individual metropolitan areas are extremely vulnerable to thermonuclear attack. It is also clear that any program designed to decrease the vulnerability of these areas would be difficult to put into effect and extremely expensive. Rationally, were we to make vigorous efforts to survive a large-scale nuclear war, we would forget about our existing cities, reconcile ourselves to the loss of their inhabitants, and concentrate our efforts in other areas.

--Harrison Brown & James Real

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BY MARION Z. BRADLEY

"A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds... Speak what you think now in hard words, and tomorrow speak what tomorrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict everything you said today. --'Ah, so you shall be sure to be misunderstood.'--is it so bad, then, to be misunderstood?"

These words of Ralph Waldo Emerson have been used often enough, I suppose, as an excuse for unstable and inconstant opinions; but sooner or later everyone--unless he is hide-bound by the same old out-grown opinions he held at the age of thirteen--is accused of being inconsistent. A reviewer of any sort, whether he is reviewing books, fanzines or the Queen's troops, is especially open to this sort of attack; and it is then that he should inscribe the words above, with a diamond drill, on whatever he uses for his thick skin.

For the process of reviewing, or of writing a review column, has as much, if not more effect upon the reviewer as upon the reviewed; and considerably more

CRYIN' IN THE SINK

than it can have upon the casual reader. The writer of reviews is changed by each review he writes, by each fanzine he reads and decides to review or not to review, by each comment upon his reviews, and by the very appearance in print of the words which represented his best opinions of a month ago. Unless he is hog-tied by the terror of sounding inconsistent, his opinions will shift and change, his discrimination will edge slowly upwards; he becomes more demanding; the fanzines which would have pleased him at the beginning now seem mediocre or worse; his steady readers have either revised their standards to accord with his growing discriminatory powers, or else they have formulated and crystallized their resistances to his individual approach; when this happens, the reviewer has reached about the limit of his powers.

(Past this point, of course, there comes the point of diminishing returns--where the reviewer has read everything and seen everything, or feels as if he had--and everything, unless it is startlingly fresh and

FANZINE REVIEWS

unique, appears to him simply tiresome and repetitious. When this happens, his editors should gather themselves firmly together and kick his caboose firmly out of their pages; not because he is a bad reviewer, but simply because he has lost touch with the largest portion of his audience--in fact, everyone who has not followed the whole path with him. But let us hope that I will not reach this point for many a long day--and let us also hope that when I do, I shall know it of my own accord, and not wait for the boot in the tail.)

As I have said before, in the pages of this column, ideally a review should act as a potter's wheel upon which the reader can form and shape his own opinions; by being definite, it can at least give the dissenting reader a focal point on which to verbalize his own assessment of the fanzine reviewed. For this reason I have no tolerance of fuzzy-minded, good-natured fanzine reviews, which give the reader no whetstone for his own ideas but simply a soft cushion against which resistance meets only spongy, soggy good will.

But the reviewer of this kind must reckon also with the tender feelings of the creative people whom he assails again and again, and with the very definite possibility that he will wound some youthful self-confidence and abort a prospective fannish career, if nothing worse. And that is why I feel it vital to emphasize and re-emphasize in these pages that I regard all reviews--not only my own--as a hook on which to base subjective opinions, not as a Judgment from Zeus from which there is no appeal.

And that is why I feel that Kipple, by printing not one fanzine review column but two, performs a great service to those who love fanzines and their creators. By assessing the differences between the Crying Sink and the Chopping Block, and casting into the scales, likewise, the differences--objective and subjective--between Ted Pauls, esquire, and Mmme. Mez, the reader will, consciously or unconsciously, accelerate that day when the opinions of a reviewer will be only ballast cast into the scale of his own individual discrimination.

All of this has been touched off by various commentary on my admittedly random use of the word "slipshod" for the work of Ruth Berman. It is not my purpose here to defend myself, or my use of the term; nor even to apologize, since I doubt if Ruth's ego is as easily bruised as all that. My own subjective bias against whimsy and spontaneity--most people who know me well, know that I prefer a sonnet to free verse--appraises any informal work as being haphazard and offhand; random; and from this it seems to me only a step to the slipshod and the sloppy. Hence my admittedly slipshod use of the word slipshod. In general, the Berman fanzines strike me as having been done with approximately one twentieth of the Berman talent; and even though Ruth has more wit and talent in her twentieth part than the average publisher who Gives His All, I cannot resist a wishful and critical glance at what she could accomplish if she gave us, let us say, half of her true ability.

++ + ++

This was the Month of the Jackpot, fanzine-wise, and since all my stars have been used up on the Christmas Tree, I am going to shirk, for once, the task of classifying this month's crop. Possibly the goodwill of the season has had its effect on me, for I suppose I would give them all four stars this time around; an ungainly number of good fanzines found

their way into Box 158 this month.

