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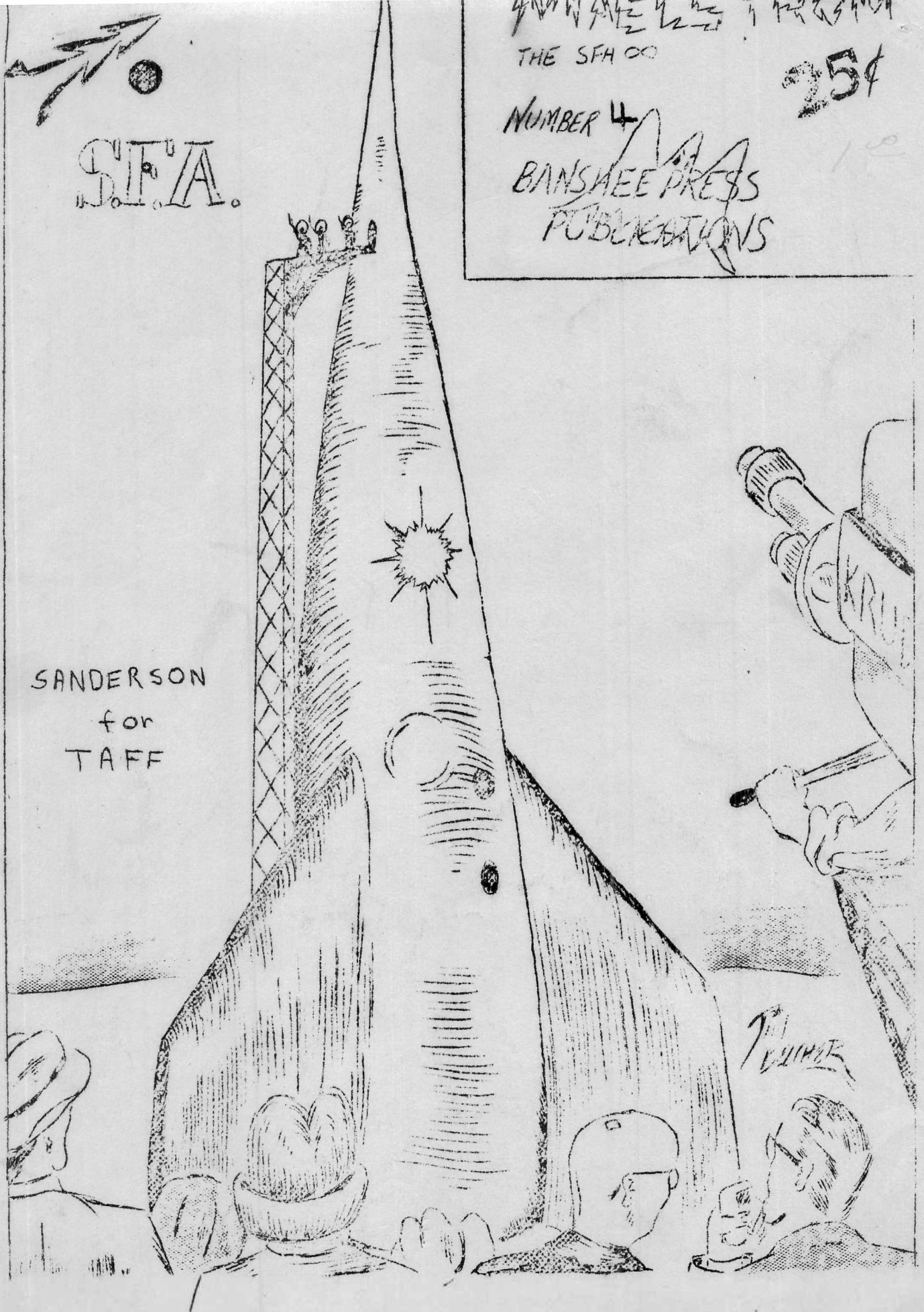
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# THE MAELSTROM



"And Hell rising from a thousand  
thrones shall do her reverence."

--Edgar A. Poe

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Copies of this issue are been circulated among the members of the newly organized Southern Fandom Group, which is progressing toward the reviving and reorganizing of Southern s-f fans. ++++Jack Chalker's book reviews will be included if they reach me in time, if not they will be excluded this issue, but will return next issue. I am on a tight schedule and don't have time to wait for them if they don't reach me within the next few days.

There is still time to join the PITTCON. Send your two bucks registration to Mrs Dirce C. Archer, 1453 Barnsdale St., Pittsburgh 17, Pa. Make checks payable to P. Schuyler Miller, traesurer. This is the highlight of the science fiction year and you won't want to miss it.

I am miraculously caught without anything to say for a change. So I'll close out with some quotes from notables:

The greatest wealth is to live content, for there is never want where the mind is satisfied.--Lucretius.

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# Behemoth

Behold now BEHEMOTH...he eateth grass as an ox...his strength is in his loins...his force is in the naval of his belly.. he moveth his tail like a cedar; the sinews of his stones are wrapped together...his bones are like...bars of iron...behold he drinketh up a river..he can draw up Jordan in his mouth... he taketh it with his eyes; his nose pierceth through snares.

----Job 40----

Greetings Earthlings! As usual I am composing this editorial on stencil with little or no previous preparation. Therefore I must mention that the length of this column will decide the length of the lettercol. It all depends on how long-winded I am; those who know me are well aware of how devastating that can be.

The absence of the ads means I must improvise so here are a couple of plugs that I feel should be mentioned. First, Larry Byrd (P.O.Box 714, Costa Mesa, Calif.) is putting out a horror fanzine to supplement FAMOUS MONSTERS of FilmLand. TERROR goes for 20¢ and the first issue is due sometime this summer. I suggest that you all send in the required two thins; namely because I will have some egoboo in the form of a record review in the first issue of TERROR.

The second plug (with apologies to Marion Bradley) is re the Ec Fan Addicts and I shall quote Gary Delain for the necessary information:

"...For the past five years there has been no national organization to hold EC fans together or recruit new fans. Between now and this summer I plan to lay the foundation for EC FANDOM '61. I have mentioned this project to very few people; now I want every fan to know about it. Pass it on to other fans you know; don't wait for someone else to do it; Please! I want every fan(including my regular correspondants) to send me a postcard containing the following information: name, address, age, and degree of interest in EC(how many ECs you have, what fan projects if any that you have worked on, what fanzines and amnags you own, and any other information that would indicate your degree of interest in EC and organized fandom). These cards will be filed with the cards recieved from other fans around the country. This summer, if enough fans have responded, I will begin to compile the first EC Fan Yearbook, Fandom '61. This yearbook cannot be compiled by one person. All active fans will contribute by writing biogs, autobiogs, articles of fanzines, etc. When completed(about Jan. 1961). it will be sent to all fans at an outrageous price, for a mag in the fan field. It will probably contain close to 100 pages and sell for \$2 or \$3. This yearbook will be the only source of revenue for the organization. Free bulletins would probably be sent to fans throughout the year. In time a well organized ED Fandom may be able to right some of the wrongs that have been done to the comics by Dr. Wertham(ed. not see lettercol of thish.) and other fanatics."GARY DELAIN, 79 Lee Avenue, Jamestown, New York.

I sincerely hope we will get some response for this project.

During the breach of time between issues, I was fortunate enough to make the fourth fan visit of my career. A state high school student council convention in Gadsden provided me with ample opportunity, although some complications did arise. Opelika High School was run for a state office and I had to spend most of my time campaigning. The final night of the convention brought with it a chance for fun; a dance and banquet was held on this night; the former being excellent and the latter being poor. Promptly at nine o'clock when the banquet ended James Ayers and relatives were on the scene in a green and white Merc convertible to whisk me away from the Gadsden Country Club and into the hamlet of Attalla where James resides at 609 First Street.

Thus began an evening which was thoroughly enjoyed by both of us I'm sure. A couple of hours were spent pouring through sf mags and guzzling cokes. I saw the contracts James has for four of his novels to be published on a subsidy basis. Comet Press' had quite an impressive contract for two of the aforementioned novels. Also I learned that James has a story appearing in a hard cover collection this summer entitled The Best Short Stories of 1960. I also acquired some material for The MAELSTROM. The poem, "Firecracker", and several short stories; I hope to begin serializing one of them next issue.

Not one to break fanish tradition, I entered Attalla practically empty-handed and returned to Opelika with some thirty-odd AMAZINGS and FANTASTICS which were some of the first magazines in James' collection. He was pressed for space and I quickly jumped at the chance to add some of the old pulp size Ziff-Davis mags to my dense collection. All in all, I spent one of the most enjoyable evenings of my fan life at James Ayers house this past April. For those of you who are unacquainted with James, I refer you almost any issue of AMAZING and FANTASTIC, as the lettercol more often, than not contains a bit of his writing.

The next ish will be my first anniversary issue and I would like to make it a really big issue. So all material should be submitted before July 31 if at all possible. I hope to finish #5 in time to take some copies to Pittsburgh for the worldcon and that will mean beginning work immediately so please send material in as soon as possible.

Recently saw "On the Beach." No, this is not going to be another of my book/movie comparisons. I would like to say that "On the Beach" was one of the most shocking movies I have ever seen. When I left the theater I felt so naked, so all alone, so vulnerable that I had to get off by myself and think it over. I was quite emotionally disturbed over the movie. I happen to see the film the very same day that the news of the Summit Conference failure was being blurted out through all modes of communication and that did nothing to help my shattered hopes of the future. I would like to quote Sandy Snnderson from his zine APORRHETA in re to the movie. This quote is borrowed without first requesting permission. Hope you don't mind, Sandy.:

"Personally I have never seen a quieter, more subdued audience leaving a cinema. If the film caused these people to go home and think, then it did a damn good job."

That expresses my opinions to a "T", because I went home and thought. And my thoughts weren't any too pleasant, nay, they were more cynical than anything. Be sure to read Alas, Babylon by Pat Frank. It's super in another viewpoint of the nuclear war. Less condemning, anyhow.





I am well pleased with the results of the last issue, especially the interesting discussion that came from the MAD interview by John Pesta. Some good points, pro and con, have been made as a result; and since I seem to be doing a heckuva a lot of quoting in this column, I'd like to quote Harry Warner from the lettercol of Dick Ellington's FIJAGH #3. Again I have not sought prior permission, so I hope Harry has no objections to being used here:

"...it is horrifying to me to see how MAD has become popular around Hagerstown since it lost most of its importance with the revolution in its editorship and staff. I lost interest in it immediately after it turned from satire to parody, and that's just about the time that everyone in my office be-

gan to buy it as soon as it hit the stands, chuckle to one another over it, quote its punchlines at every opportunity. I think that the MAD today is as to the MAD yesterday as Kostalanetz is to real music, and that it's symptomatic that it should have become a major success just now. At one time, it was about the only genuine hard-hitting iconoclastic satire that you could find in generally circulated form on the newstands. Now it's just a joke book."

I thought Harry gave one of the most reasonable opinions of MAD that I have seen, and felt that everyone interested in this controversy and discussion would be interested in seeing the above.

I shall conclude this with the following article which I must begin below with a typed heading or not get in at all. My apologies, Tony, for not offering you a more egoboostical layout.

bjp

### The Truth About Billy Joe Plott

by Anthony Rudmann

Once again I have been summoned forth from retirement by citizens of high integrity and low morals to launch a dissertation for the purposes of dispelling, now and forever, the malovelent rumors currently circulating about your fiend and mine, William J. Plott.

Let us first discuss the rumor that Billy Joe Plott is actually a pen name of Gertrude M. Carr. Bill, himself, neatly dispelled that cloud against his sterling, but slightly tarnished, character by stating that such an accusation is completely ridiculous; then he hit me with his pocketbook

Another vicious story presents the so called fact that the eminent Mr. Plott is, during periods of the full moon, a vampire. After closely studying several pictures of the gentleman in question--or is he out of the question--and consulting highly paid--and overpaid, too--dentists, I can state with some degree of assurance that Bill is merely suffering from a case of widely spaced buck teeth.

continued on page 30

# The Paradoxical Potpourri

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If you are wondering about the portent of that title of mad wizardry, gentle reader, don't feel too badly for I find myself also in a bit of wonderment about it. However, just for the sake of some sort of equilibrium "potpourri" means a medley, anthology or highly spiced mixture, while "paradoxically" modifies it to denote that this mixture will be of things that are generally held to be the opposite, or different at any rate. So I invite you to ramble along with me and see what we find.

