



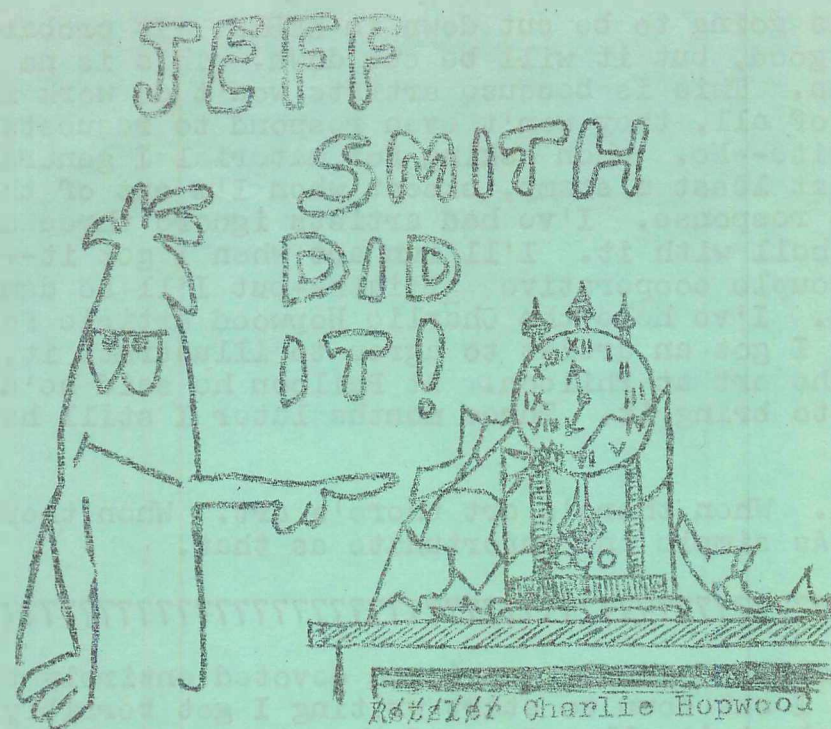
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### *Nameless Natterings*

Business first. I was planning on dropping KYBEN to twenty pages bi-monthly, which under the new! confused! postal rates (which as a public service Don Miller published in SON OF THE WSFA JOURNAL 129--12315 Judson Road/Wheaton MD 20906/25¢, 9/\$2) would mail for 10¢. Then I thought about how limiting 20 pages is--for me, anyway--so I upped it to thirty, and will publish more or less on a quarterly schedule.

Looking at the first seven issues, publishing so far has been quite sporadic: December 1971, August 1972, September 1972, July 1973, September 1973, January 1974 and now March 1974. But from now on a new KYBEN will be published between two and four months after the preceding one--three to six a year.

Next issue will have Charlie Hopwood's return to Austria. (Is it coincidence that Charlie's first two articles were published in issues that quickly sold out, PHANTASMICOM 8 and KYBEN 3?) After that I have some surprises. The lettercolumn will be back in #8 if there is room; if not a very large column will appear in #9. I put the fanzine reviews in this time instead.

Work has begun on PHANTASMICOM 11 and it will appear either late this spring or early this summer. From all indications so far it will be an excellent issue. At this point I have written material by Joff Clark, Charlie Hopwood, Paula Marmor, Darrell Schweitzer, James Tiptree, Jr., Chelsea Quinn Yarbro and Roger Zelazny; and artwork by Alex Eisenstein, S. Randall and Steve Stiles. And more to come.

Artwork is going to be cut down in KYBEN. It probably won't disappear for good, but it will be cut down. This is no official policy decision. This is because artists won't do work for me. Most disappointing of all, they won't even respond to requests with a polite--or impolite--No. When asking for material I generally enclose a postcard or at least a stamp, except when I'm out of them, and still I get no response. I've had artists ignore three and four letters. So the hell with it. I'll run art when I get it--I'm still in touch with a couple cooperative artists--but I'll be damned if I'll worry about it. I've held the Charlie Hopwood article for a long time. At last I got an artist to agree to illustrate it. He said he'd give me the art at Philcon. At Philcon he said he'd done it but he forgot to bring it. Three months later I still haven't heard from him.

Forget it. When there's art there's art. When there's not, there's not. As simple and unfortunate as that.

[illegible]

I had considered running an issue devoted entirely to 1974 Rip-Offs, but when I sat down to start writing I got terribly depressed just thinking about it all. Some of the strongest mind-fuckers, though:

Seven-mile gas lines (no lie).

The Baltimore area Mass Transit Administration threatening to sue Catonsville Community College because CCC set up its own emergency bus line to get faculty, staff and most importantly students to the College, which the MTA does not service.

The fact that Ohio has so much gas there are virtual price wars out there, while Baltimore is bone dry.

I read in PERFORMANCE that three Western states have more oil than the entire rest of the world put together. The problem is that it's shale oil, not free oil, and it isn't as easy to get as free oil is; it has to be pressed out of the rock. All this land is owned by the government and the oil companies, but the oil companies don't want to go to the trouble of digging it out. They say the most efficient method is nuclear blasting. ARE WE GOING TO GET SO DESPERATE FOR OIL THAT WE WILL ALLOW NUCLEAR BLASTING FOR SHALE OIL? I hope to god not.

Nixon's State of the Union address. ("There will be no recession...")

Nixon, for that matter.

People can't travel as much now. So the phone company wants to make it impossible to talk to people you can't visit by charging 5.5¢ per local call plus 1¢ a minute. That is literally obscene.

Roger Rappaport's exposes of hospital practices in PLAYBOY and NEW TIMES are sickening. I won't try to summarize them here; look them up in your library--assuming your library carries controversial material. (I read in MS. about all the trouble they have with libraries; MS. is probably the solidest and least controversial revolutionary magazine ever published.) I often wish for socialized medi-



cine, then realize that would mean the government would be running things. Blah. Our government can't do much but lie, it seems.

An interesting story from the New York TIMES, as quoted by NEW TIMES: "Persons afflicted by the gasoline-shortage blues may take slight comfort from Bernard Markwell. He said he recently pulled in- to a Gulf Station in Concord, New Hampshire, only to see a 'no gas' sign. 'The owner was inside and I knocked on the window and sig- nalled him to come out. He told me he was out of gas. "Like heck you are," I said. "Do you know who I am? I'm a vice president of Gulf Oil." When he recognized the name, he filled up the tank.'"

According to an article in INTELLECTUAL DIGEST (I'm going to have to stop reading), a family is doomed to struggle economically until it reaches an income of \$25,000 a year. At this point I do not foresee us making \$25,000 a year for a long time, if ever.

As you can see, a whole issue of this crap would have sent us all out the nearest window. So, it's just as well I decided to run a moldering Darrell Schweitzer article on insanity instead.

[illegible]

Early in December I decided to write a boring article on a week at work. (For those of you who just tuned in, I'm the clerk in the Biology Department of Catonsville Community College outside of Baltimore.) It was supposed to be "A Typical Week" sort of thing, but the week I picked turned out to be quite atypical and I only had time to write up the first day and a half. Not wanting any of my sterling prose to go to waste, here is

"A Typical Day and a Half"

Monday I arrive at work a couple minutes before nine, which is quite a rarity. BOB SMITH (bio lab technologist--and (my Boss)) isn't in yet, so our office is locked--and, since I leave my keys with a student aide over the weekend, I'm locked out. A simple matter, though: I go to the main offices next door and get the key out of the desk of STEVE SIMON (head of the Biology Department).

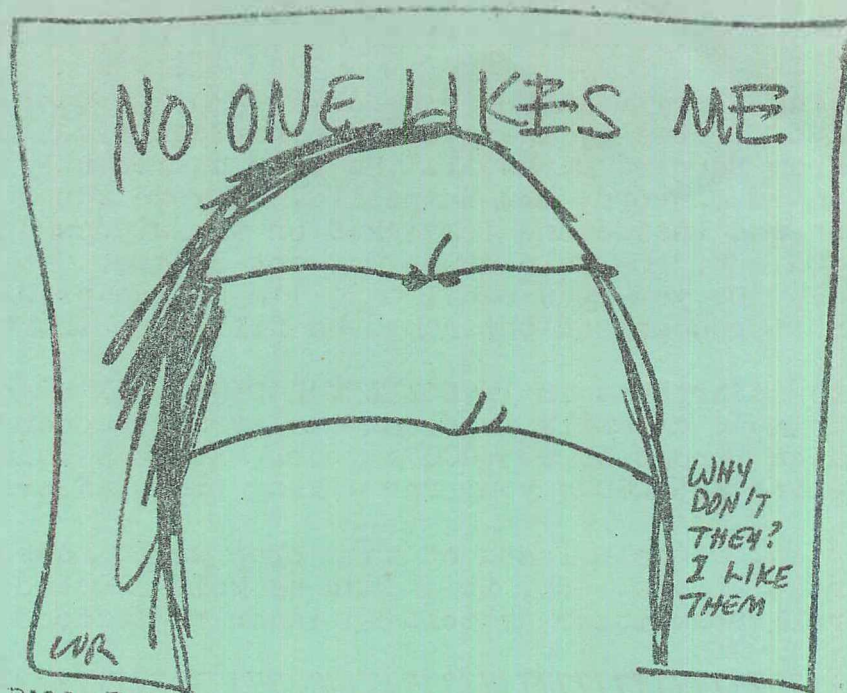
I'm sitting at my desk, and a student comes in to return a borrowed microscope. Bob made him leave his student ID card when he signed out the scope, and now he wants it back. For the first time in memory, Bob's desk is locked. I tell the student to come back later.

An electronics student comes student comes up to demonstrate neuro-muscular physiology to an Anatomy & Physiology class. For this experiment you need a frog. I go into the Life Lab/Greenhouse to get a frog. This is the first time I have had to get a frog. Yuch. Bob comes in about now.

SHIRLEY SIMON (no relation to Steve--Anatomy lab instructor) brings a sick student into the office. Jan says she has been on insulin as a recently-diagnosed diabetic, but hasn't had any since Saturday.

The comedy begins.

Jan has not told her parents she is diabolic, because "they have



Bill Rotsler

too much on their minds now." Shirley asks, "What if you went into insulin shock at the dinner table? Wouldn't that worry them even more, not knowing what was wrong?" Bob calls the nurse, who calls St. Agnes Hospital; the hospital says we should have an ambulance come get the girl. The girl refuses to go in an ambulance. She'll go if her friend can drive her. What if she goes into a coma on the way in? we ask. What can her friend do for her then? Slowly we get more information out of her: She is seventeen, underage. The insulin was prescribed by an intern friend of hers, not her family doctor. The intern is unavailable; her family, which she does not want told, is "in Washington with my sister."