Doubtless the most imposing, for sheer size and effort, is Habakkuk, by Bill Donaho (1441 Eighth Street, Berkeley 10, California, 50¢ a copy and free to contributors; no free samples). Bill's fanzines match his size and personality in being imposing; they tend to dwarf, by sheer size and impressiveness, most of the rest of the crop. This one has 114 pages, and if that weren't enough, came in an envelope with a small rider published for the OMPA, called Viper. As usual, the emphasis for this one is thoughtful, discursive, informal and liberal; in fact, most of the liberal literary magazines stack up rather poorly by contrast. Ray Nelson takes a few swings at ingrown/ingrained patriotism in an article called "War Baby," which ought to be required reading for every fanghead Mama who wonders why they "don't teach the kids patriotism in school anymore." Dick Ellington discusses the private codes of juvenile delinquents and comes to the conclusion that they are better adjusted than non-delinquents (which, to this reviewer, sounds just a little like the psychiatrist/pediatrician of the twenties, who insisted that the noisy, aggressive, destructive baby was better adjusted than the disciplined one--in other words, a good theory if society can survive it).* Proctor Scott comments that the main contribution of man to society is garbage. There are many other articles, mostly along these and similar lines; in general, Habakkuk represents pretty well what it sets out to be, a mirror held up to our times. Conclusion: it's a pity that nobody is apt to read it except those who are pretty well in agreement to start with. Art Castillo's "Inquiry into the Theory and Practice of Doublethink" probably deserves a wider dissemination than even Donaho's valiant efforts can give it. But then, the people who could benefit most by reading it probably wouldn't be bothered. I am also prompted to wonder, sometimes, if--by writing these articles and expressing these opinions in order to have them applauded by those of equal intelligence, and like mind--the liberal thinkers don't dispell the energy which might, otherwise, prompt them to do something concrete against the fuggheaded ideas and practices they condemn? This, however, could be made as a general indictment of all thinkers versus doers; and does not diminish the value of the thoughts, ideas and opinions which Donaho has assembled in this meaty symposium.

Jumping immediately to the opposite end of the scale, a slim first issue produced by hectograph (the first hecto zine I've seen in many a long year): Solar #1, from Phil Harrell of 2632 Vincent Avenue, Norfolk, Virginia. About all that can be said about this first issue is that Phil has made full use of the special beauties of the hecto medium, and the cover, which looks slightly like a mescaline dream, makes me wonder what he will do when he thoroughly masters his messy process. There is a feeling of motion, color and space here which are seen all too rarely in the mannered sketches of fan artists; the colors and the swirls seem to shimmer on the paper in

*EDITORS NOTE: While it is quite true that the juvenile delinquent is better adjusted within his sphere of existence than the normal person within his own sphere, this fact is meaningless because of the diversity of the fields. I think, perhaps, that a so-called "normal" person might get along better in the environment of the jd than he (the delinquent) would get along in the world of normal endeavor. I'm sure a fan would be able to adapt himself to street life easier than a hood could adapt himself to fandom...

a way achieved, previously, only by Bjo. I'd suggest bombarding Phil with all sorts of material--for his talents as an editor do not yet begin to meet his talents as an editor--in the hopes that he'll do better next time.

Discord (Redd Boggs, 2209 Highland Place NE, Minneapolis 21, Minnesota), as usual, presents neatly mannered opinions in their bright blue array; and here that inconsistency of which I spoke at the beginning of this column rears its ugly head; for a fanzine supposedly dedicated to disharmony, social discord, protest and rebellion, Discord exhibits an almost croggling self-conformity and consistency. But this is nit-picking. Redd's thoughts on the Hollywood Movie (carefully conformist to the current Intellectual's Opinion--i.e., wholly condemnatory) march neatly beside a formal and precise review of Judy Merrill's The Tomorrow People which neatly impales the lady on the point of a long and cynical pin--doubtless, this is exactly where she belongs--by a loud series of praising her with faint damns. Redd also lists a group of orchestral cliches which he hopes not to hear again until 1965; my personal appreciation of this list was tempered by wistfulness. For, living in hillbilly/gospel-music country, I think wishfully of living in a part of the world where I could here Hadyn, Handel, Stravinsky, or even Tchaikovsky or Bizet often enough to get tired of them; OUR local radio stations regard the Nutcracker Suite as a Heavy Classic, reserved for a shy display once every ten years on a late, late Sunday night when everyone but hopeless invalids are fast asleep. As usual, the letter column is acerbic, brief and well-chosen.

A long-wished-for issue of Dafoe finally arrived here, in a baby-pink cover (but I'm getting a little tired of the propellor-beanied Thurber-type fan who seems to be all Ray Nelson can draw), from John Koning, new address, Pardee Hall, Box 555, Case Institute of Technology, 10904 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland 6, Ohio. And for the first time we find out what Dafoe means; Decline and Fall of Everything. John's personalized editorial comments, reminiscent of the Twippledop in the old Sky Hook, act as a welcome balance for the formalized pattern of the zine; he spends some time defending the fact that he has not, and never will be, a "new look" fanzine, and explaining why he justifies his margins--is that what they call self-justification? Rich Brown and Paul Stanberry contribute a fannish parody of Heinlein's Green Hills of Earth--which, like most parodies, suffers from the fact that it is incomprehensible if you're not familiar with the original--but this one is pretty good entertainment in itself. However, fannish parodies should be limited by law to one per issue, because when I finished this and saw that the next item was called The Abolished Fan, I stuck in my heels and threw the fanzine down to read when I recovered from the onslaught. Harry Warner Jr. talks about a basic fannish library and makes one good point, that the more notable fannish endeavors are frequently malevolent or dated. The fanzine reviews, and the letter column, are somewhat dated by John's infrequent publication; there's nothing wrong with Dafoe that going quarterly wouldn't cure, but while John's in college, that's not very likely. A pity.