As you have noticed Bill Plott entitled his editorial BEHEMOTH and it started me to wondering as to what is a behemoth? Bill quoted from Job 40 in part. (Actually Job 40 : 15-24.) The King James Version, from which he quoted, simply calls it behemoth, but this doesn't really identify the creature. The original Hebrew word here is "bēhēmōth" which is an intensive plural from "bēhēmāh", meaning beast, therefore the literal meaning of behemoth is "colossal beast". As to what this "colossal beast" may refer, there are two approaches of thought. One being that it is a symbolic animal with the details of its appearance borrowed from the animals of the Egyptian and Babylonian mythologies; however, this theory has little concrete evidence to support it. The more acceptable possibility is that it describes a natural animal. Scholars long suggested the elephant as the animal, but now many seem to favor its being the hippopotamus. The hippopotamus seems to fit the description better there in the book of Job, and surely Moses would have made mention of the tusks and trunk of the elephant if that animal had been the one he was writing about. So this makes Bill's editorial a... ..well, on to other things.

And speaking of animals of imposing size, Cacareco polled a landslide win of 50,000 votes in the municipal election.

tions in Sao Paula, Brazil on September 7th of last year. And her final tally ran nearly 100,000, and she even did pretty well in the elections at Campinas, an industrial city, and the port of Santos, although she didn't win those two. Of course, you may be asking, "But who is Cacareco?" Well, she happened to be a female rhinoceros. Actually she was entered in the elections as somewhat of a joke and her amazing tally can be attributed to the people's displeasure about the shortages of food staples, high cost of living, and Brazilian politics in general. And s-f writers tell us it's spiders or ants that will take over the world!

But if animals go into politics they might find in that dizzying area two heads are better than one, and one Dr. Valdimir P. Demikhov of Russia would be the man to see. Dr. Demikhov transplanted a head a forefeet of one dog on the neck of another and has performed two dozen similar operations. One of the two headed animals lived for 29 days and other transplanted heads have even been able to lap milk. Of course, the Communists are always first to accomplish anything, so we won't mention that back in 1908 an American doctor performed a similar operation. Who knows, maybe we are on our way to "two-faced" becoming more than just a phrase.



But if a rhinoceros winning an election and a dog having two heads seems like fantastic confusion, you may be shocked to learn that we just go around to settling more elemental matters. For example, how long is an inch and what is the weight of a pound? Back in 1893 the inch was set at 2.540005 centimeters and the U.S. pound was 0.4535924277 kilograms. But in December of 1958 the inch was chopped to 2.54 and the pound rigged down to 0.45359237 kilograms. So if you've lost weight and become shorter don't blame me. The United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa have joined in on the new measurement. These changes, while seemingly trivial to the average person, are important in a number of technical fields.

And while some deal with the small things and their changing,, British astronomer, Dr. Fred Hoyle takes the opposite in size scale and deals with the largest....the Universe. Previously the universe's age has been set at 6 billion years, but using an IBM 704 electronic computer Hoyle studied our Milky Way Galaxy in which lies our Earth and Sun. Based on his life histories of the two types of stars (or suns), known as Population I (young, hot stars) and Population II (older stars), he now calculates the universe's age to be some 10 billion years.

And here is an interesting fact about a man of a few years ago that I think is quite revealing. In his book Officers Against Hitler Fabian von Schlabrendorff writes:



"The meeting with Hitler took place in Field-Marshal Kluge's personal quarters. As he entered the office, Hitler laid down the peculiar military-style cap he always wore. I had always been curious about this cap. Now, with no one watching, I impulsively reached to pick it up and have a look. I was startled to find it heavy as a cannon ball. On examination, I saw why. Our dauntless dictator, who professed to be beloved by all Germans, had his cap lined with fully three and a half pounds of protective plate."

And ironically he committed suicide.

I've enjoyed rambling here and I hope that you r may have found something of interest along the way. And I would like to leave you with this lovely quote from "The Wilderness of John Muir":

"This grand show is eternal. It is always sunrise somewhere; the dew is never all dried at once; a shower is for ever falling; vapor is ever rising. Eternal surprise, eternal sunset, eternal dawn and gloaming, on sea and continentsss and islands, each in its turn, as the round earth rolls."

\*\*\*      \*\*\*      \*\*\*      \*\*\*      \*\*\*  
 // - Al's takeoff on my editorial column was most interesting to me since I attempt to write that editorial. There should be one point of interest to all females fen reading this article, however, and that is the last paragraph of the preceding page. The answer to a much sought after question is given on that page: now, at last, girls, you know Fabiah's real name! -- //

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### "Delilah"

It was easy at first, it seemed,  
 To simply ignore it all---  
 Only that was BEFORE I met her;  
 And she had plenty of gall!

Oh, you'll say that I was a weakling,  
 And that I acted like a baby---  
 But that was before I met HER;  
 And I don't mean if or maybe.

Again you'll say I was putty  
 In the hold of a creature like that---  
 But that was AFTER I met her;  
 Yes, she was a wonderful cat.

--Mark R. Curilovic--

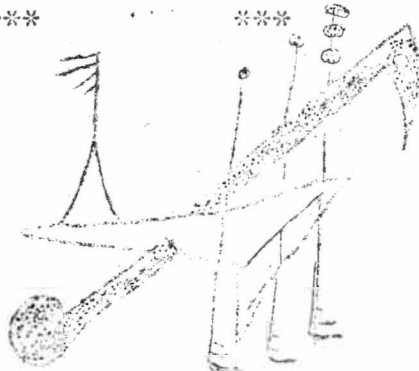
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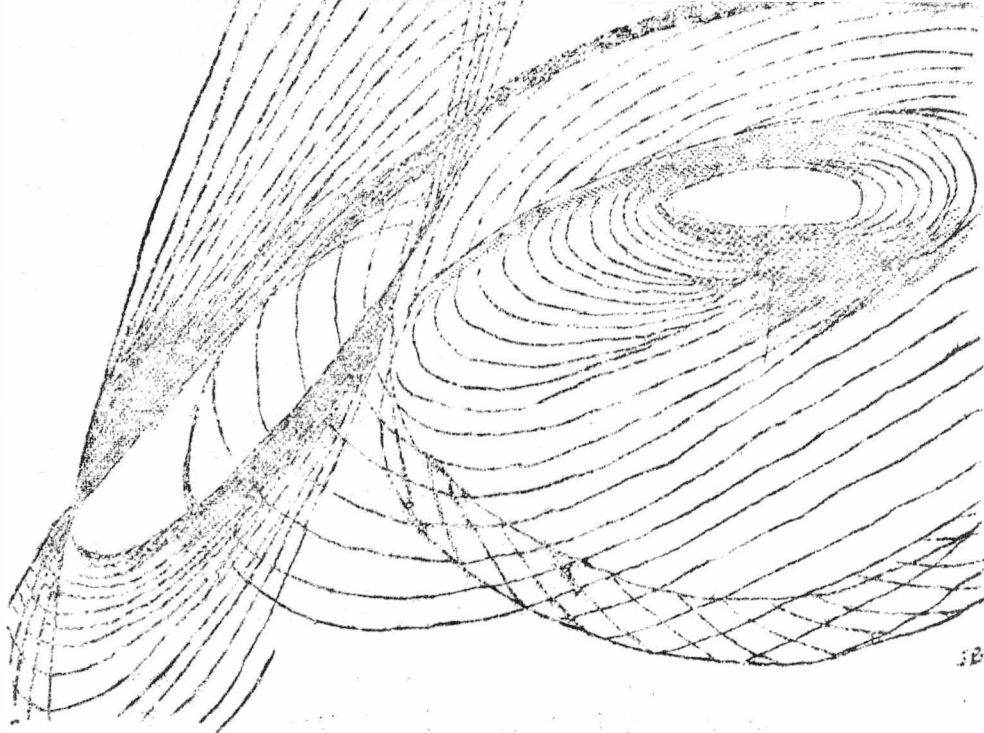
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## COLLISION

by Mark Curilovic

Two lines of force began to move  
In hyperbolic lines,  
One was a shade of delicate green  
And the other--the hue of wines

Their epicenters seemed to be  
In the sine of the arc subtending,  
But the outer edge of the reddish force  
Had an area more extending.

The verdant force began to merge  
And superimpose the other,  
When the tableau ended in a whirl of tints  
As they collided with one another.

.....

"Well, John, it looks like your pen wins again. I had my red one started in the upper left corner, figuring that it would gain the central area first because of the sweep of the curve it was taking."

Smiling, John said, "And I had my own Designagraph start in a smaller central portion, Bill, because I figured that an ellipse was the best form to commence with, since the left extreme of the parabola would eventually overlap into your design."

"Which contributed to my defeat, and lost the bet," said Bill ruefully.

# Don <sup>But</sup> <sup>Not</sup> Forgotten

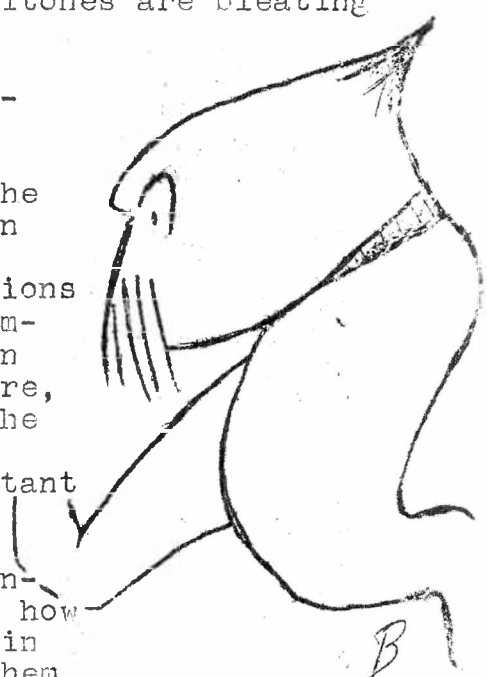
by HARRY ARNER, Jr.

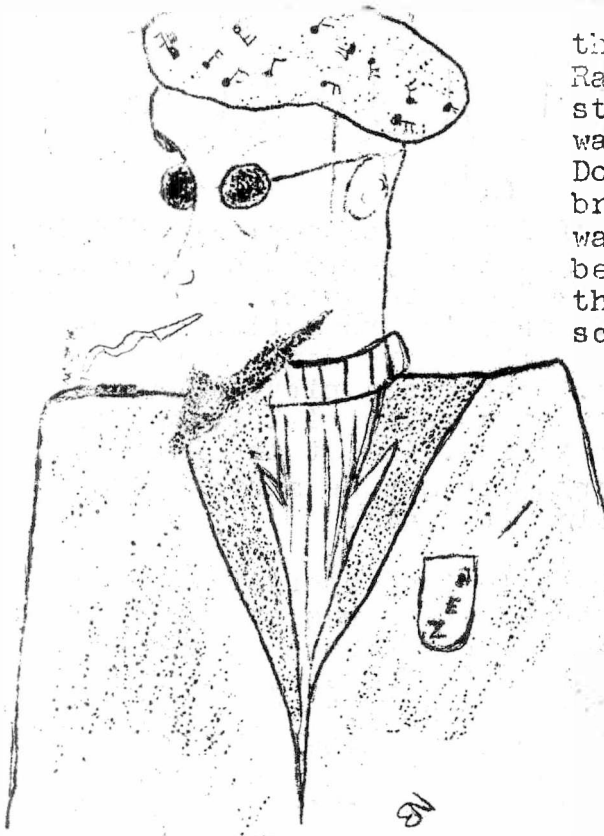
It snuck up so quietly that lots of fantasy enthusiasts didn't realize that it was coming, the first televised performance of that pre-Bloch weird story to music, Mozart's "Don Giovanni." The NBC Opera Theater wasn't widely publicized for this production in advance, unless you happened to live in a city where dealers were pushing sales of color television sets. That was a pity, because it took nearly 200 years for this story of a revengeful statue to appear on the video screen for the first time. And at the rate at which operas appear on television networks, it may be another 200 years before they get around to producing it again.