The nurse recommends calling the Campus Security, to have them take her down. Bob calls Security. She still protests.

In a couple minutes Bob and I walk out to the D-door and find a security car sitting there, but no sign of any security people. Bob stays at the D-door and I walk down to the D-E-door. No security. A few moments later we see them walking up the hall. Jan is bundled off and taken away.

Shirley, calm and cool throughout the crisis, practically collapses afterward. Jan was right in her own mind to protest, because I'm sure her parents will know about her condition before she gets out of the hospital, but she had to go and it's certainly better that they know.

JUDY COEN (Anatomy & Physiology, Nutrition): "Mitch ((one of her students)) learned that the Affirmative Action Committee is going out and actually trying to recruit the kind of student I have so much trouble with. He wants me to go down and tell them you can't teach a fifty-year-old illiterate to become a nurse."

It's five minutes to ten; TINA LONG (Biology Fundamentals and Lab Studies) walks by and asks if her film is set up. Who's had time to set up a film? I grab the key to the projector cabinet and rush



down to the library. I burst into the audio-visual room: "Quick--I need film 104!" VESTA ZAISER (Audio-visual materials assistant) gets it for me. There's a card to sign. "Give me a pen; I don't have one." She motions me out: "I'll sign it." I run across the quadrangle back to the Science Building, in the door and down the steps to D-2, one of the big lecture halls. While I'm setting up the film, I hear one of the Questions of the Month. Tina Long: "Because of the energy crisis, the school will be closing one week earlier at the end of the semester. Consequently our final exam will probably be on January 14." Student: "If our final is on the fourteenth, will we still have the quiz on evolution on the sixteenth?"

Ten to eleven is quiet (fortunately). No crises of any sort, no problems out of the ordinary. Bob and I water the animals. CHUCK DUKE (student aide) discovers that the UV box he is building for the Microbiology lab needs better, more expensive, caulking. ALTA TAYLOR (Purchasing) sends up a request from a company for us to pay our bill. My records show we haven't received everything they say they sent. I leave a note for EDITH REICHERT (Medical Laboratory Technology), who ordered it, to see if she received the remainder without telling us.

McGraw-Hill sent us a set of slides ordered almost two years ago for YAMEEN ZUBAIRI (Anatomy & Physiology). That was before either Bob or I worked here and we have no idea what's going on. We have no record of the original order. Dr. Zubairi says it's an excellent set and wants to keep it. Alta Taylor is trying to track down the order in her files.

Lunchtime. I go downstairs to the vending machines and make an unappetizing meal out of a hamburger, a coke, and a package of coconut cream cookies. While eating I start reading Gardner Dozois' "King Harvest" in NEW DIMENSIONS II.

I go over and feed the rats. We have Purina Rat Chow.

We receive a report on the girl in the hospital: Blood sugar normal. She probably wasn't diabetic. Her mother was with her at the hospital--so much for being in Washington. We all sit around and speculate why she lied. Did she hope to explain away needle marks on her arms with the insulin story?

Typically, the afternoon is very dull. Ninety percent of our days have hectic mornings and lazy afternoons. Today I just work on the physical inventory in Microbiology: non-refrigerated consumables.

And at five o'clock I go home.

Tuesday I arrive at my normal time, a couple minutes after nine. Judy ~~wants~~ needs a frog. I go into the greenhouse, and although I get quite wet I get no frog. I go back to the office and get RICH DIEHL (student aide) to help. He gets lucky on the first try; he just reaches in and grabs one. We take it in to Judy, who reluctantly accepts it. Protesting all the way, she takes the scissors to it and cuts off the top of its head. Then she tries removing the leg muscle needed for the bioinstrumentation experiment. The animal keeps hopping around so I have to hold it. When she finally cuts the muscle loose from the nerve the frog really jumps, slipping out of my hand and hopping headlessly around the table.

Rich and I go back into the greenhouse to get two more frogs, one for each of the other two classes today. One hops out of the frog farm and we have to chase it around the greenhouse. Finally, we get the frogs, and we get drenched. Yuch. We put them in a plastic box and refrigerate them, so they won't be quite as active as Judy's was.

Bob comes in. We talk about the UFO we separately saw last night. I am not a firm believer in flying saucers, but Ann and I chased this thing for at least fifteen minutes until we hit an angle where its odd assortment of lights approximated the shape of an airplane.

I type up a note to Judy: "To: Judith A. Coen. From The Anti-Vivisection League. Subject: Anatomy & Physiology Lab. LEAVE THAT FROG ALONE!!!"

I finish typing up some orders, and then Bob and I talk about  
 sf films we have known and loved.

Just before lunch the head of the security division pops in, picks up the phone and dials a number. "Yeah, we're gonna hafta turn up the heat in the art room, D-200. The model has goosflesh." I can imagine his examination....

--And you're spared the rest of the week.

[illegible]

Harlan Ellison's influence spreads! During a bored moment while flipping through various paperbacks, I chanced upon a line in something called LUCK 'N PLUCK or something, by Gordon Swarthout or somebody: "So you haven't sucked on the glass teat recently?" The character was talking about television.

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I called Don Keller in Philly the other night. Don continues to breathe sighs of relief realizing he no longer co-edits with me and my continual changes of policy no longer affect him as strongly as they used to.

-Hello.

=Hi. Don.

-Oh, hi. What's up?

=How are you feeling?

-Much better. From 30% at Balticon I'm feeling about 90% now.

=Glad to here it. Now: Why I called. I've made a new policy change. Guess what?

-I don't want to guess.

=I bet you can guess it. What's the most unlikely thing you can think of? What did you never expect me to do? Come on, I bet you can guess it.



- Oh, good.

What?

-You're bringing back PHANTASMICOM...

Yes, disregard the statement about the last (quote unquote) PHANTASMICOM you read a couple pages ago. Just as KYBEN was started because it could fulfill needs that PhCOM couldn't, so am I realizing that KYBEN, for all the pleasure and satisfaction it gives me, still cannot provide some of the things PhCOM did. So, I plan to publish one PhCOM a year, probably in the spring.

I have some vague ideas of just what I hope to accomplish with this annual PhCOM, and I'll let you know as things get lined up. I hope to provide you with a major fanzine each year, and with a year to do each one in I think I can manage without going crazy.

Of course, all of you who had PhCOM subscriptions which I cancelled....Let's worry about that another time.

While I've been typing this issue up I've been working on PhCOM 11--and something is going to have to be done...I worked out a 150-page issue. I immediately discovered that I could not publish a 150-page issue, by folding a copy of PhCOM 10 (78 pages) in half and trying to staple it. No go.

So I started cutting. Out went the complete reprint of PHANTASMICOM 1....(I'm only kidding. #1 was 67 pages, and I'd certainly not inflict it all upon you.) I expect it will eventually pare its way down to the vicinity of 100 pages, which is manageable...somewhat.

Let's see if by next issue I've killed it again...

[illegible]

\*chomp\*

I wish I got compensation pay for every rat-bite I receive on the job.

[illegible]

Bad jokes from work:

Patty, trying to move the table that blocks the door that opens to the switch that turns off the xerox machine: "I wish you guys would make this table a little lighter."

Jeff: "We don't need to. Everyone here who smokes uses matches."

Chuck, holding camera: "I've got to shoot up the rest of this roll so I can get these pictures developed."

Jeff: "Will it fit in your vein? Gee, Chuck, you're quite a picturesque person."

Chuck, holding large heart model against him: "Look, I've got a heart-on."

Jeff, groaning: "Aww, have a heart."

Chuck, carrying heart menacingly over head, advancing toward





# COLLECTORS ARE SICK PEOPLE

DARRELL  
SCHWEITZER

Collectors are sick people. Theirs is a curious kind of illness, a demented lust for material things which would make Mammon himself shake his head in bewilderment. According to Milton, the first thing this noteworthy fiend did upon arriving in Hell was to search around for gold and precious stones. This was a perfectly reasonable thing to do because gold is, after all, valuable and if it's just lying around one can hardly blame some enterprising and industrious individual for thus seeking his fortune. Besides that it gave the guy something to do that would take his mind off the unfortunate position he was currently in. Clearly Mammon was making the best of a bad situation and should be praised for his resourcefulness and unshatterable optimism.

However, your average collector doesn't have any such legitimate excuse. He's just greedy, obsessed with the desire to possess something. It doesn't particularly matter what, because it's the satisfaction of having obtained it that really counts. There are some pretty strange manifestations of this syndrome, as can be quickly seen by glancing through any copy of COLLECTOR'S WEEKLY (a newspaper devoted solely to the exploitation of these misguided wretches). You'll see classified ads for the buying and selling of such unusual commodities as electric trains, doorknobs, lengths of barbed wire (there even exists a specialty periodical for barbed wire collectors) and other sundry items. Anything is collectible.

People used to laugh at those who hoarded great boxes full of string or marbles, and often whispered things to the effect that such persons had extracted a few of the latter from their heads and added them to their collections; but such an attitude is no longer a good idea, because when your neighbor trades off his string collection for a truckload of antique spittoons which he promptly sells to a rich spittoon collector for a million bucks, the joke's on you.

I shall not delve deeply into the psychology of such persons in this article, because it would take at least 100,000 words to do so, and I haven't the stamina. Perhaps Dr. Wertham or some other

eminently qualified man of science will write a book on it someday and enlighten us all. In the meantime I shall restrain myself to considering only one aspect of this remarkable aberration: the fantasy collector.

All of you have undoubtedly had some contact with this particular sub-species. You see him wandering around convention huckster rooms with a dazed look in his eye, unable to respond to any utterances that don't have to do with what this or that costs. He needs to occupy his mind with all the data he has stored there ever since he memorized the Donald Day index, and currently must summon up information needed to obtain certain dusty pulp magazines so that he may truly claim to have the largest collection of the works of Capt. S.P. Meek in the world. A true collector is a walking index in himself; he never uses written want lists, and may be detected immediately at any fannish gathering by his remarkable ability of telling anyone concerned not only the complete contents of the second issue of MYSTIC SCIENCE FICTION but who did the illustrations. He never writes notes on his shirt-cuffs, either.

Let us take a look at the case-history of a typical collector who also happened to have been a close friend of mine: Artimis Vreeb.

Artie started reading SF in the normal manner. You know, disapproval of parents, then serious doubts as to his mental health coming from all quarters, claims by his English teacher that this crap will dull his mind and thus render him incapable of appreciating Good Literature, the whole bit. This got his traditional fannish I'm-right-and-the-world-is-wrong persecution complex off to a roaring start and before long he fit into the multitudes of fandom nicely. He started writing for fanzines a little bit and was very flattered when a faned wrote to him asking permission to reprint one of his Grundul Flatfoot stories. All this time, of course, he read SF, buying all the prozines regularly and picking up many of the new paperbacks. As these accumulated he had a collection of sorts, but it was a modest and healthy one, quite unlike the cancerous monstrosity which later led him to his bizarre and unholy end.