Bruce Henstell sent me an issue of Esoterique which, though cleverly done, was so sloppily reproduced that I boggled at reading it, which is one bad effect of that growing discrimination I mentioned; five years ago, before Tesseract, Kipple, and the widespread effect of Ted White on the sloppy fanzine world (I think Ted's total effect on fandom is much greater than he realizes, for he made all of fandom realize that a mimeograph COULD be a precision instrument, and dimin-

ished tolerance for sloppy mimeo work almost 98%)--as I said, five years ago, this would have seemed a pretty well-done fanzine, especially for a teenage fan using unfamiliar or borrowed equipment. Somebody or other (he isn't very careful about identifying his contributors) did an excellent review of "Slan"; there's an article about the new Mad-type zine, Help!; and some exceptionally slipshod (a considered use of the word this time) letters and fanzine reviews. I would paraphrase Shakespeare and ask, please, for less matter with more art...and I don't mean drawings, either!

I dealt with Ruth Berman in general above, so feel little need to mention All Mingo #6--except to wonder why on earth the interiors should be double-spaced? Nor do I care too much for freehand-scrawled titles, being absolutely didactic about the use either of lettering guides OR the humble typewriter. Some of the poetry is a good long way above the fannish norm, and, as I have said again and again, such an array of talent deserves better presentation. Possibly slipshod talent is better than precise mediocrity...but I'm not so sure.

Ciln, the work of Ed Gorman, 242 10th St. NW, Cedar Rapids, Michigan, is neat, discursive, with a most attractive ditto cover in three colors by Mike Kane. Most of this issue is devoted to sighing over past glories of various old sf and fantasy magazines; a worthy, but, I fear, a lost cause. This is what I mean by precise mediocrity.

Reserved for the end, but definitely not the least of these, is a fanzine whose logotype was so smearily mimeographed that nothing of the title but "Kal-----" was distinguishable, coming from Jack Chalker, 5111 Liberty Heights Ave., Baltimore 7, Md. Jack yells in large letters on the contents page that "OK, DAMMIT, THIS IS A SERCON PUBLICATION AND IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT...WE'LL DROP YOU FROM THE MAILING LIST." That, I would say, was fair warning. This is aimed deliberately at amateur writers seeking a place for their work; and (though Ghu forbid that this type of zine should start budding like a Hydra) I think this sort of fanzine is getting just a little too rare in fandom. The fannish humorist and essayist have many outlets for their talents, but the would-be writer, if he can't hit the few remaining markets, is out of luck. Jack states his wish to revive a slice of the "Good Old Days" when a fanzine was a place for budding authors to try their wings, and says, with perhaps a little too much pessimism, that he doesn't expect to succeed. Let's prove him wrong, huh? Frankly, I'd like to see this one succeed. However, he starts off by reprinting a story by H. P. Lovecraft, who is very far from being a "budding author"--although, as some of Lovecraft's lesser work is rare, I enjoyed having a chance to read this. The stencils were evidently cut on two typewriters, one of which is badly out of line and cuts fuzzy letters, the other excellent; I hope he can beg, buy, borrow or steal the better of the two for his next issue. The second effort in this issue is a story by one "Howard St. John", which he identifies as a professional author who has sold from the start. It's a temptation to play guessing games about the author's identity, too. In short, since the demise of Weird Tales, people who want this sort of thing will have to get it in a fanzine; so long live Jack Chalker and his new effort. Taken on its own terms, it could be a notable zine, if the editor would develop the habit of checking such things as the difference between "Its" and "It's" in a dictionary.

--Marion Z. Bradley

BY TED PAULS

A SEMI-REGULAR COLUMN
OF PROZINE CRITICISM

THE MYOPIC EYE

There has been a lot of comment on science fiction magazines in the past year or so. Much of it has been derogatory and, unfortunately, grossly over-generalized. Fans complain that science fiction magazines are no longer worth reading, wail that the field is dead and woe is us, and make poor puns on Analog Science Fact & Fiction's title. None of these sideline hecklers bother to dig down and dissect a science fiction magazine--they are much more interested in contemplating their own and their neighbor's navel. Self-interest may be a good thing in some cases, and certainly I'll not complain about an interest in the doings of friends. But it must be realized that there are other things, and, yes, some are even more important.

When I first came into fandom, in very early 1958, there were more reviews being written of prozines in fandom than there are now. This is not as it should be, for science fiction is now undergoing such a colossal change that one would think everyone would be interested, that everyone would want to discuss it. This, unfortunately, is not the case, for although there are fans now intensely interested in science fiction, the majority are uncaring to the point of idiocy. A couple years ago, most everyone was interested in science fiction to one extent or another. Nowadays, you have a half dozen people who are really interested and a couple hundred who couldn't care less. A couple years ago, every new fanzine had a prozine review column. Nowadays, new editors are afraid of being laughed out of fandom if they should succumb to the desire. No one, new to the field or not, particularly jumps at the chance to run reviews of science fiction magazines in his or her fanzine, because chances are that the readers will not be interested in such reviews. To write a prozine review column these days almost necessarily means to publish it yourself. No one--or practically no one--would accept it. I mean, why publish three pages of prozine reviews when a three page story by John Berry will fill the same space? Why, indeed.