Otherpoints of interest about this televised opera have been overlooked. For instance, the English translation was prepared by W.H. Auden and Chester Kallman. This is important because the same pair of poets turned out the original libretto for a modern opera that has quite a few similarities to "Don Giovanni." That is "The Wake's Progress" whose Stravinsky music created quite a bit of excitement a decade ago. I think that the new English version of the da Ponte libretto for Mozart's opera was the best thing about this television production. It sounds as if it were easy to sing, it sticks close enough to the original Italian words to mirror the music, and it's contemporary without being so up-to-date in slang that it will become antiquated next year. I think that English-language opera would be much more welcome in the United States if all translations were as well done as this one. It was nice to note that the telecast allowed "rape," "hell," and "damn" to be sung during the opera, apparently on the grounds that not even the censors pay any attention to what tenors and baritones are bleating out.

Then there's the little matter of the remainder of the opera. It would be nice if NBC would spring free another Sunday afternoon to perform the parts that were left out during the April 10 production. Nobody minds the omission of the duet between Zerlina and Leporello, which is almost always cut from stage productions and probably wasn't set to music by Mozart himself. But it was rather jolting to hear a "Don Giovanni" that was missing half of the overture, "Non Mi Dir," "Mi Tradi," "Dalla Sua Pace," the entire final scene, and some hunks of recitative that have no musical merit but are important to the development of the plot.

The thing that impressed me about the general staging of the opera was this: no matter how old-fashioned or melodramatic certain things in operas may seem to be, any attempt to alter them creates a disaster of one sort or another. A good example of this problem occurred just after the start of "Don Giovanni." Ceare Siepi in the title role made his first appearance wearing a mask, removing it after the duel and death of the Comendatore. Maybe NBC thought that this mask would delude people into





thinking that they were watching "the Lone Ranger". But the use of the mask created a stage situation that was impossible to watch patiently. Nobody could believe that Don Giovanni really had so much trouble breaking away from Donna Anna that there was time to sing a fairly extended trio before Donna Anna's father showed up. In the original directions for the opera, this scene becomes quite plausible. Don Giovanni is wearing a large hat and a flowing cape but no mask. He is hiding his face from Donna Anna with these garments, and it is understandable that a woman could detain for a minute or two a man who has only one hand free, because the other must be used to keep his features out of sight. Besides, this business of the mask contradicts the description that Donna Anna later gives of what happened just before the rise of the curtain. Don Giovanni had come into her home incognito, she mistook him in the gloom for her boy friend, and didn't raise a ruckus until he started snogging so vigorously. She would have spotted the intruder instantly as such, if he'd been masked.

I didn't like the handling of the statue. Maybe it was more effective in color. But on black and white, the statue looked like a shapeless gray lump that inspired neither respect or revulsion nor awe in the viewer. Its immobility in the final moments of the opera didn't fit very well the striding music that Mozart wrote for it.

The other major flaw of this production involved the lighting. Television programs are apparently lighted on the assumption that viewers will call the repair shop if faces appear so dark, so it's hard to distinguish between a nighttime and a daylight scene on the screen. This is particularly bad in the case of "Don Giovanni," where so much of the plot depends on poor visibility in certain scenes: the opening scene that I have already mentioned, the long sequence in which everyone mistakes Don Giovanni for Leporello because they've exchanged hats and coats, the uncertainty in the graveyard's moonlight over the question of whether the statue really nodded its head.

I thought that the opera was sung for the most part quite well. Cesare Siepi in the title role got off a performance of the champagne aria that would be something to remember, where ever heard, and James Pease was a marvelous Leporello, one who actually sang the role instead of hamming it up. Judith Raskin displayed such a remarkable talent for looking alternately angry and happy that I almost forgot to pay attention to the way she was singing Zerlina. The rest of the cast didn't equal their excellence. Leontyne Price sounded frankly scared and her Donna Anna wasn't what she is capable of doing.

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Howard Phillips Lovecraft of providence, R.I. was without doubt the most unusual literary "character" of his time as well as one of its greatest writers of supernatural horror stories. Born of parents who were both mental cases he was brought up in a sheltered, unhealthy atmosphere which unfortunately lasted all of his life. Poor health kept him indoors a great deal of the time and this naturally turned him away from the usual activities of his kind.

Through endless reading he educated himself along unusual lines. He developed an early taste for fantasy; a life-long interest in science and a love of the 18th century and his native New England scene. From Lord Dunsay, Poe, Bierce, and others as well as from his own dreams, he learned the writing craft. Correspondence with a host of friends provided him with his most lasting pleasure and need for human contacts.

He traveled a little, wrote a little, and died in comparative obscurity. Less than 100 stories bare his name as author and less than 50 saw publication during his short lifetime. To the casual observer H.P. Lovecraft may not seem very important or interesting, but to his many friends, correspondants, and readers he was and is a legendary figure of ever increasing stature. Since his death his tales of horror have been printed and reprinted many times.

Most of the credit for this must go to August W. Derleth who has done more for Lovecraft's reputation than all the rest of his friends put together. But the stories themselves remain as HPL's greatest claim to fame. He saw horrors from beyond the grave and beyond time and space as no other author ever did. He created a world peopled by the most hideous creatures ever dreamed of in fiction. HP Lovecraft will take his place among the immortals of fantasy fiction.

The Cthulhu Myths of HPLovecraft is the framework (a rather elaborate one) for all of his upernatural fiction. In essence it is quite simple. In actual usage it is a ponderous and clumsy explanation of things that should be left to the reader's imagination. It is the one majoy flaw in Lovecraft's work. Its similarity to the fall of man in The Bible is at once apparent.

In the dim ages before man evolved, a race of Super Beings lived on the earth and ruled it but through evil practices they were imprisoned by the Elder Gods and put under the spell of the elder sign. Cthulhu sleeps in his house in R'lyth; Yogsothoth lurks outside time, and so on. Only man can release them from their bondage by sorcery. Many attempts are made in the stories of Lovecraft and others. Man is doomed by his ignorance and almost complete lack of weapons for defence. So far all is simple; but then the Super Beings and their followers begin to multiply (by a half dozen writers) into a regular hoard of slimy, hideous entities.

They take on a definite shape and form and therefore much of their impact is dulled by familiarity. Lovecraft and his followers went too far in explaining away horrors that should have remained vague. The best of the New England horror stories only contain hints of unnamable things beyond time and space. "In the Vault" and "The Outsider" do not rightly belong to the Myths at all.



continued from page

They don't fit into the pattern. That monumental s-f classic, "The Colour Out of Space" is one of the best examples of Lovecraft's stories. Its strange, unexplained blight from the stars is a far cry from the elaborate and longwinded "At the Mountains of Madness". To put it bluntly the Cthulhu myths are and always was a complicated (but fascinating) failure. His later stories suffered from it. But in spite of all this the great man never wrote a really bad horror story. He had great talent and skill in the use of words. As a writer of horror stories he had no peer in his day. At his worst he was merely wordy. At his best he approached true genius.

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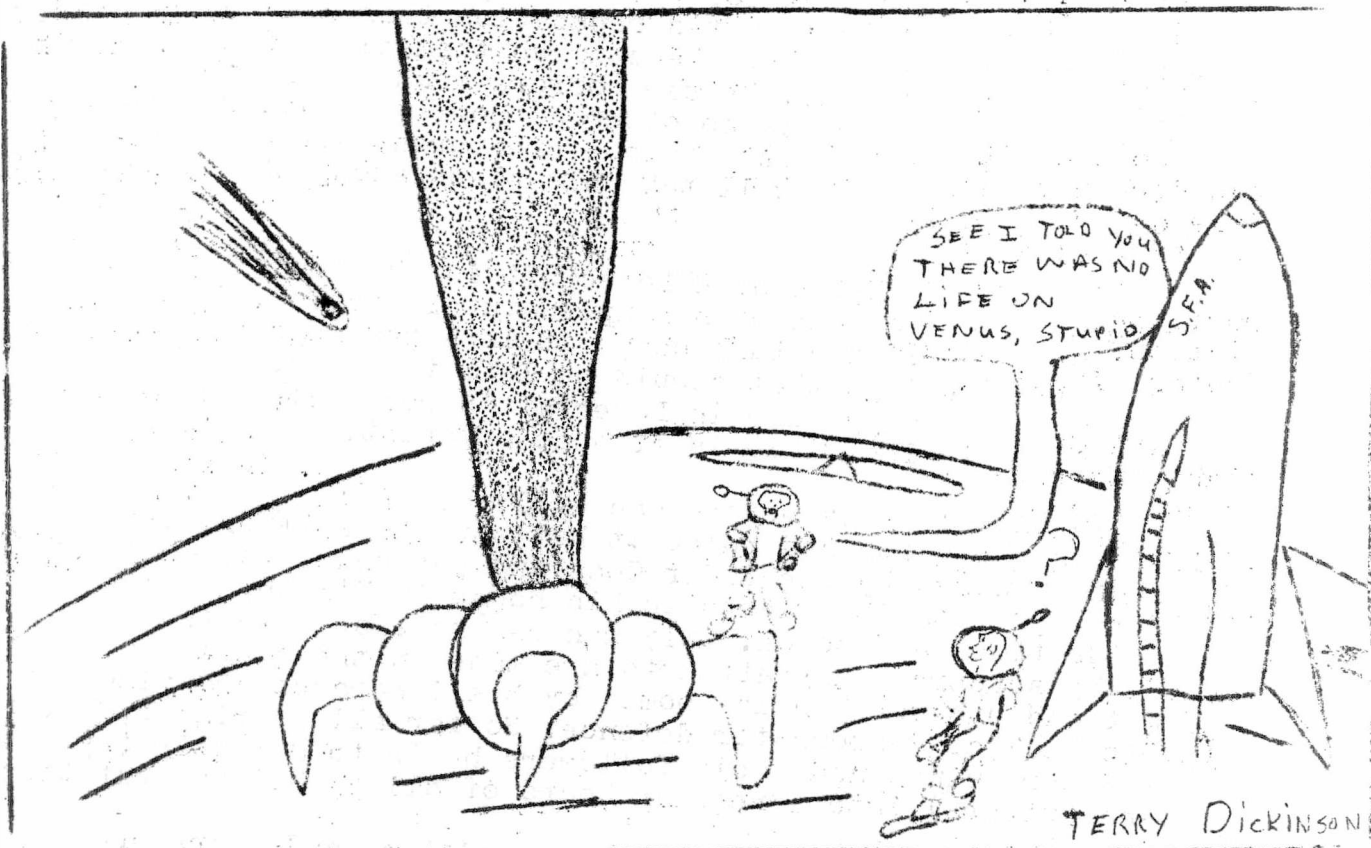
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"Don But Not Forgotten" continued from page

But I admire the courage of the producers in casting her in the role, at the risk of alienating immediately the South's viewers. Almost all of the opera was performed at too fast a pace. It was added insult to the injury when a voice was clearly audible, just before the start of one scene, calling out: "Now, we've gotta do this fast."

-30-

// -A remarkable contrast to end these two totally uncomparable articles on the same page, but I feel both of them were of interest to all concerned. Wish I knew something about opera so I could comment on Harry's article. All I can say about Peter's is that "The Colour Out of Space" ranks as my favorite bit of Lovecraft.-//.

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# What Makes a FAN

by Marion Z. Bradley

EUREKA!

No, I haven't solved the riddle of the ages. But the other evening, while paging my way through Damon Knight's In Search of Wonder, it suddenly dawned on me - the answer to the question which plagues all s-f readers, and all s-f and fantasy lovers, from time to time.

The question - why does one person like s-f, and another person hate it? What is the serious psychological difference between fan and non-fan? What is it that makes the s-f reader defend his favorite literature variously as escape enjoyment, extrapolative delight, the fun of seeing the future, while the non-reader shudders at "that morbid futuristic horror stuff?"

And suddely I had the answer;

The s-f and fantasy reader DOES NOT FEAR THE UNKNOWN.

It has been staring me in the face all my life. My mother, an otherwise intelligent, well-educated and fairly broad-minded woman, interdicted WEIRD TALES and Boris Karloff movies for fear they would "scare" me, and tsk-tsked over my liking for Rider Haggard and Sax Rohmer as "morbid". And I have never forgotten an incident of my sixteenth Christmas. I had received the classic Dracula as a gift, being too old to be denied my choice of books, and sat under the tree that evening, nibbling on a candy cane and devouring the pages, oblivious. She entered the room, stared, shook her head, and remarked on the incongruity of the scene - the beautiful lighted tree, her golden-headed daughter like an angel in a new pink dressing-gown, and in innocous candy cane - "and that horrible, horrofying book!"