It all started when he was hit with a realization of mortality. Not his own, his collection's. Paperbacks have a nasty tendency to fall apart after a while, regardless of how well they are kept, because of their cheap paper and the fact that the only thing holding them together is glue. This glue inevitably dries out, unless it is kept in a lightless, vacuum-sealed environment--which is beyond the ability of most people to produce, and also makes reading rather difficult. Artie realized that there would come a time when all his books would be rendered worthless, not to mention unreadable, due to their own natural decay. He conducted a survey of old paperbacks, even those which had never been read, and came to the conclusion that the average lifespan of one of them was about ten years under optimum conditions.

Here began his Obsession. Realizing that digest magazines bound with staples have a much greater survival capacity due to the fact that metal lasts longer than glue, he began to collect famous novels in their original serializations. THE CAVES OF STEEL in 1953 GALAXY, DOUBLE STAR in ASTOUNDING, that sort of thing. This would have remained quite harmless because digests cost anywhere from



twenty-five to fifty cents, which is cheaper than the average paperback; and though three installments may be a bit more, there are always other things in the magazines, so he always got the most for his money. But soon he fell into the completing-serials trap and ended up with large runs (especially of magazines that overlapped the first installment of one novel with the last of another), and the result of this was one of the more severe symptoms of Collector's Fever: rapidly growing piles of unread material. As the new prozines continued to come in, they too, lost in the confusion, got shuffled into the Unread category.

This wasn't the end of it, either. Not wanting to get anything short of his money's worth, Artie read everything in those old prozines: lettercolumns, editorials, book reviews, "coming next issue" features. Soon he was possessed not only with the desire to get more magazines, but he just had to have a copy of THE GREEN MAN OF UPSTATE NEW YORK by Epimondias T. Snooks after having seen all the raves of the fans of yore over it. He found that the only edition of this classic ever published was limited to seventy-five copies and put out by the Frustrated Dwarf Press in 1948, and it could be had from a certain dealer for fifteen dollars. He jumped at the chance, and had clearly progressed beyond the permanent, illustrated editions stage. He was well on the road to madness.

After that he discovered the art of getting hardcovers at ridiculously low prices from stores run by charity groups like the Salvation Army and the Neighborhood League. He found that he was unable to resist buying any fantasy hardcover that cost a quarter or less. Previously he had been buying only things in which he was specifically interested, but now all selectivity was thrown aside. Soon he began carting home books by the boxload, including such SF masterpieces as THE BIG EYE by Max Erhlich and SNOW FURY by Richard Cort Holden. Things were now totally out of control and Artie was beyond the reach of all help, for the simple reason that no one could get to him through all those books. During my last few visits with him I observed that he had every room in his house walled floor to ceiling with bookshelves, and additional cases stood in the middle of the floor in a manner reminiscent of a library. In addition to these the floor was covered with boxes, and on top of them vertical stacks of tomes reached to the ceiling. Oftentimes he would place a board horizontally between two of these stacks, thus creating an additional shelf, which would be promptly filled. Gradually the concentration became so great that the only way he could move about was by means of narrow tunnels and crawlways between the books, and many times he would horrify me with accounts of harrowing escapes after having removed the wrong volume and starting an avalanche. One time he lay trapped for seven hours with his nose stuck in a David H. Keller novel, finally rescued by his mailman.\*

He was now utterly mad, mumbling something about actually intending to read all that stuff, claiming to have invented a system that works sort of like the national debt, whereby any given item would be read eventually, even though at no time would all of them be so, since new material was always coming in. I feared not only for what few remaining vestiges of sanity he might still possess,

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\* Thank ghod he didn't have a post office box. --jds

but for his life as well, because a massive cave-in would surely prove fatal. Indeed, this may have already happened, but I have no way to be sure. You see, the last time I dropped by his place a frightening thing occurred.

I rang the doorbell and there was no answer. This didn't surprise me because the last time I had been there it seemed that an invasion of the electrical system by his Judy Merrill anthologies was imminent. I knocked, and still there was no response. I peered through the glass and was shocked to see nothing but books. No pathway or anything. I raced around to all the other doors and then checked all the windows, and even climbed a tree to look into the second storey. The entire house was packed solid with books! There wasn't a square foot of open space anywhere. Artie was doomed! Even if he had made a little enclave somewhere for himself deep among his books, he couldn't last long, for his food and air would surely give out if madness didn't claim him first. Whatever his ultimate unhappy fate I can only conjecture, but the images conjured up in my mind often deprive me of sleep at night.

This terrible tragedy sobered me up somewhat and I think it was this that proved a substantial factor in my own salvation from a similarly unwholesome end. In many ways I was like Artie in that I too had an aversion to paperbacks and collected magazine serials. I also discovered the second-hand bookstores, but fortunately had often been forced to pass things up for lack of funds. Twenty books at a quarter apiece is five bucks and this served to restrain me. I began to specialize, and became incredibly proficient in finding the choicest items in any store before anyone else could. My eyesight and reflexes were improved thusly, but the overall effect of my collecting was bad.

I had begun to delude myself. Gradually I slipped away from reality. I overestimated myself to the point of hubris and planned to collect the entire Ballantine Adult Fantasy Series in hardcover. This being impossible, I proceeded to do it at a jolly rate with a remarkable amount of success. Or at least I thought I did. I soon had three shelvesful of figments of my imagination, being the actual Carter-selected titles and related materials. They are still there, and are some of the most remarkable hallucinations I have ever encountered. Not only do they refuse to go away, but they remain completely consistent. My copy of THE HOUSE OF THE WOLFLINGS still remains a huge thing with gold-leaf that looks like a Bible but is really a deluxe 500-copy edition from 1890. Every time I pick up this obviously non-existent volume it says 50¢ on the fly-leaf in magic marker. Even though nobody gets deals like that, the illusion remains surprisingly solid and other people fallen under its spell have reported the same details.

By this point I was somewhat shaken, but not yet on the road to recovery. It took one more ridiculous and outstanding happening to snap me back to reality.

My family has a custom of vacationing in a remote New England state (where Ephraim Derby learned his tricks) which is a slowly dying area, its non-tourist population heading for civilization in droves. Consequently there are miles and miles of semi-paved roads, undisturbed forests, and abandoned farmhouses here and there. Now my mother is a professional artist of considerable standing,



being secretary of the National Forum of Professional Artists (to put that in terms you all understand: the SFWA of the Fine Arts), and her favorite subject matter is old houses. So I often end up driving her along deserted country roads looking for a suitable ruin.

One time, as we were skirting the top of a rather scenic ridge, we came to an empty farmhouse and lo! the artistic sense clicked. This one was to be painted, which meant we would stay for a while as photographs and preliminary sketches were made, and would probably return several times.

After a while my brother David, who often comes along on these expeditions, became curious as to what was inside the place and slipped in through the back window, this being the only opening not boarded up. About five minutes later my own curiosity was aroused (What was taking him so long?) and as I went around back he emerged proclaiming proudly that he'd found a Genuine Pulp Magazine. Indeed he had--a 1929 ARGOSY in terrible condition, waterstained, sans covers, contents page and advertising section, and also rather dirty. Not much of a collector's item, but we both had to agree it was worth it for the price.

We made three return visits to the place, and there were complications. Since we were both true blue collectors (him slightly more so--he's now turned dealer) we were both interested in the contents of the place, but it wouldn't do for a woman to be stopped and alone on a deserted road like that, so one of us had to stay with my mother at all times. We worked inside the house in five-minute shifts, this plan being devised only after protracted negotiation. As an added safety device there was a pre-arranged signal of a slammed car-door which meant that someone was coming and/or had stopped to investigate, and the person inside was to remain absolutely quiet. After all, I am old enough to be prosecuted as an adult in most states, and it wouldn't be too nice if David ended up in a juvenile home, so we had to be careful. There were no "No Trespassing" signs, but everyone knows these hick sheriffs can't read anyway.

My first entrance gave me some difficulty. Not being an overly athletic person, I found it hard to get through the window in any of the methods used by the nation's leading burglars. It was just a little high for me to get my leg over the sill, and even if I had gotten that far I wouldn't have been able to bend sufficiently to enter. (I don't know about you, but I can't even touch my toes.) I tried, precariously balanced on an old and rotted lobster trap, and the end result was that I slipped and went in head first in a most ungraceful tumble that could have ended painfully had I landed in a pile of glass and slashed both wrists.

That over with I proceeded upstairs, looking about for valuable antiques while I was at it. (The disease, like hemophilia and lycanthropy, is inherited--my mother collects old bottles, plates, books, furniture, sculpture, etc.) Empty whiskey bottles? True, there is a market for such, but these were hardly dry. I later did find some plates which turned out to be a rare variety of Cantonese China from the 19th century and quite valuable. After that I began to ransack the attic. It was a total mess, the house obviously having been deserted for many years, with everything anyone wanted removed (and a little more subsequently hoisted by assor-

ted vagrants). There was no whole furniture of any kind and the whole place was knee-deep in newspapers, Sears catalogues, spilled sacks of grain and fertilizer, splintered wood, old rugs and other varied items. The idea was to dig through all this and find things which had been preserved underneath from the elements. Lots of old newspapers and magazines, too, with headlines like JERUSALEM FALLS! FIRST TIME IN CHRISTIAN HANDS SINCE CRUSADES. There was nothing after 1940, which was presumably the time the house was abandoned. Anything left had survived thirty years of harsh winters, rats, rain and other destructive forces.

The final yield was about forty ARGOSYs from the 20s and 30s, three Hal Foster Tarzan Sunday strips, and lots of historical newspapers. Condition ranged from very good to hopelessly unsalvageable. There was one magazine, I believe a 1923 ARGOSY, which was so bad it split in half and then crumbled into a cloud of dust as I picked it up. I believe I accidentally inhaled the front cover.

Making a safe getaway after a few uneasy moments with the locals, we proceeded to nurse these neglected treasures back to health, first cleaning the dirt away, then taping up the brittle and shredded pages, and finally placing them under immense weights (such as an entire 25-volume set of encyclopedias) to get the wrinkles out, since many of them had been rolled up in odd positions for all those years. It took several months to get most of them to lay flat. They still aren't in what I'd call good condition. But just think, I have the first installment of THE MOON MAID, with cover, and it didn't cost me a cent.