Dick Eney and Bill Evans are practically the only fans currently active who show an intense interest in science fiction. Some others--Redd Boggs, Ted White, Marion Bradley, myself--show interest to a lesser extent. Most of the rest of fandom is interested to a lesser extent which is so "lesser" that it very nearly does not exist. At this writing, there are only five columns/fanzines in all of fandom where prozines are reviewed: Speculative Review, Boggs' "The Reviewing Stand" in Discord, Renfrew Pemberton's column in Cry of the Nameless, Ted White's occasional "Wailing Wall's", and this column. Five review columns. If you don't happen to receive any of the five fanzines in which these

columns appear...well, tough luck; cheer yourself up by reading a Pittcon report (the 19th you've seen published).

Someone ought to say something about science fiction to counteract the vague and unspecific digs which appear from time to time, and someone ought to give the converse side of the field, since it seems to become a fad to point out the faults in science fiction magazines. Sure, are faults. Most current science fiction, as others have pointed just, isn't as good as the Good Old Science Fiction you remember so well. This is the most frequently repeated criticism of current science fiction; it's true, as far as it goes, but it doesn't go far enough. Possibly nothing written in the future will equal some of the science fiction of the late forties and early fifties. But on the other hand, the poor science fiction of 1960-1961 is no worse than the poor science fiction of that period. It's just poor in a different way: instead of being technologically absurd and poorly characterized, it's dull and rather mundane. Who is to say which of these is worse?

The science fiction of today isn't like the science fiction of old simply because we (anyone who read science fiction at the beginning of the last decade) remember the very good pieces and tend to forget the poor ones. (The fact that this is done is admirable--it's rather difficult, though worth it, to forget some of the science fiction of the last decade.) Speaking from personal experience, I don't think I'll ever enjoy a piece of science fiction as much as I enjoyed Sinister Barrier, though I will be the first to admit that there are better pieces of stf than that novel. It was simply the novel which struck my fancy in a certain way at a certain time the way no other piece can ever do. I'll never forget it; and I'll never get as much enjoyment from another stf story as I did from it.

The point I am trying to make in all this is that when we say "Science fiction isn't as good as it used to be," we actually mean that most of the stories presently appearing do not come up to the standards of our favorites from another era. Naturally, they could not. There can never be a kiss quite like the first kiss, though there may be many which are quite enjoyable and satisfying.

What I'd like to do in this initial installment is to point out the improvements which have been made in the science fiction magazines. Whether they offset the liabilities is something I'll leave to the mind of the reader.

First, there is the matter of appearance. "Why bother about appearance," you might ask. "We're interested in the writing." Writing itself is, of course, of prime importance, but there is much to be said for appearance, also. It entices the novice to purchase a copy--why did you buy your first magazine?--and expertly done layouts can draw one into the stories. ("Appearance" covers artwork, quality of printing and paper, layouts, etc.) Look, for instance, at the Ziff-Davis twins, now titled Amazing Fact and Science Fiction Stories and Fantastic Stories of Imagination. The logotypes are quite a distinct improvement over the last issues of those magazines that I purchased--late 1958 issues, I believe--as is the cover art. The January 1961 issue of Fantastic sports a cover by Alex Schomburg which is an excellently fantastic piece of art. I defy anyone to show me a cover from Fantastic between 1954 and 1958 which is superior to it. It is vaguely (though very

vaquely) remeniscent of the covers Matt Fox used to do for Weird Tales in the late forties, making full use of colors for grotesque effect. The interior artwork of both Amazing and Fantastic (January 1961 issues) is at least as good as it has ever been, though possibly no better. (Both Dan Adkins and George Barr have illustrations in the current Amazing, incidentally.)

The improvement in the appearance of Analog is somewhat more subtle, but it is there. The most striking effect is the new type of illuminated letters heading the stories; but the cover logotype and the interior layouts are also a solid improvement. The cover illustration (by Van Dongen) which illustrates the lead story, Randy Garrett's "The Highest Treason," is excellent, as is nearly all Van Dongen work. The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction--which is the only other prozine I've seen the current issues of; I haven't been able to find If or Galaxy--has changed less than any of the others in appearance (or, for that matter, in any other manner). The cover is still reasonably decent, interior illustrations non-existent, and layouts disturbingly unimpressive.

The stories themselves range from echhh to nearly-superb, with Analog standing out as mostly the latter. The lead story, "The Highest Treason" by Randy Garrett, is a well-characterized, nicely put together novelette which has a subtle, thoroughly terrifying message hidden beneath an obvious parellel. It is certainly worth reading by one and all. However, the best story in the issue is the second novelette, "Card Trick," by Walter Bupp, a very good psi story with an interesting though gimmicked ending. These, and the third part of a four-part serial by Mark Phillips which I haven't read, are the science fiction content of this issue of the magazine. "The Green Beret" by Tom Purdom professes to be science fiction, but it is in reality a dressed up mundane; an American Negro UN soldier in the Congo. Aside from this, however, "The Green Beret" is a good short story. It is rather well written, and while the story is much too short for anything but patchy characterization, the "hero" is believable. The plotline, too, is believable, but that's only because it may well be happening, minus stfnal props, at this very moment. Leonard Lockhard's piece, "The Lagging Profession," doesn't even pretend to be science fiction. It is a fictional account of an incident which may well have happened in the offices of a patent attorney. It is interesting, but a bit overlong, like a 35 page Sodacon report.

The rest of the 178 page issue is composed of the regular departments--editorial, P. Schuyler Miller's exeellent book review column, a letter section, "In Times To Come," and "The Analytical Laboratory"--and a photograph section such as used to appear about ten years ago. The photographs, mostly of experimental rockets and shots of men under acceleration pressure that any self-respecting fan would already have seen, do not justify the expense obviously incurred in printing them. I'm afraid the accompanying article--"Time For Tom Swift" by G. Harry Stine--doesn't either.