Even then I felt it as a great uncrossable gap between us, for I felt no horror in the pages of the book. I explored the world of Dracula, the coffins, the Undead, the Sinister Count, the gallant men, and pitiful Lucy and Courageous Mina, with wonder and surprise and a little sadness, but without a single chill of fear or morbid sensation.

Most people seem to believe that those who read Poe, Lovecraft and the like - and they usually toss in science fiction as well - do so out of a morbid desire to experience a cold chill of vicarious fear. As for me, I can say in honesty that no so-called horror story has ever given me a moment of fear. Surprise, yes. Wonder; astonishment; frequently (as in Poe's "The Pit and the Pendulum") a very real compassion for the victim because of his terror. But never have I felt any personal horror. Why should I? It's only a story. To me, it is the height of perverse neuroticism - to be frightened by a book, or a movie. People who can be scared by print on paper - fictional print, that is - are really out of touch with reality.

What I do feel is the lure of the unknown; the gasp of wild surmise; the astonishment and delight in a new idea.

All this runs far afield from science fiction. But the other day, having read (at my request, since I have a high regard for her literary judgement) one of my near-future science fiction stories, my mother confessed simply that the story had scared her - because it seemed, in these days of satellites and moon rockets, too horrifyingly real to contemplate.

I was suprised and rather puzzled until I suddenly remembered; for the mass audience, even the soberly documentary "Day the Earth Stood Still" was billed, on the movie houses, as a horror movie.

And then it dawned on me;  
To the average person, the UNKNOWN, in itself, IS HORROR.

Be it vampires, split personality, moon rockets, telepathy, the life after death, or the unexplored mountains of the Andes, all these things are lumped together as horror - simply because and soley because they are unknown.

Their reaction to these things is not curiosity. It is not wonder, surprise, or a desire to explore the matter further. Their reaction is fear - ranging from simple distaste to stark terror.

This is why science fiction can reach a mass audience only when it treats of the unknown as THE HORRIBLE. When it takes that fear into account; it plays on it; capitalizes on it.

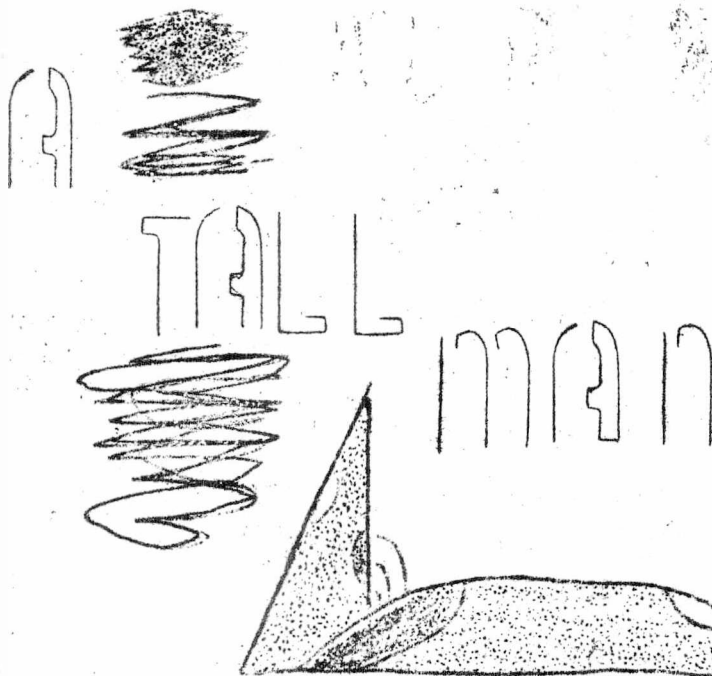
And to the fan, to the s-f and fantasy lover who delights in the unexpected, the unforeseen, that equation of the unknown with horrible is in itself a horror. Which also explains why mass-audience s-f does not sell to fans, and vice-versa.

The curious thing is, that we who love the unknown are not immune to horror. But my horror is reserved for the known. I feel horror when I read of juvenile gang-wars in Harlem, or marijuana addiction among the "beat generation." I feel horror when I see a girl of fourteen solemnly married to a boy of seventeen and her parents sighing with relief at the knowldege that "now she can't get herself into trouble." I feel stark inconceivable horror when I read that the concentration of strontium 90 in the atmosphere will reach a dangerous level in the foreseeable future. I feel absolute maniac terror when I see a boy of fifteen at the wheel of a hot-rod, driving 93 miles an hour in a school zone.

Vampires and spaceships, even if real, could never hold for me the terror which I have for these things. I reserve my shudder of horror for a world which calls Dracula morbid and turns aside to peruse Lana Turner's love letters to a hoodlum just murdered by her little daughter.

\*\*\*\*\*

The last two paragraphs express my opinions quite well. Although I have never been "scared" by any horror story I have read, there have been several with the element of suspense that played upon my nerves, either causing me to pause and reason things out or else held my interest to the extent that putting the book away for the night was painful. Notables on this list include: Dracula, A Stir of Echoes by Richard Matheson, and The Power by Frank Robinson. The only movie was "The Invasion of the Body Snatchers." I'm sure this article could open the doorways of discussion even as the MAD interview has done.



by  
Lloyd Biggle Jr.

A man once came to the earth,  
He came to the earth from Mars.

He stood in the traffic,  
And looked so giraffic,

That people got out of ~~their~~ cars.



//This piece of  
verse is the  
first science  
fiction ever writ-  
ten By Lloyd Biggle. It o-  
riginally appeared in a school  
paper and was contributed by  
the author. It was written at  
the age of nine. Even then a  
great in the s-f field was pro-  
ducing good science fiction.//

NB

The pain was becoming more intense. It had been quiet at first. Peaceful, lying there. With nothing but a white wall around him when he opened his eyes. But he liked to keep them closed. The dark was nice. Soooooo nice! He yawned!

Ouch! That pain was coming back again. It was a strange pain. It had first started to be troublesome when the white wall around him had trembled a bit and he had heard a grinding sound as if a piece of the white wall had been torn away. It had always been thus. Here in this space inside the white wall.

Whoops! There the pain had started again. He tried to communicate with his brothers in their white walls, but they were of no assistance to him. It was the first time that any one of them had had any pain before and they were at a loss to explain it.

Then a warm liquid came flowing around his white wall. He could sense it before it finally seeped into where he was. The pain was intense. Then he began to grow groggy. This wasn't the sort of sleep that he had been used too. This was something else. He sensed it and felt afraid. His brothers started to call to him. But his hearing grew bad. He dosed!

Then all senses of awareness began to fade.....blackness closed in.....then all of a sudden one horrible pain. The white wall quivered. There was a sense of falling.....then silence.....

"You got it, Doc? Gee, what an ache that was. I hated to lose it. My first one you know."

"I know m'boy, but I couldn't have saved tooth if I'd tried. Germs you know. How even one can get inside a tooth and then..."

"Well so long, Doc, send me a bill will you?"

"Sure, son. Goodnight."

\*\*\*\*\*

## FIRECRACKER

by James W. Ayers



It was a new spaceship, all right  
That the aliens sent far out of sight,  
With only a little light  
And exploded right in the middle of  
Night.

\*\*\*\*\*

//It'll be interesting to not how many readers follow my example and get only the surface meaning of the two preceeding pieces, rather than having to reread them and get the underlying fact. The short short by Raleigh Multog is another N3F Manuscript Bureau procurrung by Art Hayes. I have another Ray Nelson piece from the same source for the next issue. It is a short story entitled "Fireside Gathering". I'll wrap this page up with some more quotable quotes.--//.

\*\*\*\*\*

There are four varieties in society; the lovers, the ambitious, observers, and fools. The fools are the happiest."--Taine.

Men are led by trifles.--Napoleon.



THAT

OTHER

POETRY

by Ray Nelson<sup>+</sup>

The human heart's been caged in verse  
Through all recorded time.  
The cage has not been always made  
Of rythem, meter and rhyme.

The Japaneese, for instance, cound their syllables with care,  
Real meter is impossible and rhyme too easy there.  
The French use complex rhyme-schemes that in English sound too  
cute.  
Two sentences combined were sung with ancient aryan lute.

If, within the family of man, the muse can change disguise,  
What strange unthinkable poetry awaits beyond the skies?  
On other worlds, round other suns, how are the phrases sung,  
Of Alien emotions and life in Alien thought and tongue?

How has that far un-human heart reflected God and Love...  
Or are there even words like that on other spheres above?  
And do they speak with sounds or do they speak with dance,  
Like Hindus and Hawaiians, like the bees and like the ants?  
Or have they found another way of which we've never dreamed  
To cross the bridge twist soul and soul that always trackless  
seemed?

Sometimes, when looking at the stars, I hear that songless song,  
That rythemless rythem and rhymeless rhyme, that feeling subtly  
wrong.  
And suddenly each star is screaming twisted rotten things,  
Of madmen's gods and more than gods; of drug-drunk visions of  
wings.  
Of horror-filled pits of time and space where all man becomes  
The meaningless march of worms through dung and wrongly added  
sums.  
Of terror older than the Earth and how the Veil was torn  
By Things that crept the endless dark before the stars were  
born.  
Of Beauty too, and that's thw worst! One glimpse will drive you  
mad,  
And make you seek forever in vain what no man ever had.

I block my ears and shut my eyes  
And bury my face in Earth,  
But nothing can still and nothing can kill  
The Heaven's silent mirth:

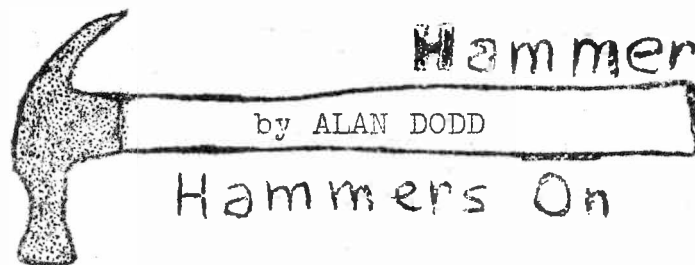
+ Obtained through Art Hayes from the NFFF Manuscript Bureau.

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I am not one of those who do not believe in love at first sight, but  
I believe in taking a second look.--H. Vincent.

Affections, like the conscience, are rather to be led than drawn; and  
'tis to be feared, they that marry where they do not love, will love  
where they do not marry.--Fuller.

One and God makes a majority.--Frederick Douglass.



Since I wrote the first part of this study of Hammer Films, the makers of horror, a number of additional points of interest have come to light which should be added to the previous article on them. As film studios are in the habit of changing titles all the time, a film often has a "working title" which is changed before the film is actually released. Such was the case with STRANGLERS OF BENGAL.

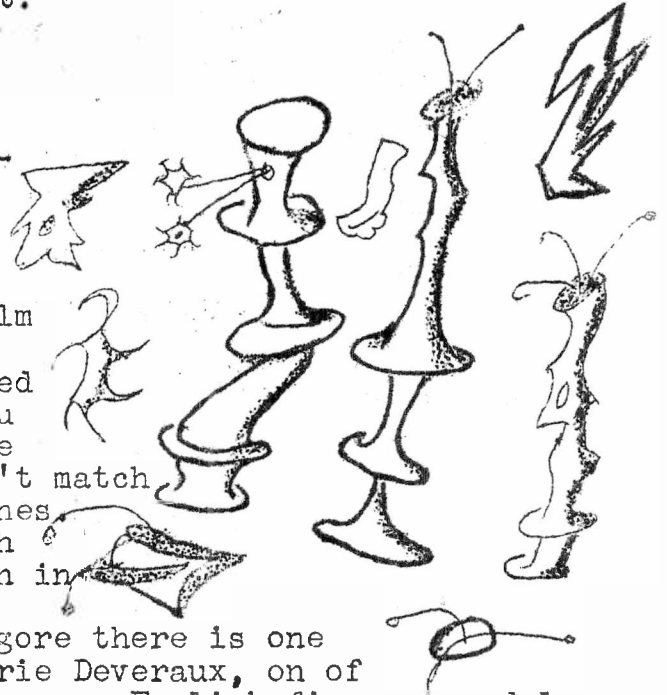
The new title for this film is THE STRANGLERS OF BOMBAY, but what the significant difference is only Hammer can say. The story as I may have mentioned concerns possibly the first true "Murder, Inc." - The Thugs. In India the legend has it the Goddess Kali fought a demon from hell and cut and slashed the demon till it died but from each drop of blood there sprang a new demon to battle Kali and from each drop of their blood further demons came. It was only when Kali discovered she could kill the demons by strangling with a silk scarf that the evil was averted. In the years to come then, the followers of the religious sect of Kali only ever killed by strangulation. In the film this is shown by means of a silk scarf - in real life a Thuggee cord with two strategically placed knots was often used. In addition strangulation or garroting with a silk scarf is by no means the easy process Hammer shows it in their film. It is not possible to strangle a fully grown man with a silk scarf in such a short space of time as is shown in the film. The real Thugs always killed with three against one - two were "handlers" who held the victim's arms while the third who was more advanced in the degrees of the sect did the actual strangling.