I really shouldn't gloat. Undoubtedly you are nearly as appalled by all this as I am. Now you can see what depths of depravity some collectors will descend to. No heroin addict is more fanatical. Had I been caught I might have entitled this article "How Science Fiction Magazine Collecting Led Me to a Life of Crime" and written it on prison stationery.

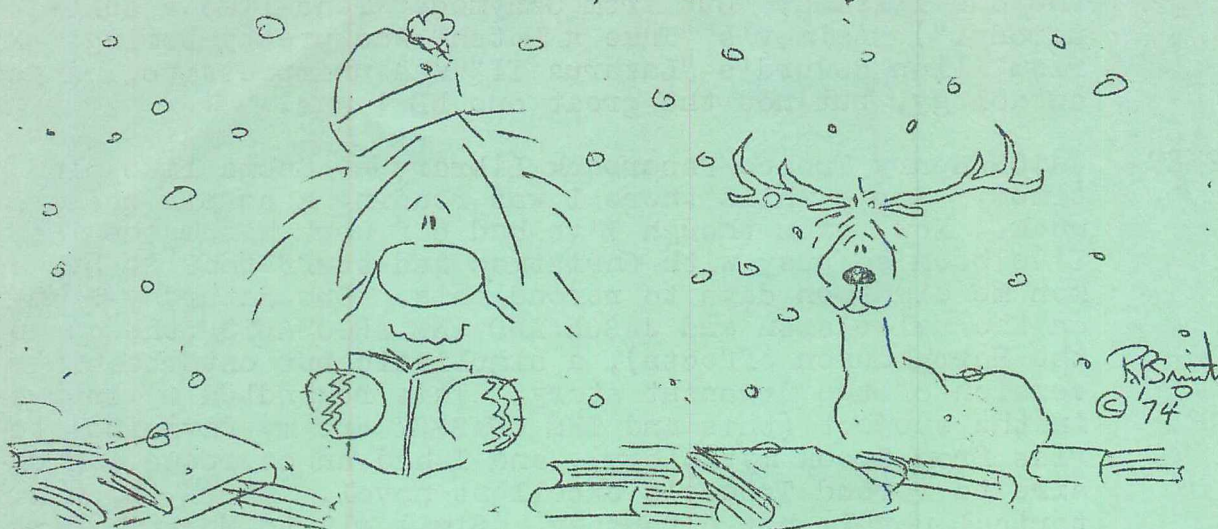
However, I slowly returned to my senses, especially after I started to be plagued by a recurring dream in which my entire collection burst open to reveal a slaver's horde of silverfishes who proceeded to devour me alive in a sandwich made with two bedsheet-sized UNKNOWNs. I have some control over myself now, even if those twenty-five hardcovers from the Ballantine Adult Fantasy series remain on my shelf. I have at least a little time before



I regress to my old detestable ways and come to my doom. At least I can warn you:

DON'T BECOME A COLLECTOR! Read books at your library! Better yet, don't read at all. Don't read the rest of this fanzine even. Watch television and play it safe. It's your mind. Don't squander it.





WORLD OF PTAVVS/Larry Niven/Ballantine -- In 1966 I thought 12/2  
this novel was as confusing as anything van Vogt had ever  
conceived. Seven years later I was able to follow it pretty  
well. Niven is not one of my favorite writers--I never did  
finish RINGWORLD--but there have been half a dozen or so of  
his stories that I've really enjoyed (and I think he is im-  
proving all the time). WORLD OF PTAVVS is a high-class  
space opera with a plot that isn't quite as complex as Ni-  
ven makes it out to be, worth reading mostly for the small  
passages sprinkled throughout that hint at the writer's  
future development.

SYZYGY/Michael G. Coney/Ballantine -- Coney is going to be 12/5  
one of the big ones. He has an extremely pleasant style,  
smooth and readable. His stories are meaty, seldom slight.  
He's good. Unfortunately, he's a little more facile than I  
think is good--I like to see evidence that the writer sweat-  
ed blood over his work. Enough. I'm glad that Don Wollheim  
started reprinting one of his stories almost every year;  
that's how I got into reading him, and he's well worth read-  
ing. His first novel is about a colony-planet headed for  
disaster. About twenty-five years after settling there was  
inexplicable chaos when the six moons formed a certain pat-  
tern. Now, fifty-two years later, the pattern is forming  
again, and the chaos is starting again. It's all tied in to  
the alien ecology, and makes for very good reading. I par-  
ticularly enjoyed the characters; they weren't really well-  
drawn--"sketched" is more like it--but they're so likeable  
it doesn't really matter. I'm looking forward to seeing  
the next three Coney books surface from that immense pile  
next to my bed.

NEW DIMENSIONS II/edited by Robert Silverberg/Doubleday -- 12/9  
This, while still a good collection, is not as impressive  
as the first volume. But it is worth picking up. "Nobo-  
dy's Homo" by Joanna Russ is an excellent story; James  
Tiptree, Jr.'s, "Filomena & Greg & Rikki-Tikki & Barlow &  
the Alien" is one of my favorite Tiptrees, wild and funny;  
Geo. Alec Effinger has a well-done story with a marvelous  
title that doesn't quite fit the story, but remains marvel-  
ous (" $f(x)=(11/15/67)$ ;  $x=her$ ,  $f(x) \neq 0$ "). Gardner Dozois,

Gordon Eklund, R.A. Lafferty, Ed Bryant and Barry Malzberg all have good stories. (Malzberg's "The Men Inside" was the one I liked; "Out from Ganymede" read like a self-parody.") Asimov's "Take a Match" was pretty boring. Miriam Allen deFord's "Lazarus II" was unimpressive. A good anthology, but not the great one ND 1 was.

12/27 JASON/Henry Treece/Paperback Library -- Seems like old times. For a while there I was reading a couple books a week. Now, even though I've had off work since the 15th, I've been so busy with Christmas and stuff that it has taken me eighteen days to reread this. One Saturday I turned on the television and JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS (the one with the Harryhausen effects), a simplistic but entertaining version of the Argonaut story. This rekindled my interest in the subject (this and THE ODYSSEY are my favorite stories from Greek mythology), and I had an overpowering desire to reread Treece's excellent novel. JASON is an historical novel, not a fantasy. Similarly to Mary Stewart with her Merlin books, Treece worked out a consistent framework to retell the story in; however, Treece wrote out all the magic and treated it as straight "history." (Jason tells it in the first person, so sometimes he thinks there is magic, or the intervention of the gods.) So Treece has Cheiron the centaur become "the Horse King of Polion." The Harpies are mere birds, supernatural only to the blind man who has to abide with them. Many mythic occurrences are explained away as inventions of Orpheus to make his songs more interesting. (Treece had many versions of the Argonaut myth to pick and choose from; the one by Apollonius is only the most complete and prominent. At least one co-exists with Heracles the captain of the ship.) JASON moves slower than I remembered it--eighteen days is a long time even for a 350-page novel. (Of course during this time I also was keeping up with the magazines that come in all the time: NEWSWEEK, NEW TIMES, ROLLING STONE; some comic books; a couple books on rock--ANY OLD WAY YOU CHOOSE IT by Robert Christgau and LENNON REMEMBERS; I don't keep track of the non-fiction I read here because generally I skim it.) But JASON was written to be read slowly--not as slowly as I did, of course, but not in four hours, either. While it is full of adventures, it is not an adventure novel in the Edgar Rice Burroughs sense of the term. JASON is a dark book, a tragedy through and through. If you get the chance, read it. It was written in 1961 and paperbacked in 1969, probably out of print by now. You may have to look it up in the library. (It probably had more sex than any other book in my high school library, where I first read it--and not only that, but the sex is not a happy thing; Jason never liked women; he found them evil.) JASON is a bitter book, but a rich and rewarding one. I'll probably read it again in another five years. ## From the epilogue:

\* An old crone sat by me that night and  
\* sang to me--or, at least, sang beside me,  
\* for she never looked me in the eye. I  
\* think that she counted me already dead.  
\* She was my mourner, who would bury me in  
\* the morning. The sons of Creon would pay  
\* her for that service.  
\* She sang a song about a king who went in



a long-ship to find the city of gold, and came \*  
back a god, married to the fairest princess the \*  
world had ever known. \*

I dimly know that this was my own tale, and \*  
I tried to roll on to my side and tell her \*  
that it was not like that at all; that the po- \*  
ets had lied. That my life had been a night- \*  
mare of horror, no more. \*

\* \* \* \* \*

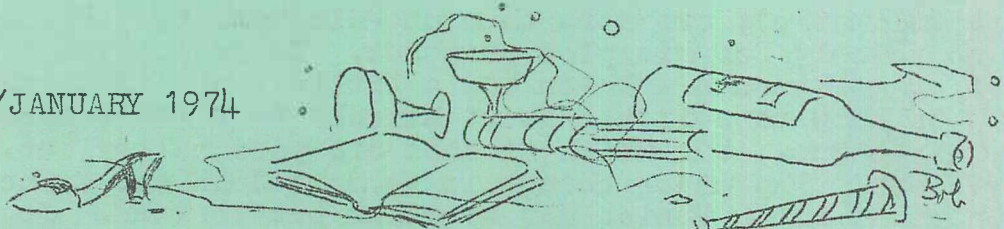
"Don't Look Now"/Daphne du Maurier/Doubleday -- Someday in  
the far future I will get around to reading Doubleday's  
TREASURY OF MODERN MYSTERIES. But for now I contented my-  
self with just the one story. The reason: I just saw Nico-  
las Roeg's excellent film version and I wanted to see where  
it came from. I was quite disappointed in the story, though  
only in comparison; I might have enjoyed it had I not seen  
the movie. ## The story of the story of the story is this:  
An English couple vacationing in Venice meets up with two  
Scottish women, twins, one blind and "psychic." She tells  
them--or the wife, Laura, as John wants nothing to do with  
them--that their recently-drowned daughter is with the  
couple, that she is happy and wants them to be happy, and  
that they should leave Venice because there is "danger."  
A telegram from England that their son is sick sends Lau-  
ra back on the first plane, with John to follow by train.  
But before he leaves he sees Laura and the twins sailing  
down the Grand Canal, and certain that the twins have  
done something to his wife he starts searching the sink-  
ing city for them. That's as far as I'll take this syn-  
opsis. ## The film is practically a textbook example of  
how to turn a printed story into a movie. For instance,  
the telegram from England is turned into a phone call.  
Beyond that, there is a care taken with the characters  
that du Maurier did not bother with: The minor charac-  
ters, all of them (with one necessary exception that I  
won't go into here, and the sisters--not twins--who re-  
main enigmatic), are more than one-dimensional. No-one  
is there only for his plot purposes. Everyone with a  
part bigger than a walk-on has a little scene in which he  
gets to show us a little about himself that isn't necessary  
for us to know, but which fleshes his personality out.  
Marvelous. The major change is to make John not a vaca-  
tioner; he is in Venice not to relax but to work. He is  
restoring a church. ## I could go on and on about the film:  
the acting (Donald Sutherland is great, Julie Christie much  
better than I expected), the photography (rich and beauti-  
ful; Venice is strikingly, almost attractively, ugly), the  
music, everything. I highly recommend this movie. ## I  
like to take into consideration when talking about books-  
into-movies which should ideally be experienced first.  
DON'T LOOK NOW is an interesting case. If you see the mo-  
vie first the story will disappoint you. But if you read  
the story first and know what the ending is you'll be  
cheating yourself. I would recommend skipping the story en-  
tirely, except in this case: If suspense in a movie thea-  
ter, where there are no commercials and you can't put the  
book down briefly, might cause you some anguish (I'm being  
serious here), read the story so you know what to expect,  
and go see the movie as a movie.