Amazing and Fantastic present the most improvement as far as writing goes. These two magazines, almost universally acknowledged as the crudzines of prodom five years ago, have undergone incredible improvement, though naturally there is as yet room for more. Bob Silverberg's "Dark Companion" is better than nearly anything published by Amazing since

the long novel issues, though it would have been even better if condensed by about five pages. The idea--an android as a companion to a troubled son of wealthy parents who has tried to commit suicide several times--is not strong enough to support twenty-two pages. Silverberg makes it come off as the best piece in the issue, however, though only one other piece offered serious competition anyway: "The Asteriods, 2194" by John Wyndham. The other material in the issue includes an interesting piece by Lester del Rey, a rather purplish story by Thelma Hamm, a reprint from a 1933 Amazing, the conclusion of a serial, and some literate and interesting book reviews.

The companion magazine, Fantastic, is slightly better this time around as far as written content is concerned. Both of the best stories in the issue, oddly, have the oldest, most worn plots. They are Arthur Porces' "Dr. Blackladder's Clients" and Jack Sharkey's "According to Plan." They concern a problem solver from another world and a girl who works for Death, respectively. Both are much better than this plot synopsis of mine would have you believe, though the former was rather slipshod and rough in comparison with the latter. There aren't any really poor pieces in the issue, though the other stories--"The Reality Paradox" by Daniel F. Galouye, "Dreaming Eyes," a somewhat far-out piece by Miriam Allen deFord, and "Degree Candidate" by Peter Arthur--don't come up to the standards of the two really good ones.

The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction, as I mentioned above, has changed least of all the magazines. The stories always have been mostly good-to-excellent, and the current issue isn't really an exception. Suffice it to say that there are several assets and no outstanding liabilities, which makes the magazine worth the 40¢ price-tag. Emsch's cover is usual Emsch, but qualitatively superior to much of his work, and Ike Asimov's science column is certainly a recommendation even if the stories themselves weren't--Asimov writes in a very pleasing manner in these columns.

This column has no set rules for reviewing. It may, each issue it appears, review all the current science fiction magazines. Other times I may devote the column to a single magazine, still other times to a single author. I may even consume the entire column editorializing. At any rate, this is a science fiction column, devoted expressly to science fiction magazines, and, whether review or commentary, it will always be on the subject of science fiction.

--Ted Pauls

Science fiction is just a ghod dammed hobby! --(everyone)

DEPARTMENT OF SWIFTLY CHANGING OPINIONS:

"I abhor censorship in any form." --Marion Bradley, in a letter dated September 9, 1959

"I published a most beautiful 69-page magazine but can't send you one; you are under 21." --Marion Bradley, in a letter dated June 19, 1960

+++++

A SONG OF SIXPENCE.....

LIKE, LETTERS:

MIKE DECKINGER Your description of the tv troubles you've experienced
85 LOCUST AVE. are somewhat similar to ours. At the moment our soli-
MILLBURN, N.J. tary set (an old Emerson) has been afflicted with an
elusive malady, causing the picture tube to black out
at odd moments while the set is running. The only way to return the
picture to the screen is either by stamping heavily on the floor, or
hitting the top of the set. Luckily however, the converse of this af-
fliction applies. If I happen to be engrossed in a tv show (which is
very rare, I assure you) and a commercial comes on, all I need to do is
stamp heavily on the floor, thus dispelling the commercial, and the
picture away. When I feel a sufficient length of time has elapsed I
stamp again and the picture resumes, without the commercial intrusion.

Peggy Sexton's review of "The Time Machine" was very interesting. The
points she brings up are unusual. Accusing H. G. Wells of using the
late nineteenth century stilted, flowery prose is wrong. As a matter of
fact, Wells is one of the most readable authors of that time. Granted
he did indulge in long paragraphs well sprinkled with adjectives and
descriptions, but he still had the knack for holding the reader's in-
terest, through the sheer power of what he wrote about. There were many
other authors of this era--George Eliot, Robert L. Stevenson, the
Brontes, etc.--who used a far more "classical" and dull style than did
Wells.

I don't quite follow Peggy's objections to the origin of the two
races existing on the Earth. I thought it was made quite clear, through
the use of the ingenious "talking rings" that the Morlocks were the
descendants of the humans who hid below the Earth to escape the final
holocaust. The Eloi remained on the surface, they were the survivors
to the war and thus evolved a society far different from the almost
troglodyte Morlocks.

For a film to be a faithful adoption of a known
book, I would like to bypass Peggy Sexton's fine rules, and instead
state that the film should be able to evoke the same emotions, and pre-
sent the same character portrayals that the book does. The insight of
a main character is given verbally in a book. If he is an undesirable
person, you (the reader) are told he is, by the book. On screen, there
is no off stage narrator to tell a little about each character; the in-
cidents and events shown must provide you with enough insight into a
character to give you the same smug, knowing feeling that the book
does. Another thing of note is that some books are not written solely
for the purpose of exploiting the life of the main character, as "The
Time Machine" for instance. George, the Time Traveler, is simply a ve-
hicle used by Wells to advance his theories on future civilizations

and philosophy. The opposite to this is something like "Elmer Gantry" or "Of Mice and Men" which concentrate intensely on the characters, while the main story revolves around them.