It is a matter of criminal fact that during the British reign in India the Thugs killed over one million people - whole caravans, whole villages, whole families - this was the most incredibly evil murder sect ever discovered, it was passed from grandfather to father to son and onward in complete lines each following the stranglers' path. All valuables were given to the Priests of Kali as sacrifice, as well as a few bodies and other sundry items. Throughout India mass graves hid hundreds of bodies and there was a vast conspiracy of silence among the inhabitants to say anything against the Thugs - after all, who knew who was a Thug and who wasn't? It was only through the devious work of one British officer there at the time that the British army over several decades succeeded in finding the blood lines that ran the sect and succeeded in wiping them out. Many died before they succeeded though.

This, then, is the material that Hammer had to work with for STRANGLERS OF BOMBAY - a misleading title because the stranglers came from everywhere and not merely from the city of Bombay - or indeed Bengal as the former title would have you believe. What then is the result? With an hour and a half film it does little but skim the surface and the ending looking forward to a one day destruction of the Thugs is hopefully put but rather unsatisfying to the viewer.

What then is left for Hammer? The ingredients of the story are all there - many of the facts - but they have just not dug far enough! Multiple murder is more vast, the scale is bigger than the mere village that is mentioned in the film. True - there are the standard gory trappings of all Hammer Films - the two Thugs who fail and rob for themselves have their eyes burnt out with a red hot wire, their tongues cut out - the officer's servant had his hand severed at the wrist and it is then wrapped up in cloth and thrown into the officer's dinner table while he is in another room entertaining guests - later all three of these unfortunates are strangled, one by his own brother. The officer is staked out on the ground with a cobra lurching after him, till a mongoose of his former servant goes after it. Take a note of this sequence - it is the only one not filmed in England and there is a story behind it.

Firstly the Royal Society for the prevention of Cruelty to Animals forbade the use of any film being made here of a mongoose killing a cobra, for in almost all cases it is indeed the mongoose that does the killing rather than the cobra. Hammer contacted a studio in Ceylon and they agree to film the sequence which lasts for about two minutes for a fee of six hundred dollars. It is effective but if you examine the scene you will find the mongoose attacking the cobra doesn't match the mongoose seen in the other scenes. It is bigger, and one suspects much older than the almost baby one seen in earlier scenes.



In addition to the gore there is one beauteous native girl played by Marie Deveraux, one of the foremost - and I mean foremost young English figure models. Having seen the virtually frontless dress she wears in her brief appearances in the film, you'll know what I mean. She is a female Thug and it would be a pleasure to be strangled by her any day of the week. For her, the cobra and the scene in which the stiff British officer awakes to find himself in a camp filled with what he thinks are sleeping bodies, but are all strangled bodies, the film is worth seeing. Surprisingly you will find the film is in black and white rather than the lush colour of former Hammer Films.

Take note too of the scenes where the caravans and the travellers and horsemen and troops are travelling along the road with hills and foliage in clumps around them, this is supposed to be India but I assure you it was taken in a sand-pit less than forty miles from where I live. The same sand-pit is to Hammer what that dreary box canyon is to Hollywood horror film producers - convenient. Of course, there are a few plastic trees and shiny large-leaved plants but it's a sand pit all right!

THE SAN SIADO KILLINGS is the Hammer Horror western which portrays the Western hero as he really is with no white washing - in this the hero shoots his opponents in the back as we know so many western "heroes" did. It is much less effort and a much surer way of being certain the opponent doesn't kill him. Filming is in Spain where most British westerns and outdoor epics are made these days.

Christopher Lee is in THE TWO FACES OF DR. JEKYLL but he plays the lover of the wife and not Dr. Jekyll suprisingly. This role goes to Canadian actor Paul Massie and reverses the Jekyll-and-Hyde theme for in Robert Louise Stevenson's story it was the evil that came out when the drug was used by Dr. Jekyll - in this story Dr. Jekyll is the ugly one and when he drugs himself, it is the new and handsome Mr. Hyde that emerges. A true switch of the old theme.

Apart from HELL IS A CITY which was filmed in the northern town of Manchester as a drama rather than straight horror we then come to the very latest in the Hammer Horror films - one that is currently being made.

BRIDES OF DRACULA will not have Count Dracula in it at all. As you remember he died hideously in the previous Hammer film and being no Phoenix he cannot be resurrected once again. However Dracula is dead....but obviously his disciples live on. He had to get the blood of one for every night for six hundred years to stay alive that long - it stands to reason that there must be quite a few of them around by now - even allowing for those who were caught by sunlight, stakes through the heart - and of course each of those had to make further converts to stay alive.

Why---almost anybody out there might be one. . . . .

MIGHTN'T THEY??

-30-

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#### MARTIAN ROBOT'S PLAINT

I wish that I could return to Mars,  
'Cause my legs are rusting here;  
To heck with trains and gas-fed cars  
And this humid atmosphere.

Back on the reddish plains I could  
Runlike mad in the dust,  
But all I can do on Earth is brood  
And slowly turn to rust.

--Mark R. Curilovic--

\*\*\*\*\*

Jim was driving down a street when he saw another car coming right at him. After the crash Jim didn't see any other people and got scared because he thought he was dead. He was really frightened until he saw a man walk by him. He felt eve safer when a second man walked by. He didn't feel so hot, though, when the third man walked through him.

--J.P.Android--

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///-I'm sure Alan Dodd's sequel will go over with everyone as well as his first article did. Again the mysterious J.P.Android makes his appearnace in The MAELSTROM. As of yet no one has discovered his identity.

Mark's poem about the Martian robot makes me wonder if he was inspired by one of Mel Hunter's paintings from F&SF depicting the adventures of "the last man." A beuatiful series of paintings by Hunter, who is undaughtably the best pro artist for '59.-///.

SANDERSON for TAFF! SANDERSON for TAFF! SANDERSON for TAFF! S. for T



By Jerry Page

In The MAELSTROM #3, there appeared an interview between John Pesta and Jerry DeFuccio, associate editor of MAD. The first part of the article was interesting, even entertaining, but fairly mild. However, at the bottom of page 16 there was a question asked by John Pesta that got an answer that I think deserves a good, strong denouncement.

The question was this: Why did so many artists (Elder, Wood, & Davis primarily) leave MAD when Kurtzman left?

And the answer? I quote: "A good many of them thought Kurtzman was a god, that he could do no wrong. They'd follow him anywhere -- look what it got them! Davis has done a few album covers for RCA Victor and some comics for Atlas....A page of comic art gets \$20. If Jack were here, he'd get \$125 and have sure work."

Now in the first place, Elder, Wood and Davis are NOT starving, and from what I've seen, I'd say they have pretty sure work. Davis, in addition to those album covers (which probably netted him a very neat sum) has sold cartoons to PLAYBOY and ESQUIRE, two of the finest and highest paying markets around. He also illustrates the new horror mag SHOCK. Poor old starving Wallace Wood is slaving away (for a few paltry pennies, no doubt) in GALAXY and IF and suffering from the thought that he has no steady work other than that -- if you discount his daily comic strip "Sky Masters". And in perhaps the saddest state of them all, poor old Bill Elder is hacking out drawings for as poor a paying market as the Saturday Evening Post. (An unreliable job if there ever was one.)

And Kurtzman?

DeFuccio describes Kurtzman with these remarks: "Kurtzman had no system at all. MAD would be dead if Harvey had kept it much longer." One of TIME's Chicago writers was bought by PLAYBOY -- (this about the famous "short-lived satiric pulp" comment in TIME -- that was the time when Kurtzman left MAD to put out TRUMP for 50¢ a copy for PLAYBOY.

Yep, Harvey Kurtzman, poor soul, folded two magazines; TRUMP and HUMBUG. The fact that HUMBUG was as poorly distributed as any magazine ever was has little to do with it; it was entirely Kurtzman's lack of organization. For, although, DeFuccio does not say that outright, the implication is there.

But, Kurtzman does have that stigma of having folded two magazines, and now he's forced to turn out best selling books for BALLATINE (Harvey Kurtzman's Jungle Book) and hack out articles for PLAYBOY and TV GUIDE at a mere thousand dollars basic payment per (and I'm willing to bet that he got better than the basic rate for PLAYBOY.)

Now then, there's the part about Feldstien being more organized than Kurtzman. He sure is organized -- and formulated too. He has even joke on hand that MAD will use for the next ten years. That's because they were all originated by Kurtzman.



When MAD became a slick (with #24, I believe) it ceased to be funny. The strain was evident in the first issue. While highly amusing, it failed to create the same raucous guffaws the comic created. Kurtzman did two or three issues, then, with apparent disgust at the way MAD was being prostituted into a formulated hackzine of slick drivel, left. Feldstein took over and did a competent, professional, well formulated and unoriginal(not to mention unfunny) job. It became a potpourri of catch phrases and repetition; as a comic it had, I'm willing to bet, a higher average age-level among its audience than it now has. It dropped the comic format and adopted the policies of comic publishing against which EC had so valiantly and so rewardingly crusaded heretofore. (And I'll be the last person to knock SHOCK ILLUSTRATED, which was edited by Feldstein. A very good job.)

What about Kurtzman? TRUMP was a poor idea, even if it was a funny magazine. It came out as too great an advancement over MAD. It was funny, it had a quality format, and above all else, it was totally adult. MAD has never appealed to a totally adult audience. There was no ready made audience for TRUMP, and it had been budgeted in such a way that they could not afford to create one.

So, along came HUMBUG. I don't know how long HUMBUG lasted; a couple of yaers certainly. But in those two years it completely outstripped MAD in laughs. The comic book format and the slick format had been compromised and the result was a book that was neither. Kurtzman had total freedom and he used it. The men who worked for him were having far more fun( and fewer ulcers) than they could expect working for EC.

HUMBUG and TRUMP both hit just after the Amerccan News Co. folded, dissolving the one reliable distribution empire in America. That loss hurt magazines all over, even MAD. The first or second new-sized MAD was forced to change dsitributors, and if I recall correctly, took a terrific loss. However, they had decided on the lowest common denominator and push at all cost(the cost being the editorial gusto and intellectual honesty they had had under Kurtzman) policy and manage to withstand that.

TRUMP, so far as I know was distributed well. But Kurtzman's own HUMBUG was not. It sold, originally for 15¢ but it didn't reach many cities. A large portion of it was text, not illustrations. The illustrated features were often too subtle for the teenaged market(and far too funny.) Kurtzman assumed he was being read by adults(MAD and Pogo were liked by the same crowd when MAD was a comic book) and wrote for adults.

As a result, he lost his mass market. For, HUMBUG could have well, if Kurtzman had used the same jokes, in every satire; if he had preferred MAD's 'Three Stooges' level of humor to his own which compares more with Jack Paar. But he did none of those things. Instead he turned out two failures. But they did not insult the intelligence of their readers.

-30-

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Don't think of school as a drag, man! Think of it as an escape into unreality from the daily grind of pod-parties, dates, dances, drag cars and other assorted oddities labled as being fun.

--Bill Niemeyer--

Uncalled for excuses are practical confessions.--C. Simmons.



# BACKLASH

! Curses, Threats, & Raves !