12/31

12/31 NEUTRON STAR/Larry Niven/Ballantine -- The most interesting aspect of Niven's first collection of short stories is watching his improvement as a writer. I can't neatly say that the first story is the worst and the last the best, but there is noticeable change. The worst-written, unfortunately, is one of the most interesting plot-wise, "The Soft Weapon." A duel between some alien Kzinti and some humans, conducted with a weapon neither race knows how to use, the story is marred by a choppy narrative line much as that which hurt WORLD OF PTAVVS: The storyline cuts back and forth from one group to another, but without consistency or sufficient transition; when you start a new section you don't know whether it will take place before, after, or at the same time as the end of the last section. (I was always glad to see that a story I was about to start was in first person; straightforward.) My favorite stories were "Flatlander," for the picture of Earth as seen by an off-worlder, and "Grandel," which was an action-adventure intrigue told in the first-person (hooray!). My big regret: The puppeteers were sent out of the picture halfway through. I liked them.

12/31 THE ABOMINABLE MAN/Maj Sjöwall and Per Wahlöö/Pantheon -- A policeman is slashed to pieces in his hospital room. As Martin Beck and his colleagues investigate the murder they discover evidence that Nyman may have been the most sadistic and brutal person ever to wear a police captain's uniform, yet he had built up such a network of men beneath him that the law could not touch him. Beck tries to find out which of Nyman's many victims took matters into his own hands, but then the question becomes academic: whoever it is is killing every policeman he sees. It is unusual for these books to have a true action climax, but that is what the last fifty pages of this are. Very good, as usual.

BOOK REPORTS/JANUARY 1974



1/5 ELLERY QUEEN'S ANTHOLOGY/Fall-Winter 1973 -- A celebration of mediocrity. Some of the plots were okay, but the characters were uniformly cardboard. I really only enjoyed the last of the seven novelettes, Hugh Pentecost's "The Masked Crusader." In toto, a waste of time.

1/7 THE TIDES OF LUST/Samuel R. Delany/Lancer -- A sex fantasy, not worth reading. Philip Jose Farmer's are much more readable, and Harlan Ellison can write much better obscenity.

1/12 FANTASTIC/November 1973 -- I bought this for the Jack Dann novella, "Junction," which turned out to be a phildick. I am not a fan of phildicks, so I was disappointed in the main plot theme. The details of the people and the societies were excellent, though, so I'm looking forward to



Jack's next major work. Of the short stories, Jim Ross's "A Matter of Time" struck me as the best. I did not like Fritz Leiber's new Fafhrd/Mouser story, "Trapped in the Shadowland," which struck me as so coy I don't know how the words managed to stand each other. Gardner Dozois' Disclave speech read even better than it sounded, perhaps because Gardner's typewriter didn't have a cold. A very good speech.

MIRROR IMAGE/Michael G. Coney/Daw -- A good book. Coney's work so far seems pretty much geared to him being a topnotch paperback novelist--in a lot of ways like Bob Shaw. The stuff they write is good, but minor. Coney is kind of like a Poul Anderson who concentrates on the soft sciences. I like him. But he's terribly sexist, despite his attempts to portray intelligent, independent women. ## MIRROR IMAGE is, like SYZYGY, about a colony planet. Coney goes very deep into the process of getting a colony started. There is one engrossing scene after another. More books like this could give paperback novels a good name.

1/13

A PURPLE PLACE FOR DYING/John D. MacDonald/Fawcett -- Actually, NEW DIMENSIONS 3 has surfaced to the top of the pile and I should be reading that. And I have read the first several stories. But today I didn't feel too well, and when I don't feel too well I want something basic and fast-moving. Consequently, JDM. MacDonald is, in my opinion, just about THE most professional writer in the world, and anyone considering a writing career should read some of his books to see how plots are supposed to work. He is certainly a limited writer in some respects; almost every one of his seventy-or-so books is a somewhat sordid crime novel. But he knows how to plot, oh yes. ## This one is not what I would consider one of his better books; about average. A woman is killed and Travis McGee--MacDonald's only series hero, seventeen volumes so far of which this is the third--tries to find out who and why. The background information is on small-town politics, a town owned by a dozen people. It is presented matter-of-factly, from the top--as opposed to Joe L. Hensley's DELIVER US TO EVIL, in which the hero, working from the bottom, learns to his horror just how high the corruption goes. ## The ending scene of PURPLE is one of MacDonald's most suspenseful.

1/15

CASINO ROYALE/Ian Fleming/Signet (Seventh Printing, April, 1963--now published by Bantam) -- I've only read a few of the James Bond books; every time I get interested in them (this time prompted by seeing FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE on television) I start with CASINO ROYALE and never get too much further. I have the feeling, though, that this will always be my favorite, even if I do get them all read someday. CASINO ROYALE is so unlike the super-spectacular image one has of Bond stories. It's a quiet, low-key story; well-paced and well realized. The baccarat game is the best scene in the book; the ending very moving, down to the striking last line. ## I seem to be one of the few people who enjoyed the movie CASINO ROYALE--although I was a bit disappointed when I saw it on tv recently. I think it was fairly obvious that they couldn't have made it too

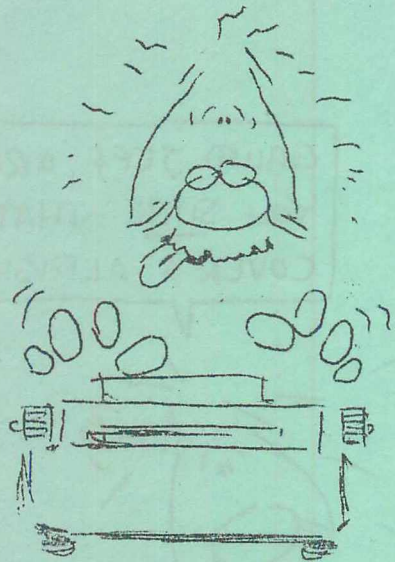
1/18

similar to the Sean Connery series, and spoofing the whole genre was a good idea. But I've always regretted that they didn't decide to do it straight, without gimmicks. I would have liked to have seen an honest representation of the book.

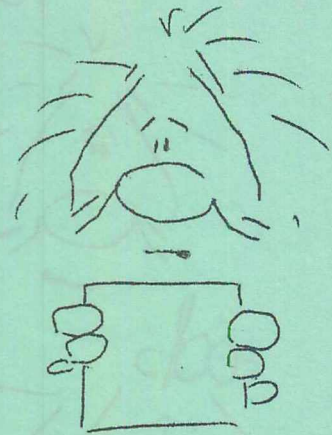
- 1/19 LIVE AND LET DIE/Ian Fleming/Signet (Twelfth Printing, October 1963--now published by Bantam) -- Now I remember why I never got far in the Bond series; this is always such a let-down after CASINO ROYALE. The taste of things to come, with trapdoors and other such gimmicks. Nonetheless, I had no desire to put it away without finishing it. ## I was rather disappointed in the movie version--not because Roger Moore was in it rather than Sean Connery, but because there was such a strain involved. Surely the scenes involving Bond's running across the crocodiles and the death of Mr. Big could have been replaced by something better. The crocodile scene belonged in the farcical CASINO ROYALE. But the chase scene was great.
- 1/23 MOONRAKER/Ian Fleming/Signet (Nineteenth Printing, date unknown--now published by Bantam) -- The intrigue surrounding a secret rocket somehow reminded me of some sort of Hardy Boys/Tom Swift story, but I liked it. The nice thing about Fleming's Bond stories--at least these early ones--is that Bond is not really a superhero. I love the way he just calmly decides to blow up the rocket and himself, without making a big deal over it--part of the job. And when the book is over, everything has taken its toll: he's hurting. Neatly done.
- 1/25 DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER/Ian Fleming/Signet (Twenty-second printing, date unknown--now published by Bantam)--This one perhaps has less in common with its movie version than any of the others. It's not a particularly interesting book. Bond joins a jewel-smuggling gang and smuggles some diamonds into America. He learns about crooked gambling, gets beat up, wins the girl, destroys the gang and goes home. The crooked gambling part was the best.
- 1/31 FROM RUSSIA, WITH LOVE/Ian Fleming/Signet (Twenty-eighth printing, date unknown--now published by Bantam--and oddly enough, some yellowish copies of the twenty-ninth Signet printing just turned up on the stands here. It was odd to see a 60¢ novel in the ~~drugstore~~ again). -- Well, I certainly shot the last half of January. There are now three piles of books next to the bed, and I better get on them right away. No more James Bond for a long time. But it was an enjoyable diversion, even though I feel guilty about not getting a single review copy read this month. ## This one is the only one that rivals CASINO ROYALE for the "favorite" spot so far. It's done quite differently, in that the first part concerns Russia's plan to destroy Bond, and Bond himself doesn't appear until after the first third. It also ends damned strangely. ## If you saw the movie you know the plot behind this one; the film was made early, back when more than just the book's title and characters were used. I liked both versions. ## Inconsequential note, circa 3/6/74, typing date. While waiting for the conflu to dry I've been reading Julian Symons' MORTAL CONSEQUENCES, a history of detective/crime fiction. I was amused to see that his favorite two Bond novels were also CASINO and RUSSIA.



FIRST



CORFLU...

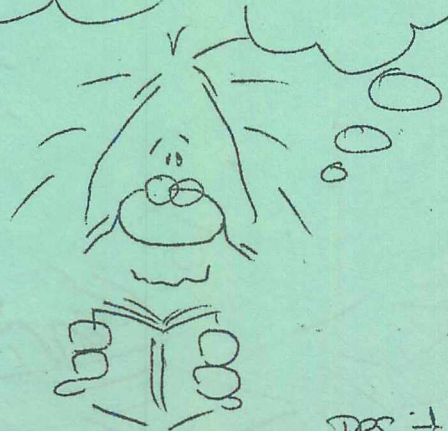


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THEN...