DAPHNE BUCKMASTER
8, BUCHANAN ST.
KIRKCUDBRIGHT
SCOTLAND

Only three days ago I wrote to you enquiring about Kipple and now, obeying the B factor, here it is on my mat. I haven't read it all yet, but I'm just on the editorial so I'll comment as I go along. First of all, what the devil is an "indivd-zine sub-type alpha"? The first word speaks for itself, but the rest...? (There are two types of indivdzine defined in the Fancyclopedia: Sub-type alpha has the outward appearance of a subscription fanzine, with seperate articles on unrelated subjects, departments, fillers, cover, illos, ktp. But--this from the original Fancyclopedia--"the personality of the editor is evident everywhere. Sub-type beta, on the other hand, is defined in Speer's Fancyclopedia as fanzines which are "very much like a conversational monolog, in which the editor talks along, moving from one subject to another as he is reminded of it..." This, of course, refers to the traditional "letter-substitute" magazine. Redd Boggs did a fine job of pigeon-holing the various types in the first issue of Retrograde/Discord. (Retrograde #1, July 1959, pages 1-3.))

I do wish some fan would publish a glossary of up-to-date US slang; I am always asking faneds what this or that means and I can see you are going to be no exception. In this case, it's "what does 'R&R/jd' mean?" R&R to me means Rock & Roll and jd is a brand of US whiskey--not two things which go together exactly so I'm probably way off the track. (As you say, "R&R" refers to Rock & Roll. The term "jd" (either in upper- or lower-case) refers to, variously, "juvenile delinquents," "juvenile delinquent," or "juvenile delinquency." (Like, Teddy boys...) Lest you be confused by other statesiders, there is also a term "dj" or "deejay" which refers to radio or television disk jockeys.))

I don't usually mention layout, preferring to comment on material as being more important, but I must say that yours is very attractive--you seem to have a greater variety of lettering guides over there than we have or perhaps it is your well-thought-out positioning which gives an impression of such great variety. Anyway, keep it up. I hope you keep the same headings for regular features all the time because this helps in the enjoyment of reading a zine, I feel; gives a sense of familiarity as each new issue is opened. (There are, of course, more varieties of lettering guides available over here than in your poor backwards community, but unfortunately our prices are rather exorbitant for the most part. ABDick's guides are especially expensive, though of course they are of high quality. The cheapest guide I ever saw was one Bob Pavlat gave to me made by the Niagra Duplicator Company--a paper-thin, pliable plastic guide which I don't imagine could cost more than \$1.00.))

Marion's analysis of why Femizine and similar zines tend to fail is very well done and I find myself agreeing with everything she has to say. The problem of fannes versus wives has not been discussed much over here and doesn't seem to arise so much. I'm not sure why this is except that many fans with mundane wives tend not to bring them to fan gatherings anyway. (This may not be due to the fact that they don't want to but to the fact that fewer people over here can afford babysitters.) Anyway, we don't seem to have had any groups of mundane wives in the corner at any of the fan gatherings I've attended. There is, of course, a third group of wives

who, while not being fannes themselves, are willing to join in the fun at gatherings rather than segregate themselves and talk woman-talk.

On this question of my apparent disregard for other fanzines of the serious type and the implication that I was the only one to publish an intellectual zine, may I explain to your readers just what the circumstances have been by saying a few words about each of the titles you mention? First, your own zine. I heard of Kipple for the first time just a few weeks ago--not before September anyway--when in a letter of comment on Esprit someone pointed out that Kipple had an aim very much like my own. If my letter of a few days ago, you will recall I said, "I hear that Kipple #3 is out" which shows that I was under the impression that your mag was more or less concurrent with mine as far as newness is concerned. I have also seen a couple of reviews of it lately, but at the time I stencilled Esprit #1 I certainly did not know of it or I should not have said that mine was a new idea.

Tesseract, so far as I have heard, has only had one general issue and my copy, I have since learned, was lost in the post. So that, too, I did not know about. Of Habakkuk, I had received one issue (#3) at the time I was composing Esprit #1. I regarded it as a thought-provoking zine and enjoyed it very much, but it consisted mainly of discussion about "beats" and I don't remember seeing anything to the effect that Bill wanted to start a series of general discussions. I understood (from reviews) that it had started as a personal-zine-cum-letter-substitute and that the "beat" controversy had arisen in the letter column in response to an article just as they often do in any fanzine. (While of course the "beat" controversy consumes quite a bit of the letter column in each issue of Habakkuk, there are many other discussions going on in those pages also. Most of them are offshoots of the "beat" question, but they are no nearer related to it than the discussions (in Kipple) of sex and integration, though both these subjects evolved from the same dispute. (As strictly a side note here, it might be interesting to note that just about half of two large issues of Kipple were filled with comments inspired by "Quotes & Notes" in issue #3, though that column was only a page long--it discussed "The Rumble, a discussion which shows only slight signs of dying out, and Sammy Davis' marriage to Mai Britt, which prompted the fugged letters from racist Bill Conner and most of Ted White's long column in #7.)) Warhoon is a SAPS zine, is it not? (Yes, but I gather that Dick has a rather large non-apan distribution; he himself commented that the SAPS participation was mainly so he'd have a definite schedule to stick to.) I was never in any doubt that many apazines were given to serious discussion and I should have mentioned that in my editorial. In fact, it was this very fact that so much serious stuff seems to appear in the apas that made me certain that plenty of fans would welcome a thought-provoking zine. In connection with this, I'd like to add that many of my readers were also under the impression that I was starting something really new but they also thought that fandom, as a whole, would not support a serious fanzine; note their gloomy prognostications about the future of Esprit in #2!