REDD BOGGS

2209 Highland Place, NE  
Minneapolis 21, Minn.

Thanks for MAELSTROM #3, which arrived the other day. The back page was hanging on for dear life when the magazine was thrust into the mailbox; you'd better get some longer

staples into the magazine back-to-front, or you'll be losing a bunch of copies. // -I learned the hard way with this-// The magazine could be more neatly produced, but at least it is mostly legible and quite cleanly stenciled. The pages seem to be newsprint but are okay as far as offset and showthrough are concerned. I'd suggest some colored paper for covers to brighten things up a little. Readability could be increased by skipping a line between paragraphs, and a bit of planning would enhance the appearance of the contents and advertising page. The biggest flaw of this issue, so far as I can see, is in the artwork and headings. Your artists like Jim Blecher seem competent, but their efforts are ruined by the poor stenciling job. You seem to need a good shading plate, a signature plate, a stylus or two, and a lettering guide. I enclose a signature plate. // -Which is graciously and gratefully received-// Your hand-lettered headings such as those for "Man With A Secret" showed up better than those done with that stencil-guide. If you can't get a regular lettering-guide, I'd suggest trying typed headings with borders to set them off. These often look very attractive. Headings that split the text, such as those for "The Machine" should always be avoided. +++ Among the material, "Madly Interviewed" is by far the most interesting item. This is certainly well done and informative, even though I have little interest in the current MAD. Oddly enough, you failed to provide this item with a by-line and thus deprived the writer, John Pesta, of a lot of egoboo. // -I figured the average reader would easily derive the authorship since it was mentioned several times throughout the zine. Had no intentions of slighting John in any way-// Dodd's article on Hammer films was okay, and so was the editorial, but nothing else came close to the MAD interview. +++ The SFA organization sounds promising. You seem to be bringing a lot of unknowns into the fan field - which, Foo knows, can stand a lot of new blood. But I wonder if the title of your club is accurate? Judging from the contents of MAELS, you are interested in MAD Magazine, comics, flying saucers, horror films, and amateur rocketry, but not in science fiction. Aren't any neofans interested any more who Anthony Gilmore is? Or, for that matter, in who sawed Courtney's boat?

Lloyd Biggle Jr. MAELSTROM #3 was a most agreeable surprise. It is a well-balanced issue, interesting and informative. Few of these "fan-zines" have come my way, but those I have seen have left me deeply impressed -- no, downright awe-struck -- not merely by the general quality of the contents, which is usually commendable; nor by an underlying intense seriousness of purpose, which is perhaps to be expected; but also by the overwhelming labor of love that these "zines" represent. I doubt that such can be fully appreciated by anyone who has not at some time functioned simultaneously as production manager, circulation manager, advertising manager, general editor and financial backer of such a "publication." +++ It interests me that the thought-level of the articles in these "zines" is measurably higher than that of fiction. // -A debatable point, Sire, especially if A Taste of

Fire is considered in the controversy-/// I am referring here to subject matter, not how well a piece may be, or may not, be written. Perhaps young (or amateur) writers are naturally more mature in handling non-fiction. Or perhaps this observation merely reflects the fact that my own exclusive interest is fiction. Anyway, I found the articles interesting. The two pieces of fiction were spoiled for me by the fact that I knew almost at once what would happen; and spoiled for me a second time by the fact that what did happen turned out to be precisely what I know would happen. Well, I have read 4,000 million words of fiction, "new" fiction plots, or even twists, are hard to come by, and one mark of the professional writer is his ability to take a much-worn fiction situation and make of it something bright, and fresh, and unexpected. ///-I'm curious to know how one author reacts to the stories produced by his contemporaries; or is that treading on sacred ground? ///

And as a footnote to justice, be it noted that stories in the big magazines too frequently are spoiled for me in exactly the same way.

Marion Z. Bradley-In general I found MAELSTROM a very interesting fan-zine. Your mimeographing was nicely done; I used mimeograph on newsprint bought by the pound from the local newspaper office, (something like 35¢ a ream) and got very good results, but never this good! I don't entirely agree with your editorial, as it happens; I enjoyed the film of JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH so much that I rushed out and bought the book, and was --- well, not precisely disappointed, the impossible with Verne, but a little let down. Perhaps I was expecting a little more color and comedy. But I did enjoy Alan Dodd (who always writes entertainingly) on Hammer's horror...almost as much as I enjoyed the films themselves. ///-Do you realize what you said, Miz Bradley? A trufan is supposed to scorn the films of today and abhor "Dodd's damnable film reviews." Perhaps, we are the fortunates, with the not-so-narrow minds who can enjoy more than one aspect of the genre-///

I will pass over the poetry without comment, for which you should probably thank me fulsomely. (Just wait till you read what the faaanis fans have to say about them.) +++ The Mike Deckinger story was...er... well...frankly, I deeply dislike this sort of sadistic notion. I know Mike is a great admirer of the Prosser artwork, which I am not; I don't know whether you are a reader of Gregg Calkins' OOPSLA, but for me, Walt Willis defined Prosser admirably as a chap who is, like all of us, prey to certain little nasty thoughts, but sits down to immortalize them with his excellent and painstaking talents under the impression that they are vast and earthshaking discoveries. Actually, they are simply poor in taste, and that Mike's considerable talents could be better employed. Actually, what is so interesting in the notion of an operation where the patient feels all the pain...except that it's one of humanity's worst nightmares? They story bothered me --- which is an indication that Mike has talent enough to make me cringe instead of giggling as I usually do at juvenile "horror stories" --- but it also left a slightly nauseous taste in my mouth. +++ I couldn't make head or tail out of "The Silence Group" so please don't expect me to comment on it. +++ I am not "jumping on" Mike --- I like the guy. But I do not like this kind of thing --- by anyone, even Robert Bloch. +++ I like the piece "The Visitors" oddly enough. I very much enjoyed the article on MAD. All the EC comics fans will hate me, but frankly I wish comics had never been invented and I wouldn't grieve if they all vanished forever. In all, think of the good books people might be reading. Even the few remaining fiction magazines are switching to large type and less print because the new generation of readers wants a lot of PICTURES and something to read fast. They won't take time to read novels - and as a novelist

I'm prejudiced! I don't want to censor the comics -- I simply think people are getting too lazy to read, and comics are responsible.

I'd suggest either a lettering guide or typed headings. Techniques of lettering that look very neat in ink or pencil tend to tear the stencil fibers and make shaky letters.+++ My very best wishes and I hope to see you in Pittsburgh, and perhaps to confirm my legend I'd better reserve one evening and have supper ~~xxx~~ on neofans! ///-I'm sure all neos are interested in the "supper with" bit, but as for the "supper on" -- well that's an hors (d'oeuvre) of a different cola. I hope your distaste for comics doesn't start a heated controversy of defence by the EC Addicts. I think the smoke from the MAD controversy is still thick in the air.-///.

Jack Cascio                      The third ish is a very great improvement over  
401 East Central                2, both in repro and material. For the first  
Benld, Illinois                time in quite a while, I read a zine from cover  
                                 to cover. The MAELSTROM captured my interest and  
held it till the last page.

Hammer Films is about the BEST producer of horror and/or any other films today. Therefore, Alan Dodd's article gets first place for my money. The interview with Jerry DeFuccio of MAD was very interesting, but I'm afraid that if MAD does fail, it will be because of editorial ideas such as his. I'm not taking any sides, Kurtzman and Feldstein are both tops as far as I'm concerned, but the fact remains that Kurtzman created MAD, and try as they will, they will not recapture the brilliance of those issues he put out. Feldstein is good in his field, but he is definitely out of his element as the head of MAD.

Mr. DeFuccio's remark as to some of the EC artists considering Harv as a god who could do no wrong is like "calling the pot black." The way I see it, Mr. "D" has no talent (any EC fan from way back could do 100% better), and is in fact Al Feldstein's yes man.

Finally John Pesta's column on the comics. Very good, it would add to your zine to have this become a regular feature.

///-I agree that Hammer puts out some of the top films today, very probably the top in the horror genre, but they also do a lot of fast producing to make a box office hit. I think I am safe in saying that the true horror film -- the kind that Boris Karloff and his contemporaries put their entire being into -- are gone from the screen. Personally I'd rather watch SHOCK than most of today's horror films, although I do try to see them all; there is always hope.-///

Terry McQuay Received a copy of The MAELSTROM in the mail this mornin'.  
R.D. #3                      Hope you didn't go to too much trouble to get another one  
Auburn, N.Y. for me. ///-Attention, Redd Bogg! Here is an example of  
                                 poor stapling.-/// As for my comments on the mag, they  
are nothing but favorable. The cover was simply wonderful, even tho I  
couldn't make out the Goldstein pic on page 2. Your repro is really  
coming along fine. Death to those who say otherwise? ///-Notice,  
all cynics. Never argue with a woman.-/// I also agreed with you that  
"Journey To the Centre of the Earth" strayed from the book, especially  
by putting the girl in there. "But no movie is without glamor" as the  
saying goes. I also agree that the best part of the movie was where  
the shadow of the sun showed the way. "H For Hammer" was interesting.  
The three poems were very good. Didn't get "Contentment" until I look-  
ed up the word 'sans.' Learn something every day. "Man With A Secret"  
was very good. Hats off to M. Deckinger. More of him! Hope to see  
UFO reports by Rudmann. While I was reading "The Machine" I noticed  
the author's name -- J.P. Android -- and thought it was pretty coin-  
cidental being about space and all that. ///-We cheated, though. It  
was a pseudonym, so the coincidence was lost.-///. I think our mystery  
writer is B.J.P.'s secretary. Wish it were! "Madly Interviewed" was  
also very interesting. "The Visitors"...have more of these.

I would like to place an ad: Does anyone want to sell their copy of MAELS #1? I will pay asking price which must not exceed 50¢. I believe, in looking at the cover, the design comes from the story by Poe entitled, "My Descent Into the Maelstrom," right? ~~///right///~~.

Marty Pahls. As a fanzine your MAELSTROM has yet a ways to go. ~~///~~-720 Stinaff Is it closer to being something else? Maybe I should Kent, Ohio change will there is still time!-~~///~~ I'm sorry to say I didn't finish reading it; only the parts you wrote, the Dee interview, and a few odds and ends. Repro was from passable to quite bad; the paper was most unsuited to mimeo. At least use mimeo paper; and watch the cutting of the stencils. Some of the pix couldn't be made out. As to your editorial: the lines at the top scared me for a moment, and I was about to write a nasty diatribe about the evils of scary literature, when I noted that this came from the Bible. Of course this makes everything okay, above board, and maybe a little uplifting. ~~///~~-I am excerpting at random from a long letter from Marty concerning his zine, FANFARE, my zine and other assorted subjects, mostly connected with EC. I believe the above reference was a cut at one comics condemner by the name of Dr. Fredric Wertham, who was so naive in his condemnation, that he went so far as to say that the Batman and Robin comics were unfit for kids because they taught them homosexual relations. ~~///~~

The attempts at poetry would be best omitted, as would the Goldstien art and the Belcher ditto. Better none at all than this. Alan Dodd was good -- as usual. I don't see how he can come to looking at the trash he does, but he certainly does it justice in reviewing it, showing more care and talent than its concoctors ever did.

The UFO report was good for a couple of laughs. This 'silent group' sounds pretty sinister, but I feel certain ufologists may breathe easily that none of their ranks are members of any "silence group." ~~///~~-As I said, there will be varied opinions on the UFO reports. ~~///~~.

The interview was quite ordinary--same thing has been done several times already, with as little positive results. However, you did introduce the info to a new audience, which is commendable. I talked to Jerry and Alf for some hours this summer, and, while the talk concerned MAD, this was about all I could nudge from them. MAD has too much grey-flannel aroma nowadays--hurrah for old times when you used to be ashamed to ask for it at newstands. Get them off the subject, though, and they're human again. Of course, they weren't in much of a "good-old-days" mood, that time...

I agree with Jerry On Feldsteins qualities as an editor. Alf has helped a lot of people, and always seems to feel that organization comes first and he comes second. I am sure he is much easier to get along with than Harvey. Harvey is an artist, with all the peculiarities attached to the artist. He felt the magazine had to give way for him. Its two altogether viewpoints: one produces great humor, the other an enduring and competent magazine. As a humorist, I feel that Alf doesn't rate with Harvey--though he has vast individual talents of his own, some as yet largely untapped. As an editor, in the full sense, I think he's better. ++++It's a bitter pill for some Kurtzman to swallow, but I'm convinced MAD would have died had Harvey been at the helm much longer--barring Gaines intervention. As it was, he asked himself out, perhaps saving MAD the trouble and pain.