1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7,  
8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13,  
14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19...



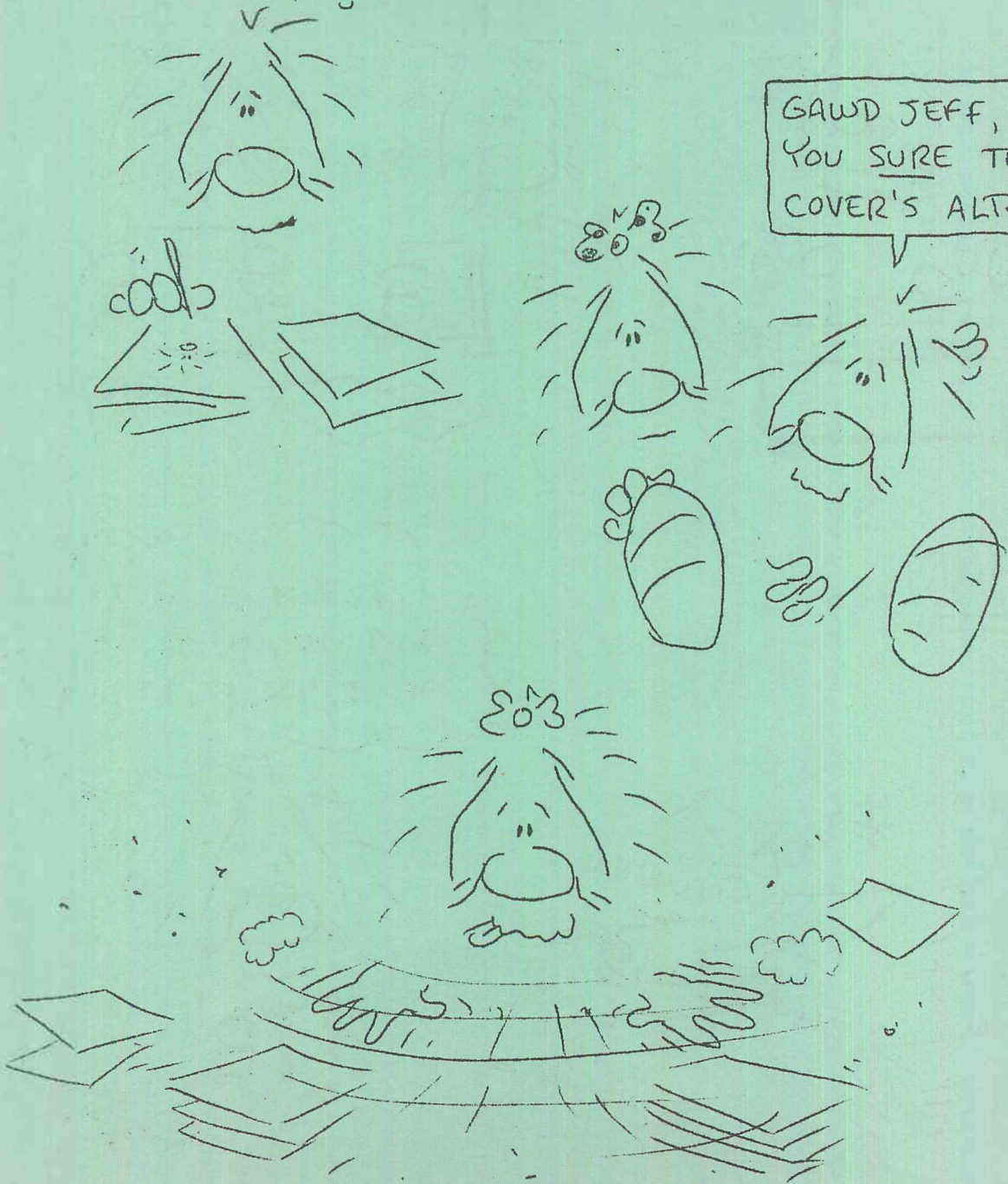
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AND FINALLY...

# THE COLLATI

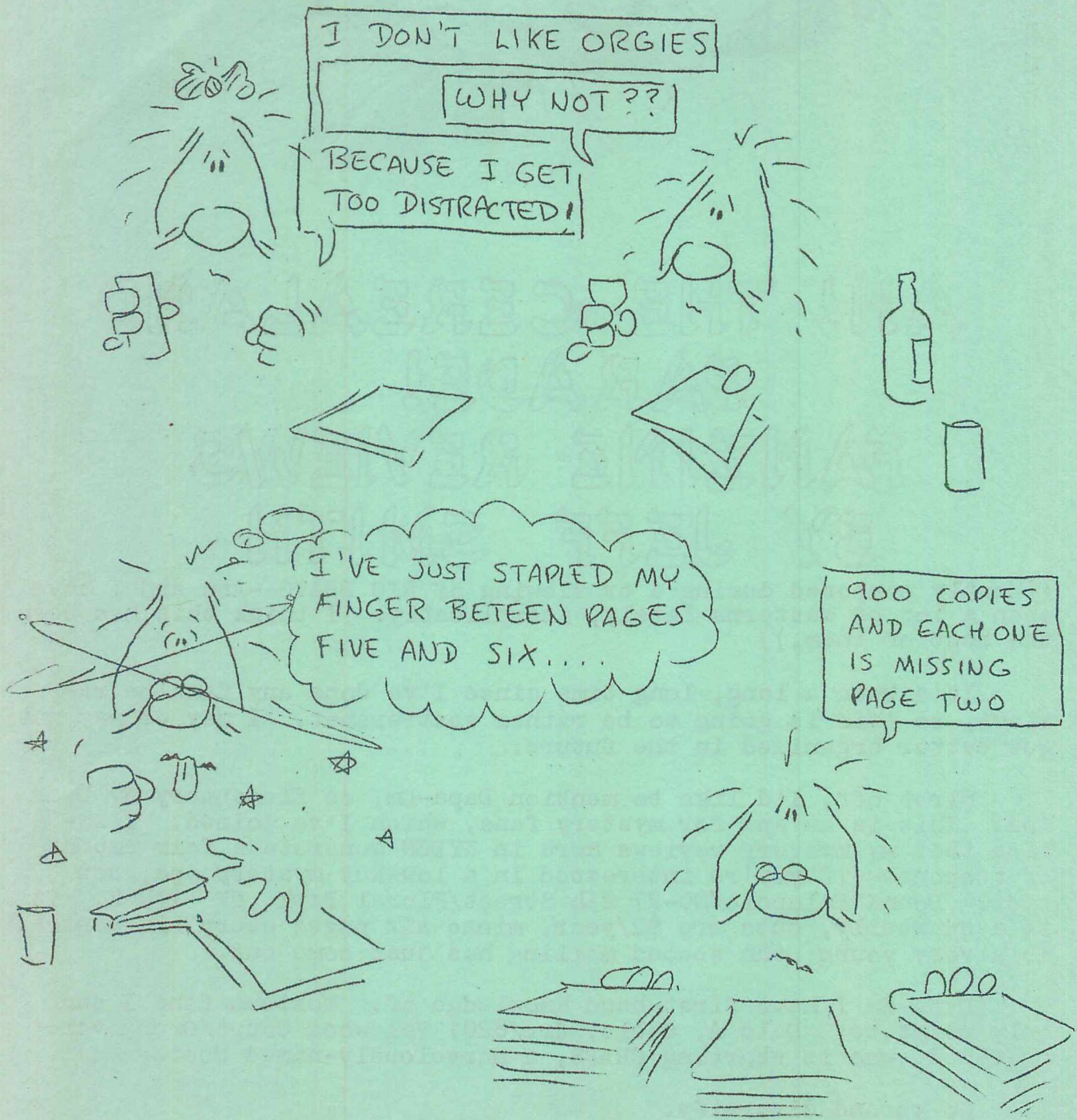
HONEST JEFF, I'LL GET BACK  
TO COLLATING AS SOON AS I  
FINISH THIS CARTOON...

GAWD JEFF, ARE  
YOU SURE THAT  
COVER'S ALRIGHT?





# NG PARTY !!



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Gregg Davidson



# AH! THE CEREALAND PARADE! FANZINE REVIEWS BY JEFF SMITH

((Mostly composed during a tv viewing of RIO BRAVO--Ann and I have seen a lot of Westerns lately, inexplicably. I think this has been the best of them.))

It's been a long, long time since I've done any fanzine reviews, so this is going to be rather scattershot. I may or may not get better organized in the future.

First off, I'd like to mention Dapa-Em, oe Elementary My Dear Apa. This is an apa for mystery fans, which I've joined. I notice that my mystery reviews here in KYBEN generate a fair amount of response--if you're interested in a low-key mystery apa, contact: Donna Balopole/80-27 254 Street/Floral Park NY 11004. It is a quarterly, dues are \$2/year, minac six pages every six months. It's very young; the second mailing has just come out.

Dapa-Em I have first-hand knowledge of. Western fans I can only point to: Dale A. Goble, Jr./8201 Valewood Court/Orangevale CA 95662, who is starting CHAPS, a marvelously-named Western apa.

Go ye and diversify.

This seems the appropriate place to mention The Fantasy Association/POBox 24560/Los Angeles CA 90024. They publish two magazines of interest to fantasy fans. FANTASIAE is the monthly newsletter, edited by Ian M. Slater (12/\$3). It has news, reviews, letters and feature articles and artwork (by such as Alexander, Anderson, Beagle, Gerrold, Kurtz; Austin, Barr, Kirk, Marmor). THE EILDON TREE will be the hopefully-quarterly journal edited by Donald G. Keller, assisted by Judith Weiss (\$1, 4/\$3.50). I've seen some of the art and written material for the first issue,



which should be out about now, and it looks to be good.

The Association definitely gives you your money's worth.

Now I'll just go through the box marked "Fmz to be reviewed," more or less at random.

BANSHEE 6/Michael Gorra/199 Great Neck Road/Waterford CT 06385 -- Mike started out with STARSHIP TRIPE, and ideas of person-zines. After five issues he decided he wanted to go the gen-zine route, changed the name, and printed a long analysis of Poul Anderson's "The Problem of Pain" and related stories. I haven't read the stories, so I don't know how valid Patrick McGuire's article is, but it read well. Still, Mike's editorial is the most interesting part of the zine, and I hope he emphasizes it. Repro still needs work, but much improved over the TRIPE days. Quite promising. (35¢ or the usual)

STARLING/Hank & Lesleigh Luttrell/525 W. Main/Madison, Wisc. 53703 is the popular culture fanzine--sf, mysteries, comics, tv, movies, etc. #27 is the 10th Anniversary Issue, 75¢ and well worth it. #26 (50¢) was also excellent. Subscriptions are 5/\$2. I consider STARLING one of the top fanzines currently being produced: people get a chance to discuss just about anything they really enjoy, and you get a good chance to learn about good things you'd otherwise never know about. Highly recommended.