To continue with your titles, Speculative Review comes under my category of "discussions of s-f stories as such". Literary criticism, while I have great respect for those who can do it, does not constitute my ideal fanzine. This applies also to Retrograde/Discord which so far as I have seen is also mainly literary criticism. (While it is true that Discord publishes an inordinately large amount of literary criticism

in its pages, I really don't think it could correctly be called "mainly literary criticism".)) I have never heard of The Neolithic, Dynatron and Xero I have but recently reviewed as being, I think, new zines. I have seen one or two issues of Void in the past and it always struck me as a sercon zine much concerned with fan personalities and, with all due respect, a tendency to feuding. The micro-elite also prejudiced me against it as I thought it gave it a dull, stuffy look. But perhaps Void is an acquired taste, for the two recent issues I have received have been much more interesting. This deals with all your titles except the two you say folded and I hadn't received those either. (4Since I wrote the Quotes & Notes in issue #7, another title has been added to the New Trend stack: Que Pasado?, published and mostly written by Les Nirenberg. Save your confederate serconism; we are gaining in strength! ## In case no one else has told you by the time you receive this, Xero is definitely a fanzine to get.))

I detect this clinging to trends etc.

I keep an eye open for reviews of new fanzines and whenever I read of one which is said to be thoughtful, I send my own mag off to its editor in hope of exchange. The point I am making with all this is, that at the time I was composing my first issue, I genuinely did not know of any other zine in general circulation which had a policy of encouraging discussion of ideas exclusive of fan interest as such. It might be relevant here to mention the time element. I first planned Esprit in about April and it was published in August. Wasn't it during these same months that most of the other titles were beginning to appear? Especially if you take into account the delay between a magazine being published in the U.S. and arriving in Scotland. Reviews, of course, take even longer to appear so that the first time I hear of a new U.S. zine may be about six months after it is out.

I hope this clears up any misunderstandings; I now know all about all these other new fanzines and am very glad indeed that they exist. I wish them the best of luck. There is room for all of us in fandom, for, although we all have one common aim in provoking thought, we have enough differences in personality and subject-matter-preferred, that we can each have a unique place.

LES NIRENBERG
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I'm afraid your article on old comic books didn't effect me much. Perhaps it will have some effect on fans your age. Back in 1949 I was just getting out of the comic reading stage and "advancing" into the Mechanix Illustrated phase. Comics of that time held no fascination for me as they would you. You were much younger and possessed of a keen sense of wonder. The comic books I did like most happened during the war years and the early post-war period. At that time I was the same age as you were in 1949. I doubt if Ted White or Dick Lupoff will be excited about the piece because they are more interested in the earlier ones as I am. It's a matter of belonging to a different generation.

Someone (I can't mention names) wrote me and told me that Esprit was garbage. Personally I think it is too. My ratings of the discussion zines are in this order: Habakkuk, Discord, Kipple, Tesseract (long pause) Esprit. (4I don't know who told you that Esprit was garbage--for all I know it may be one of my best friends--but I must say I disagree with his opinion almost as much as his method of distributing it. Certainly, Esprit is not on top of the list, if only because of its rather unimpressive appearance; on the other hand, it isn't on the bottom. Oh, yes, my own pith-zine ratings: Discord, Xero, Kipple, Speculative Re-

view, Warhoon, Habakkuk, Tesseract, Esprit, Que Pasado?, The Neolithic and Dynatron. These ratings are as objective as I can make them, and, to anticipate the obvious query, I don't think I've placed Kipple any higher than I would've if someone else was putting it out. As re your own list, I cannot understand your preference of Habakkuk over Discord. Habakkuk is good, yes, but it's not equal to Discord except quantitatively.→)

WALTER BREEN
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I don't know when you sent it, but Kipple #8 just arrived five minutes ago today (December 21), an hour or so before my departure for points east. Since I won't be back until January 2nd or so, this leaves little time to write a letter of comment. But what I'd like to know: (1) Howcome I'm now "researcher" instead of assistant/associate editor? (2) I'm in neither your letter column nor you AIAHFa--wha' happened? (3) You say my last issue will be #9 but indicate nothing I can do to improve the situation. (4) You are a researcher because of the question re the great apes directed at you in the lettercolumn. 2: Your letters have an annoying habit of arriving after the deadline for the issue after the one they comment on. 3: Since you were to get this issue no matter what, there was no reason to tell you what you had to do to continue receiving Kipple. Those squares are only checked when the number referring to the reader's last issue corresponds with the number of the current issue.→)

CARL BRANDON
213 ERGO AVE.
TRENTON 5, N.J.