Agree all the way with Jerry about SUPERMAN. He's really gone down since I used to read him--middle and late forties. Formerly he was clever, imaginative...now it's the same old truck, time after time. He has even gotten married, now, I hear...a pity. The Daily Planet's answer to Brenda Starr, I suppose. Anything to boost the old circulation. He was "less bulky and more wiry" in the old days--does this have anything to do with his marriage? Task tsk. I suppose it comes to us all--Al Williamson take note.



I can hardly say I blame Garner for not wanting to be called "anyone". It would indeed be ill-advised, much as it pains me to say it. For the comics medium has always fascinated me, and EC was one of the brightest stars of its constellation.

Ton Hilton I got MAELSTROM. It's better than #2. The cover 6215 East Gate Road was a little mixed up because it's impossible to Huntington 5, W. Va. have a whirlpool in space--or maybe it's a whirlpool(or tornado, if you must) of ether. I haven't been able to figure out what the figure is to the left of the spaceship.///-Perhaps the "whirlpool" is a vortex of unanchored energy swirling through the cosmos.-///.+++The editorial was interesting, but I think you were a little hard on the movie version of "The Journey.."/>-Alright, Blast it! I concede the movie was good. Satisfied, mongrels?-///"H for Hammer", too, was interesting. I can understand why "The Camp On Blood Island" didn't go over too well in Japan. I wish more of those Hammer movies would come here. "The Flesh and the Fiends" does not seem to follow the true story of Burke and Hare too closely. In fact, it appears to be downright corny.

The poems were...well....worthless. Especially "Dim Thoughts Or--?" The idea was way off base. Actually, Pilate was to blame for the crucifixion of Christ. He was afraid of the Jews; the only thing he could do was turn him over to the Jews. In fact, he told the mob three times that Christ was innocent of anything before turning him over for the crucifixion.///-Would you rather that Pilate had prevented the crucifixion?-///.+++The "Silence Group" couldn't possibly be serious. It's too fantastic. The quips from other mags were good, and so was the quotation from Bierce. So was Shaw. The reproduction was spotty, but legible throughout the zine. There was one cartoon--the one on the contents page--was very faint. So faint I couldn't make it out.

Poul Shingleton I received The MAELSTROM. For with my comments on 320-26th Street same: Cover: This was a waste of paper as far as I'm Dunbar, West Va concerned. Belcher isn't good enough artist for covers. The Goldstein illo on page 2 didn't come out on my copy.///-Correction. Anybody's copy.-///.Editorial: This was a lot better than your last one. It needs to be expanded tho. Still well enough done for a second issue. "H" For Hammer: I'll bet Mike Deckinger is sorry he didn't get this. It's very informative. I liked it. (At least it's away from any of Dodd's damnable film reviews.) Poetry: Ugh. Man With A Secret: While it was okay it certainly wasn't as good as Deck's faarfiction and other stuff. "The Silence Group: This isn't bad. I've got a similar article for use in the next BB..I think Rudmann is gafia. He hasn't answered any letters. Madly Interviewed: Ugh. I DON'T happen to like MAD. So there. Backlash: Better than last time! Chalker's book reviews are a waste of time. I don't like Jack's reviews...he's okay tho.

Phil Harrell MAELSTROM: I couldn't see the cartoon on page 2. Mike 2602 Workman Ave. enjoyed "Behemoth", but is the blurb from Job:40 necessary? EyeK. time? ///-Yes.-/// Dodd's bit on Hammer Productions good. I still say that flying saucers are time machines. Tony's a guy with something to say and he says it.///-Agreed.-/// J.P. Android sounds like Mike D. (somewhat his style, that is) I hate to repeat myself so often, but very nice..I enjoyed the J.deF. interview, but still miss the old MAD and WEIRD SF. I also miss Harvey Kurtzman and think MAD lost something when he left it. \$75,00.00 per ish, GOOD GHU!! Why don't I just put it this way: this MAELSTROM was QUITE an improvement over all the others you've put out. --letters continued next page--

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A hole is nothing at all, but you can break your neck in it.--Austin O'Malley.



Vicky Priester  
6 Courtland Dr.  
Montgomery 5, Ala.

I enjoyed The MAELSTROM very much. I think the best article was the one on Hammer Films, of course I'm prejudiced, but the article has a professional touch to it. I enjoyed it very much. The poem, "Headless" is real gone! "Man With A Secret Was Very Good." I liked the tricky ending. I really enjoyed the interview with the MAD mag man. I think the SFA Trading Post is a very good idea; hope it is successful. The MAELSTROM is a lot easier to read on this kind of paper. Much improvement over last issue.

Ken Winter  
10764 Lincoln  
Huntington Woods, Mich.

Again, best stuff by Pesta...the poem about Pilate, tremendous, and the Jerry DeFuccio interview was one of the most interesting interviews I've read....Was sorry to see no EChhhh! plug. Though EChhhh! is dead, we still have some copies of #4 to sell, so a plug nex' time would be appreciated....Do you, yourself, ever write any fiction?

The Jerry DeFuccio interview really burned me. He smugly says MAD's success is due to "not being afraid to go out and ridicule a thing that's silly, whether its on TV, some late fad..."etc. HAH! MAD itself is "a late fad," as he knows damn well, and they're sure cashing in on it! Every time, another MAD gimmick of some kind. And he knows that MAD's financial success is mainly due to (1) its reputation built up by Kurtzman's fine satire, and (2) its writing-for-idiot, to appeal to (as John Benson said) the semi-illiterate teenager of today. Every time I get out one of my old Kurtzman MADs and see the great variety of tremendous satire, then think of today's same-every-issue-formula-humor MAD, I feel like breaking chairs and cracking skulls. Aaagh. I used to look forward to each issue of MAD..you never knew what new twist they'd come up with...every issue had some brand-new kind of satire. Now every ish is just like any other..from about #32 until today, you could pick up any one issue and see exactly the same type of humor..the same formulas...that appeared in very other ish. Don't get me wrong, I still read MAD. About 1 or two articles are still fine satire..though it still is sticking to the formula. A key statement was when DeFuccio said Kurtzman could write for MAD if "it was good, and IN OUR VEIN". A very narrow vein. Don Martin was a sf artist? Now. Maybe he can really draw? He's a good example of MAD's formulas: For the first five issues or so, he fractured me, but I don't see how anyone can help being tired of him by now. By the way, I would love to see the return of MAD with Kurtzman, with Feldstein made managing editor, if he's such a great organizer, as Kz as chief writer. ///-No, I'm afraid Martin's sf work was just like his MAD work. The August '59 issue of GALAXY had a story by Bob Silverberg entitled "Mugwump Four" and illoed by Martin. The illos were the same characters used by Martin in MAD; same saggin'shoulders, turned under toes and fingers box car eyes, and cracker-barrel, double-chinned faces.-///.

Peter J. Maurer  
818 S. Jefferson  
Hastings, Michigan

Your latest issue of MAELSTROM was all you said it would be. The article on Hammer Productions interested me most. I can't understand why the author didn't mention "The Mummy." This picture is rather silly in many ways (even without sacred Tana leaves), but it is a first rate production and superior performances by Lee and Cushing. I didn't care much for the MAD article, but that is because I don't care much for humor. The rest of the material was well done.

Yes, I think the good Dr. Asimov is a bit conceited, but I think you will agree that he has every reason to be. No one would ever become an author if he didn't have a very large ego.///-I was speaking the recent poems by Asimov, about Asimov in some of his collections-

Asimov writes interesting and sometimes excellent fiction, but he isn't much of a poet. (I dislike his science articles also.)

The latest issue of "The Magazine of F&SF" contains two very unpleasant (and very entertaining) horror stories by Fritz Leiber and John Collier. ///-Peter's reference is to the May '60 ish; I didn't read the Leiber tale because a lot of his stuff lately has been pure hack, and I never fully understood the Collier yarn. Perhaps, I shall reread it and try again.-///. I just finished Robert A. Heinlein's classic novel of invasion from outer space, The Puppet Masters. The Titans are without a doubt, the most unspeakable invaders ever invented by the imagination of a s-f writer. Heinlein's philosophy may not be acceptable, but his ability as a novelist and storyteller is undeniable. ///-An example of his philosophy would be his recent novel, Starship Troopers. I read the F&SF version and doubt if I missed the mainpoints by reading the condensation. I found myself, not disagreeing, but not wanting to agree with his philosophy of wars and why they are and must be fought. As a master of s-f stories, he is second to none, not even the eminent Ray Bradbury; I would not, however, like to be called upon to make a final decision re which of the two authors has the most enjoyable style to me.-///.

John F. Anderson, Jr. TO THE MEMBERS OF SFA: I truly hope that the 3114 N.E. Garfield St. people with whom I have corresponded, and the Minneapolis 18, Minn. members I have not written to, do not consider me an absolute idiot (although I sometimes wonder myself) for my lack of initiative and the numerous mistakes I have made. As you all have most logically guessed, the real backbone of SFA is our secretary, Billy Joe Plott. Although I, along with the rest of you, assisted slightly in amending the original draft, the credit for our constitution lies with him. BJ also has the honor of being the creator of MAELSTROM, the fanzine that you have watched improve, and that you are reading now.

Though I cannot say that my time is extremely precious, I will say (somewhat regretfully) that I cannot carry on correspondence with all SFAers. However, starting with the publication of this message, I will answer as many letters (if any) as possible that I receive.

Perhaps some day in the distant future we will all meet at a s-f or maybe even an SFA convention, but until then I'll be answering your letters and talking to you through The MAELSTROM.

Eternally,  
John F. Anderson, Jr.

///-I am indeed honored by the gracious comments of our president, but I feel that the situation has been exaggerated somewhat. The constitutional credit should be given Art Hayes, who drew up the first draft. I merely presented it to the populous and you decided what its final form would be. I hope everyone is satisfied and I hope that SFA might become a tool for introducing newcomers to science fiction Fandom and helping them to get a start in the field, sans the bewilderment that I entered Fandom in. Thank you.-///.

Jerry Gray I've never seen anything like it, how can any  
Rt. 5, 129B Lilla Ave. mag so bad become one so much better in only  
Clanton, Alabama one ish? I was suprised and delighted. The rep  
was much better, but a couple of illo's were  
still a bit hazy. I thoroughly enjoyed the contents of the mag, especially the interview and the Hammer story although I was suprised to see that one of my favorite Hammer products, "The Snorkle" didn't even rate a mention. All in all I'd say #3 was 80% better than #2.



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

Thanks for the copy of MAELSTROM #3. The most obvious comment, of course, is the contrast between the excellence of the material and the-- well, let's be honest if can't be polite and call it the horrible quality of the repro.

I rather think the balme for the latter falls largely on the paper. The typing appears good....and the layout of the material is much better than would appear from the overall appearance of the mag. However, the stencilling of the art is very poor. Undoubtably the art-stencilling will improve with experience and a few good tools. Personally I find that crochet hooks work just as well as the more expensive stylus. You can get a variety of sizes for 10 and 15¢ each at the dime store.

An electric light bulb on an extension cord can be improvised into a tracing table by laying a plate of glass on a couple of piles of books with the light lying between them. Be careful that the flat glass surface does not get too close to the bulb. If it overheats, the glass is likely to crack. Tracing with too dull a stylus with the stencil directly on the paper being copied tends toward a fuzzy cut with a consequent blurriness to the repro.

Some of the smeariness may be due to offset. Slipsheeting may seem like a lot of trouble, but it has two advantages: One, the most obvious, is that it prevents the wet ink from transferring to the back of the next sheet. But the second advantage is that it slows up the job and gives the mimeographer a chance to watch it better. If anything goes wrong you can stop the machine immediately, instead of running off a half ream of paper before you could stop.///-For the benefit of those who don't know, slipsheeting is placing a blank sheet of paper between the sheets as they come through the machine. The reason is explained above.-///

Backlash continued on next page

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#### The Truth About Billy Joe Plott continued--

Finally, it has been alleged that William is the son of the late insane dictator of a foreign power, Adolph Hottzler. This report, reputedly backed by photographic proof, is false. It seems that public spirited citizens--and publically intoxicated ones, too--are always the targets of narrow-minded biggots. The whole question centered on a simple chain of coincidences. In a gesture of human(?) kindness, Bill offered to repaint a local church. After he had finished approximately half of the work--swastika-shaped decorations, naturally--an unfortunate accident occurred when our hero dropped a cigarette into a can of paint remover thus igniting a fire which set off 87 sticks of dynamite which had been brought to loosen the aged, encrusted paint. Such an unfortunate accident was rapidly exploded by the anti-intellectual factions into an unpleasant incident.