While we're on the subject of Highly Recommended, let me urge you to subscribe to OUTWORLDS/Bill and Joan Bowers/POBox 148/Wadsworth OH 44281 (\$1, 8/\$6). Issue 18, which just arrived, is 36 legal-size pages, mostly letters on issues 15 and 16. Issues 19 and 20, if you haven't seen their ads, will have Poul Anderson, Piers Anthony, Henry Kuttner, Ray Bradbury, Forrest J Ackerman, Susan Glicksohn, Andy and Jodie Offutt, Sandra Meisal...and on and on. The Bowers' really seem to be breaking out, and I'm anxiously awaiting the results. (I even sent them money, to make sure I don't miss anything.)

OUTWORLDS is going offset. So, at least occasionally, is LOCUS/Dona & Charlie Brown/Box 3938/San Francisco CA 94119 (40¢, 18/\$6). The offset format is very attractive and has huge possibilities. The badmouthing of LOCUS is not as bad as it once was; accept it as "the newspaper of the science fiction field," with only tenuous connections now with fandom. It shouldn't be criticized for what it isn't. ## I read LOCUS, first line to last, and I hope the Browns go on forever. I even hope they break even, at least, on it. And if it doesn't fit many people's conceptions of what a fanzine "is" or "should be," what difference does that make?

Denis Quane/Box CC, East Texas Station/Commerce TX 75428, who may yet give ANALOG fans a good name, has started his own zine, NOTES FROM THE CHEMISTRY DEPT. (25¢ or the usual). The first two issues were 10 and 12 pages, mostly devoted to science and hard-core sf. I like Denis's stuff, even though I disagree with almost every word he says.

One of the best of the personal-oriented genzines is Dave Locke's AWRY/915 Mt. Olive Dr. #9/Duarte CA 91010. (AWRY is a response-oriented zine; no subscriptions. Dave says one sample copy is available for a dollar bill--or try to convince him you'll

be a valuable addition to the mailing list.) #6 is over half letters; but then, 5 was an excellent issue. AWRY is one of my favorites.

From nowhere, Don Thompson/7498 Canosa Canosa Court/Westminster CO 80030 started sending me his monthly DON-o-SAUR (25¢, 12/\$2.50), a very pleasant surprise. Don published a couple sf stories in the mid-fifties, disappeared, and now has returned to sf and entered fandom. I have his 28th and 29th issues. He starts out with a few very well-written personal observations, and then moves into letters (28) and fanzine reviews (29). Other issues have had book reviews and Don's new fiction. As Don is slowly "discovered" everyone will be reading DON-o-SAUR. Here's your chance to beat the crowd.

Chris Sherman/700 Parkview Terrace/Minneapolis MN 55416 has started a zine called ANTITHESIS (25¢) which has attractive offset covers and highly imaginative, readable ditto interiors. Content-wise, Chris still has a way to go. The amateur sf is awful. The articles vary widely in quality; Warren Johnson's "New Wave/Old Wave" article in #1 is one of the worst articles of 1973, while the Loren MacGregor/Roger D. Sween pair in #2 is very nice. There's a lot of potential here; I hope Chris will be able to fulfill it.

Don Markstein's mail pick-up has moved to POBox 53112/New Orleans LA 70153. Write and ask for a copy of his TANDSTIKKERZEITUNG, which is one of the very top personalxines being published. No lie.

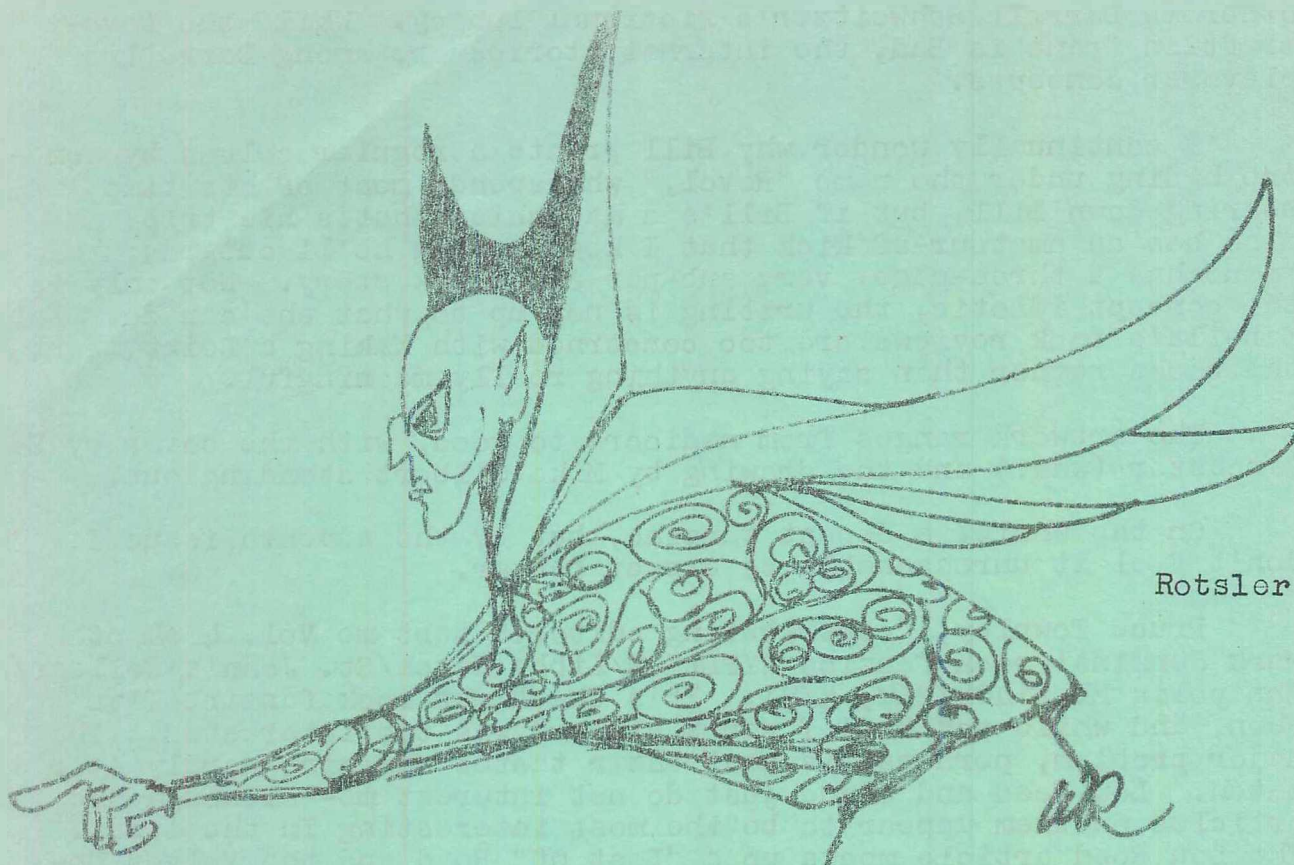
By now you've probably heard of Ed Connor's "fantomes"--his pb-sized fanzines. (MOEBIUS TRIP: SF ECHO/1805 N. Gale/Pooria IL 61604/75¢, 3/\$2) For science fiction fans. It's not great sercon material, but it's good sercon material.

John Carl/3750 Green Lane/Butte MT 59701 has RETICULUM (4 stamps or the usual), an anthology-type fanzine of short, "humorous" articles. Some appeal to me, most don't. A reprint of a piece of faan fiction by Marion Zimmer Bradley is the highlight of #1.

It is difficult to review one's first-received issue of an established fanzine, particularly when it contains mentions of how different the issue is from its predecessors--though I think what Frank Denton/14654 8th Ave SW/Seattle WA 98166 says about ASHWING 13 is that it's like what A-W used to be, but hasn't been lately, or something. At any rate, this is pretty good. Denton is a fine writer, and so is Michael Carlson. (I'd love to have Carlson as a columnist for KYBEN.) Dainis Bisenieks has a pretty good article on Mervyn Peake--an article on Peake must be good before I'll enjoy it--and the reviews, by Darrell Schweitzer and the editor, are nice. But neither of the short stories is worth reading. Still, a good fanzine, because the good parts are very good.

Linda Bushyager/1614 Evans Avenue/Prospect Park PA 19076 now has two zines: GRANFALLOON (75¢ or the usual) and KARASS (5/\$1 or contribution). They seem to be pretty much the same fanzine except that GRANNY is large (#18 is 58 pages + 8-page art folio) and approximately annual, and KARASSS is small (#1 is 10 pages) and supposedly monthly.





Rotsler

GRANNY 18 is a pretty good issue, and if you are interested in the "professional" aspects of fandom (particularly the commercialism of conventions, artshows, fanzines, etc.) you should send Linda \$1.75 for issues 17 and 18 and get into the discussions here. They're quite lively. In this issue Linda, Tony Lewis, John and Bjo Trimble, Lester del Rey, Mike Glycer, Robert Bloch, Milt Stevens, Len Moffatt, Don Ayres and Harry Warner are at it tooth and nail. There is also a minor fannish article by Susan Glicksohn, a cooking column by Sandra Meisel (great illo by Dan Steffan), short fanzine reviews by Linda and seventeen pages of book reviews. (John Curlovich covers Ted Cogswell's output, Cy Chauvin discusses Dean Koontz's "Beastchild" (this article also appears in ANTITHESIS), Angus Taylor likes RENDEZVOUS WITH RAMA, and Don D'Armassa runs through Michael Coney's short fiction, often superficially but occasionally with good insight.)

KARASS 1 has a lot of information on cons, fanzines and such, and a review of some of the Ballantine Adult Fantasy books.

Bill Wagner/Box 108/Glenolden PA 19036 has probably the longest track record of bad luck with repro in the history of fandom. No matter what he tries, it doesn't work out. I gather from hints inside this issue that what I have is the second ALPHA & OMEGA 7 (30¢, 4/\$1, or the usual), the first being unreadable and thus not mailed out. This one isn't too bad except for a large number of badly-cut stencils.

Two items stand out in this issue stand out. The first is Bill's "Thrilling Story of My Life." I didn't know he was capable of writing this well (which sounds like a left-handed compliment, but isn't meant to be; this is a good piece of fanwriting). The

other is Darrell Schweitzer's fictional lunacy. While the Lovecraftian frame is Bad, the internal stories are among Darrell's cleverer concepts.