Almost as interesting as your comment that every new piece Mike Deckinger writes is his best to date, is the fact that every new Kipple you publish is your best issue to date. Just how long this can continue is debatable, but there must eventually come a time when the current issue is only Just As Good as the last one. This shows no signs of happening at present, however. Nearly everything in #8 is superior to the material in #7, possibly excepting Marion Bradley's column which I consider noticeably inferior to the last installment. (It is my personal opinion that the installment in this issue is the best she has yet written.→)

I find myself disagreeing more with Mike Deckinger than any person who has never considered a television worth owning should. My mother (who lives with my wife and I) watches television almost constantly. Sometimes I watch for want of a better distraction. Sometimes I hear the one-eyed monster while I'm working around the house or trying to catch 40 winks. Most of the shows are nauseating, but on the other hand there are more worthwhile shows than Deckinger mentions. The Plays of the Week are good, of course, but there are other worthwhile shows. The Project Twenty series, for instance, which just two days ago presented a special hour-and-a-half version of Victory at Sea; the Armstrong Circle Theatre, surely the most interesting series on television, which does programs of subjects of interest such as dope raids in the Village, Eichmann, the "Ghost Bomber" of WWII, the diploma mills, the antique racket, much etc.; Twilight Zone, of course, and One Step Beyond; Playhouse 90's occasional excellent shows; The Show of the Month; even the various afternoon and evening movie re-runs, which have presented lately such things as: a presentable version of The Mikado, Hans Conreid in The Twonky, Alice in Wonderland, High Noon (possibly the best western of last decade, though many disagree with me on this); various half-hour shows like The Twentieth Century, Alfred Hitchcock Presents, High Road, and others. There are other shows worth watching, of course.

I've named only those which come to mind immediately.

The idea of two separate and individual fanzine review columns in each issue pleases me, especially when they are so totally different from each other as "Cryin' in the Sink" and "The Chopping Block." Both columns are enjoyable, though as I mentioned previously, the installment of Marion's in #8 is somewhat below her standard. I think perhaps I like yours slightly better as reviews--or, really, as criticisms. You've a slight edge in digging down into a fanzine and (to use a tired cliché) seeing what makes it tick. On the other hand, there is a divergence in the quality of the writing itself (of which you are doubtless aware) and here Marion comes out on top. Her columns are infinitely more pleasing to read; yours are rather stiff. I somehow compare your fanzine review columns to textbooks and Marion's to light articles; the textbooks say more, to be sure, but they are usually dull and stiff when compared to light articles. At any rate, I enjoy both, as I said, and I hope both continue to appear for quite some time. (I think you are giving me an Air of Omnipresence and Final Authority that I do not deserve. I am aware of the superiority of the writing in "Cryin' in the Sink," of course, but on the other hand my columns are not totally devoid of humor and I certainly don't consider myself the Final Judge. Perhaps my writing style (if I could be said to have a style) infers this; but it is unintentional. I can see, looking back over my past columns, how the implication of superiority might be read into them, but no such implication was intended to be there. Perhaps the trouble is the objectivity of my reviews: rather than say "I think this fanzine is poor, and I feel it could improve," I would be more inclined to say "This is a poor fanzine; it could improve." I don't bother with qualifying everything with "I think" or "I feel." I have always assumed that my readers were aware of the fact that my reviews were my opinions, and have not bothered to state the obvious. I try as hard as possible to criticize a fanzine by its objective qualities, but most of the time even those things which seem on the face of them to be objective are in reality subjective. I could say, for instance, that Buck Coulson's fanzine reviews are too short to be worthwhile (as they are, and need I follow this by an "in my opinion"?). This, I feel is an objective fact on the face of it; no one has ever claimed that Coulson's reviews were anything more than capsule reviews--certainly not real "reviews"; and certainly NOT critiques of any sort. And yet, on the other hand, the reader who prefers short reviews and doesn't particularly care if they say anything can claim that my reviews "are too long to be worthwhile". I'd disagree with this statement if it were made, but I'd have to agree that it is just as valid as mine from another point of view. I could see the reason for such a criticism: this person really isn't interested in fanzines to any extent, and he doesn't care to read two pages reviewing one fanzine. This he considers worthless, as indeed it is to him. ##To return to the reason you don't enjoy my reviews as much as Marion's (aside from the obvious--objective--fact that Marion is a better writer), I'd say that much of this is caused by the fact that my reviews are written more for the editor whose magazine is under review than for the casual reader. I want to tell him what is wrong, and what I think he can do about it. If the casual reader is also enlightened, well, fine, but that enlightenment is not my prime objective. Perhaps this will serve to explain in part your preference.))

AND I ALSO HEARD FROM: Betty Kujawa asks me to tell George to cut that out. Harlan Ellison says: "Why not a Harlan El-

lison fan club? If they can start a J. Fred Muggs fan club, how short a step down is it to a Harlan Ellison fan club?" Don Franson wishes Marion Bradley would drop her "'old fan' attitude and review as a current fan, which she is." If Marion Bradley is Franson's idea of a "current fan," then people like Terry Carr must be the newest of neofans... George Spencer enjoyed the issue but hadn't the time for a lengthy letter. Greg Benford postcards that Quotes & Notes was the best thing in the 8th issue, and notes that he's placing Kipple very high on the Fanac poll. Pete Graham says that Terry Carr recommended Kipple to him. Next issue's letter column will lead off with comments squeezed out this time, which will include letters from: Bob Lichtman, who says I forgot to check a number on his copy of #8 (this happens occasionally--this operation is part of the collating and stapling operation, and sometimes I forget), and notes that, yes, he'd like to write something for me, but he probably won't get around to it until #10; Roy Tackett says Dynatron #3 probably won't appear until he settles in the orient, observes that Kipple really is turning into a genzine. I don't think so, really, but everyone to his/her/its opinion; Vic Ryan was jealous of my heading for Peggy Sexton's review--which I considered the poorest heading in the issue--and notes "Yes, RICHARD ENEY FOR TAFF!" And on that note...

Kipple

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