I continually wonder why Bill prints a regular column by someone hiding under the name "Revel," who spends most of his time tearing down Bill, but if Bill's a masochist that's his trip. He also has an amateur-sf kick that I keep hoping he'll outgrow; this issue has a three-page, very sub-par Janet Fox story. Not only is the concept idiotic, the writing is not up to what she can do. Bob Sabella's book reviews are too concerned with Making a Point about the books rather than saying anything really meaningful.

The artwork ranges from mediocre to good, with the cover by Ed Lancaster (who?) and the drawing by Mike Gilbert standing out.

On the whole, a decent fanzine, but by the seventh issue I don't feel it unreasonable to expect better.

Bruce Townley, "contributing editor," sent me Vol. 4 #4 of Mark Jenkins' rock fanzine HYPERION/Libby Hatch/St. John's College/Annapolis MD 21404/25¢, 4/\$1. It's the first rock fanzine I've seen, and while not bad, I can't claim I was too interested. The major problem, perhaps, is that their tastes and mine hardly ever match. Lou Reed and Slade just do not interest me--although the articles on them appear to be the most interesting in the issue. The Lou Reed article mocks up a "Best Of" Reed and the Velvet Underground album, a game I enjoy myself tremendously. (The only one I've completed that I really feel is definitive is my Traffic double-album mock-up, TRAFFIC THROUGH THE AGES.) The Slade article is quite clever, a spelling/pronunciation guide to the group's unique phonetic system.

There seems to me a bit too much bandying of words like "worthless" and "worst" and "revolting" and similar negativisms. There is little tolerance for music other people might like. I personally happen to enjoy pretentious art-rock like Yes and Emerson, Lake & Palmer, but I don't go around running the Allman Brothers into the ground just because they bore me to tears.

I don't listen too critically to music. I like groups like Yes in which many sounds are going on at once, and I seldom try and sort them out to see how well someone played that one bit there. But I have had people point out to me that this bit is good and this one isn't, and such, so I now can often tell if a guitar solo is inspired or lackluster, meaningful or just technically good. (Though I still can't listen to Jimi Hendrix.) But I don't generally call something I don't like "junk."

Occasionally there is misinformation (e.g., the songs the Byrds covered in their BYRDS album are not all Crosby arrangements). That's one problem with hyper-condemnation--there is a tendency to leap without looking.

Physically, HYPERION is laid out rather plainly, not bad. The artwork is...I almost said "horrendous"...Let's say it leaves room for improvement. Different artists might help. There are more typos than in any other fanzine I've ever seen--more even than in GORBETT.



Oh yes--Bruce Townley does have a few words on sf fandom, primarily the Australian variety. In case you were wondering...

VORPAL/Richard Brandt/4013 Sierra Drive/Mobile AL 36609/35¢, 3/\$1 or the usual/is a promising zine; Brandt begins with a good idea of what he wants to do. He was quite lucky in getting some good material for his first issue. (Though I'm beginning to wonder if he'll do a second.) His big trouble was--predictably--repro. He mixes offset, mimeo and ditto, and only the offset (which was used least) worked. The problem with the mimeo appears to be merely underinking, an easily correctable situation. The problem with the spirit work is probably just that Richard is not one of the small handful of people in the world born with ditto fluid in their veins. Only a little was totally unreadable, though.

The graphics could also use work; Richard apparently does all his own lettering--except for one piece of letterpress--and he should definitely reconsider. It detracts from the good Grant Canfield cover and doesn't help throughout the zine. The heading for the Chapdelaine article was well-thought-out but poorly executed. The rest aren't worth mentioning.

The best item in the issue is an awful Ray Nelson short story; I enjoyed it a lot. The other major contribution is an expose of Scientology by Perry Chapdelaine. It was one of the more interesting pieces by him I've seen, one I was able to read from beginning to end. I wouldn't have minded seeing it cut a bit, though; it tended to wander and tightening was in order. The other contribution, a two-page short story by Stephen Barrington, was not worth printing, and I hope Brandt can resist using amateur sf in the future. (The Nelson story was something else; there is a difference between amateur and non-commercial.) The editor's own writing is good enough that he probably won't ever have to worry about detracting from the quality of his fanzine.

In toto, there's a lot of promise here. Rich has, of course, a lot of work to do, but he isn't off to as bad a start as a lot of people have been. (I was lucky enough to get off to a good start with PHANTASMICOM, but it makes improvement less dramatic.)

I'm running way over how much I intended to write, but I do have a few more things to mention, most briefly, one in slight detail. I've already mentioned two of my favorite three personal-zines, TANDSTIKKERZEITUNG and DON-o-SAUR. The third is THE PASSING PARADE/Milt Stevens/9849 Tabor St. #3/Los Angeles CA 90034/25¢. There are two noteworthy "service" publications of recent vintage. One is the third edition of THE NEO-FAN'S GUIDE TO SCIENCE FICTION FANDOM, edited by Bob Tucker (Linda Bushyager/address above/25¢). A brief history, a glossary, an often-facotious but serious-in-intent handbook, very nicely done. The other is EVERYFAN'S GUIDE TO THE AUCTIONS by Jack L. Chalker/5111 Liberty Heights Avenue/Baltimore MD 21207/50¢. This covers auctions from every viewpoint, concommittee to auctioneer to bidder. Very informative. And, to close up the short mentions: PROCRASTINATION 12/Darrell Schweitzer/113 Deepdale Road/Strafford PA 19087/40¢, 4/\$1.50 has seventeen pages on the 1973 Clarion East, for those of you who are interested in the Workshop. I very much enjoyed it.

Now. In PHANTASMICOM 8 (December 1971) I reviewed Mike Glycer/14974 Osceola St./Sylmar CA 91342's PREHENSILE ZERO. I did not

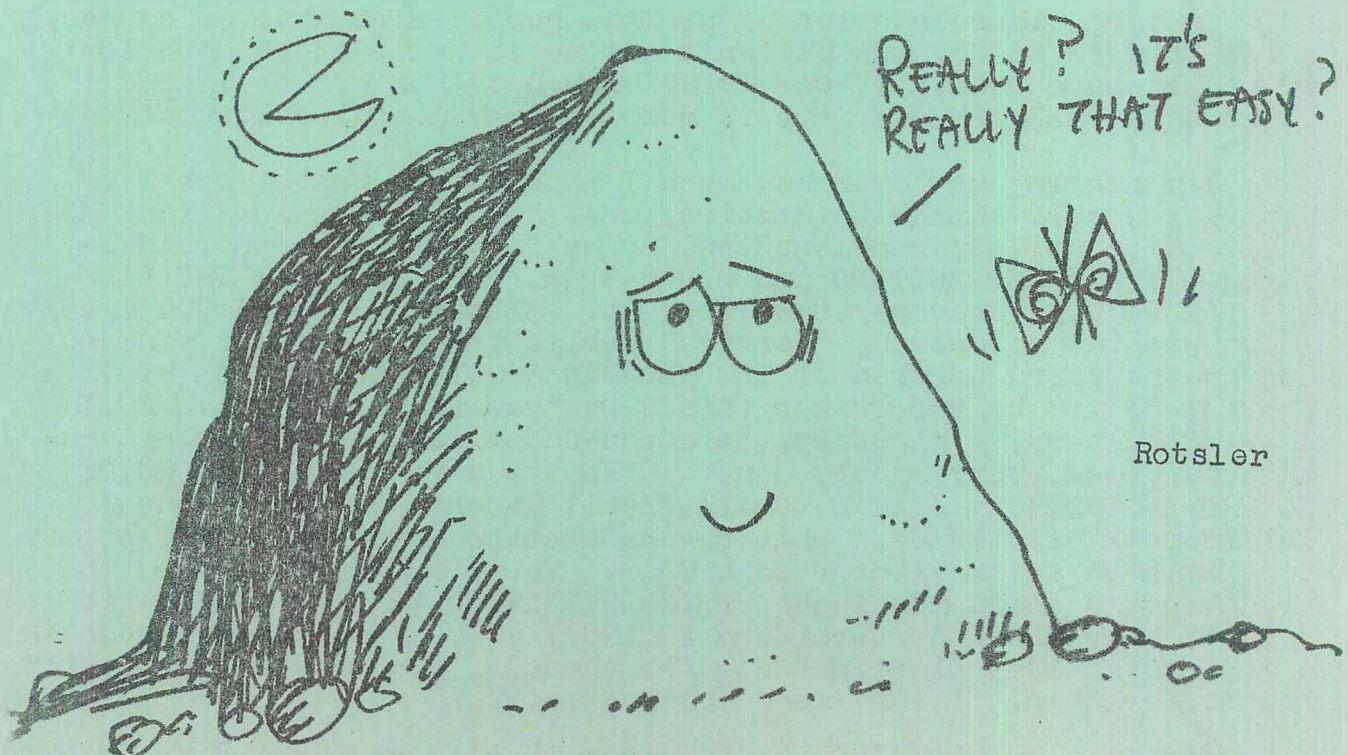
like it, and I said so very strongly, ending with "I wouldn't waste any more time on it for a while. Maybe in two more years ...". Mike responded with a bitter attack on me and PhCOM 8 (which had been edited by Don Keller). I printed it in PhCOM 9 with comments indicating that I didn't take him very seriously. Furious, he ripped a letter to Don with a message to me that he didn't want any of my publications in the future, and many of his letters to Don after that managed to contain some slur upon my personage.

Obviously, we lost touch.

Over the next two years, incredibly, PRE was evolving into a good fanzine; I occasionally looked through some of Don's copies. Once I saw a letter concerning Roger Zelazny; and since I had recently discussed the matters in question with Roger I sent a brief note to Mike clarifying a couple points. I don't know if he ever printed it or not, but eventually, slowly, we started sending each other fanzines. Now he's back on my permanent list, and I hope I am on his.

PREHENSILE 10 (50¢) is an excellent issue, with the final (at this point) results of Cy Chauvin's wrastlings with the question, "What is sf?" (and while I disagree with a lot of his views, I'm quite surprised that he hit as many good points as he did for the amount of wandering in the wrong places he seemed to be doing for the last couple years.) Jerry Pournelle gets into the fannish-professionalism scene; the book reviews by Stan Burns, Don Keller, Richard Wadholm and Glycer are good; there's a lot of really nice art...

Yes, PREHENSILE is everything I always said it would be.







# KERMIT the BROOM REPAIR- MAN

I'LL DO MY  
BEST, LADY,  
BUT THIS IS  
A GODDAMN  
TOUGH  
CASE!