There in cold print, friends, is the truth concerning a much misunderstood individual. I, for one, find it difficult to understand such scandalous stories, however I am always willing--in the case of justice and for a slight monetary remuneration, naturally--to set the record straight. In closing our discussion of the infamous Billy Joe Plott, let us ponder the words of the eminent Poul Shingleton who said of William: "Some...people...leave...their...mark...upon...the...world...:other...just...scar...it...abit."

-30-

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The greatest mag in the world is ASTOUNDING--ANALOG--PSIONICS--SCIENCE FACT & AND SOMETIMES FICTION Sub-title: "Whatever happened to Dianetics Old Nine-Foot John is messing with a bread & butter title he has had for a heap of years. Dear John! Maybe he is just tired of being on top.... "John, are you sure the SATURDAY EVENING REVIEW OF LITERATURE started this way?"---Al Andrews in a recent letter.

Harry Warner, Jr. I've read with interest and quite a bit of pleasure  
423 Summit Ave. MAELSTROM, and I want to thank you for thinking of  
Hagerstown, Md. me. And the first thing that occurs in the way of a  
comment is astonishment at the way you've drawn your  
contributors and letterhacks and such from a segment of fandom which is  
almost entirely new to me. Alan Dodd, Mike Deckinger, and John Pesta are  
only names in this issue on prominent display that I recognize readily.  
It makes a person wonder just how big fandom really is, every time he  
thinks he's pretty well acquainted with the names in it, then finds  
dozens of entirely new ones in this or that publication.///-That's due  
mostly to SFA's policy to introduce newcomers to Fandom.-///.

The interview about MAD was the most interesting thing in the issue  
to me. It was quite well done as a piece of writing, and provided me  
with some information that I hadn't known before, even though I feel  
I feel that MAD was ruined when Kurtzman pulled out; before, it was very  
funny, now it's simply very silly.

The Silence Group is about another matter which I hadn't heard about  
before, but I take less stock in the existence of this organization than  
I do in the existence of the people who put out MAD. I work for a news-  
paper and I can guarantee that it has never heard from any group that  
seeks "suppression of information by pressure" regarding flying saucers,  
although there are plenty of other interests that try to put on pressure  
to keep things out of the paper, like stories about prominent advertis-  
ers who get involved in crime. And this silence group, if there is such,  
is doing a very poor job, judging by the number of articles on flying  
saucers that still trickle into the magazines and paperbacks. I'd be in-  
clined to think it's just another example of the old tendency to solve  
a problem by oversimplifying it, just as in the old days all nasty ac-  
tions were ascribed to the influence of the devil, instead of sorting  
them out and discovering that this one occurred because the man is ep-  
ileptic and that person died because he ate a toadstool instead of a mush-  
room, and this girl became a streetwalker because she was trying to help  
the family pay off the mortgage.

The fiction in this issue would be better if the writers had given a  
bit more thought to it and patched up some of the obvious weaknesses. For  
instance, "Man With A Secret" depends on an almost unbelievable coinci-  
dence for its outcome. It might proceed more logically if the woman, for  
example, had managed to get a message to her husband that she was in  
danger, just before the murder and he arrived after her death; that would  
account for the fact that this particular doctor took the case and knew  
in advance what had happened. And more careful attention to hospital  
procedure would help, too; not even the most primitive hospital in nat-  
ure prepares a patient for an operation in this manner described here.

Earl Noe When you do your zine, do same with calmness, de-  
3304 East Belknap liberation, and above all: great tenderness. Heed  
Fort Worth, Texas those readers who bug you about your repro and neat-  
ness. I side with Chalker, but your exchange with hi  
in "Backlash" mystifies me! A small bottle of correction fluid will el-  
minate those "idiotic crossouts", misspelled words, and other bugaboos  
your readers complain about.///-Corflu is the god I appreciate!-///.

I'll send along a feather and some tar for that fiend, Shingleton.  
Waddas he mean, putting down MAD Magazine and us poor helpless neofans?  
"MADly Interviewed" was your best asset. "H" For Hammer" was inter-  
esting, to use a much overworked adjective, as was "Kaleidescope". The  
rest was just lending bulk to the mag and offending no one, except for  
"Silence Group" and all the comics piffle, which I found particularly  
extraneous. The lettercol is a must. Wadda bout doing the front and back  
pages in colored mimeo paper? Yes, I'm very critical, but I do think  
MAELS #3 was a very credible third ish, and expect it to develop into  
quite a good zine.



///--ROBERT JENNINGS followed the trend in comments, but went into a lengthy discussion on the comics, re ACG's stereotyped plots. JAMES W. AKERS liked the zine as whole and gave me some lovely money. PAUL ANDERSEN says the zine is getting progressively better with each issue. ROBERT & ROBERTA RUCKER gave a very thorough analysis of the entire zine. Request that Deckinger stick to s-f, liked Pesta, Chalker, Dodd too lengthy. TED BROCKE has contributed a nuclear war-type story for a future issue of MAELSTROM. MARK CURILOVIC continues to supply us with excellent verse. May reprint his "Night of April 19", for the benefit of the newcomers, in some future issue. MARIJANE JOHNSON enjoyed the zine. EMILE GREENLEAF sent encouragement. ALAN TOWLES expressed pleasure in reading the zine. JIM BELCHER sent comments, the cover for this, and news that his zine CHAOS is about to make the zine. Write him at Rural, Route one, Latour, Mo., for details, but 25¢ is the cost and saves time and trouble. VIC RYAN notes improvement, but progress can still be made in many phases of MAELS. GEORGE NIMS RAYBIN has offered to serve as moderator for the SFA election. And that's about all that I can think of right now. Hope no one was left out. Whoops! Forgot comments and lauds from JANET RENNER, JOHN BRUET, HOWARD SHOCKLEY, RON HESS, TERRY DICKINSON, JERRY PAGE, BOB FARNHAM, AL ANDREWS, HARRY BRASHEAR, JACK CHALKER, BART MILROAD, TONY RUDIMANN, ALAN DODD, MARY CECILE BRADY, JEFF PATTON, and PHIL MOSHCOWITZ. Whew! I think/hope/pray that's all of them.

Would like to close out this page with an editorial feature from a recent issue of The Atlanta Journal.

the  
CIDER FROM/GEORGIA PRESS

There's too much noise and some of it ought to be cut out--starting with alarm clocks. - A.W.Quattlebaum, The Pike County Journal, Zebulon.

Intuition is that which enables a woman to put two and two together and get your number. - Kate's Korner, Dawson County News, Dawsonville, Ga.

We never know when we go to bed at night what new tax on necessities will face us the next morning. - The Sparta Ishmaelite.

It's easy to tell an election year. All your mail is addressed to "Honorable". - With Rogers, Swainsboro Forest-Blade.

Sometimes we think the Golden Rule went out years before we went off the gold standard. - Carey Williams, The Greensboro Herald-Journal.

In a way the Russians are helpful. If we didn't have them how would we know if we were ahead or behind? - Quoted in the Rockmart Journal.

Men, stop complaining when your hair falls out. Suppose it ached like your teeth, and you had to have it pulled out. - The Cleveland Courier.

Observing some who've been elected at various times, it's no wonder the voter wants to get in a private booth and cast his ballot in secret. - Bo McLeod, Donalsonville News.

How things change. We can remember when a girl married a man for his money. Now she divorces him for it. - A.C. Jolly, The Bartow Herald, Cartersville, Ga.

///-I thought that the above would be of interest to the readers so I enclosed it at the conclusion of this lettercol. Would like to hear comments on it along with comments on the zine as a whole.-///.

A Canticle For Leibowitz by Walter M. Miller, Jr., Lippincott, 1959  
\$4.95.

When a novel which can generally be classified as science fiction just barely misses the best seller lists, it is time to take note. In this case, it's a tremendous volume compiling the 'Canticle' series of stories from F&SF. Divided into three books, it comes out to be less than what it seems.

It is the far (or is it the very far?) distant future. Mankind, after an atomic hallocast, has forsaken all types of learning, particularly in the case of 'the Burning,' in which all great books and works of art which could be found were destroyed. Even Bibles wer burned, but not all. This same burning included men and women--anyone who was not an ignorant savage like the crowd doing the burning. I.E. Leibowitz, a security-risk scientist, escapes detection and starts a systematic search for his wife, who was last seen before the bombs fell, entering a shelter in Arizona. But the shelter cannot be found. Seeing also a chance to preserve some knowledge, he forms a religious branch (the ignorant and scared and respectufl of God) and tries to preserve something. He never finds his wife.

But 600 years later, a young monk of the Blessed Order of Leibowitz, fasting in the heated desert during Lent, discovers a strange opening near his encampment--by means which later develop to a much fuller extent.

At any rate, Brother Francis, 17 years old and hungering for knowledge, finds the fallout shelter. The sign on the shelter read, of course, FALLOUT SURVIVAL SHELTER. Shuddering because he has found a haven for the dreaded Fallout (he has never seen one but imagined the agent of the devil as a giant salamander) he crosses himself but goes on. What he finds is the body of Emily Leibowitz, a faded blueprint done by the Blessed Leibowitz himself, and a piece of paper in the Blessed Martyr's own hand! That paper is a reminder to Emily to pick up a hlf-dozen Bagels doesn't faze him in the least--after all, though he didn't know what sort religious thing a 'bagel' was, he was sure it was of great importance.

And from then on we plunge headlong into a series of dramatic and puzzling incidents including the acceptance of Leibowitz as a aint by New Rome, theft of the blueprint by canabalistic and weird mutants, until Francis is finally eaten by the latter. Book two takes us into the further development of the Order, when border disputes comein and a mysterious olden stranger, a Jew named Lazarus, comes in.....he is immortal! He led Francis way back in Book One to the shelter!

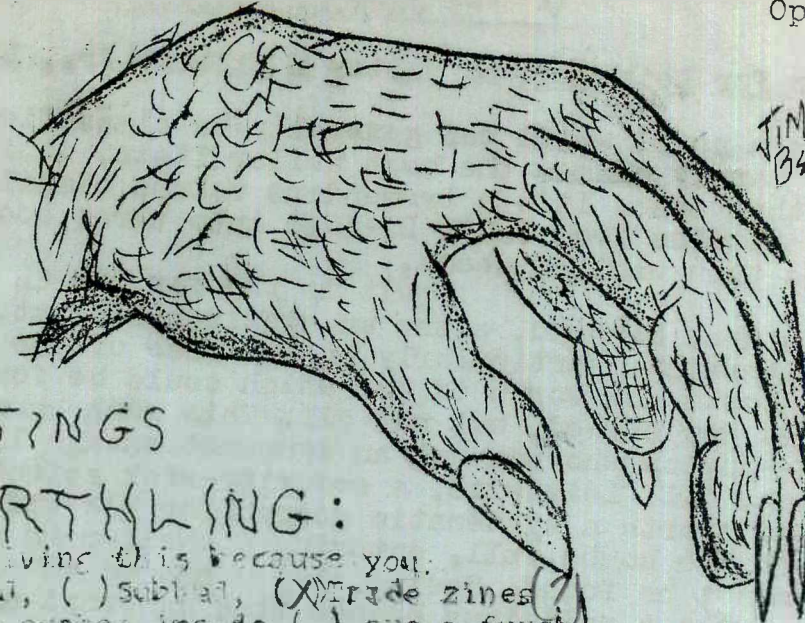
What finally comes to is a second atomic war with the rival religious and political powers coming at odds, and the monks taking off in a starship before the real end comes.

Written as a major and penetrating, often biting, satire of religion and politics in our times, it suffers from the joining of the many shorts from the magazine, each great in their own right, and from the long drawn-out style of Miller. Yet this is a powerful work--one to be read and remembered. I'm going to start rating these--! for worst, up to 10 for the best. This barely misses the truely great classic stage, but it deserves a rating of 8.



Bill Plott

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GREETINGS

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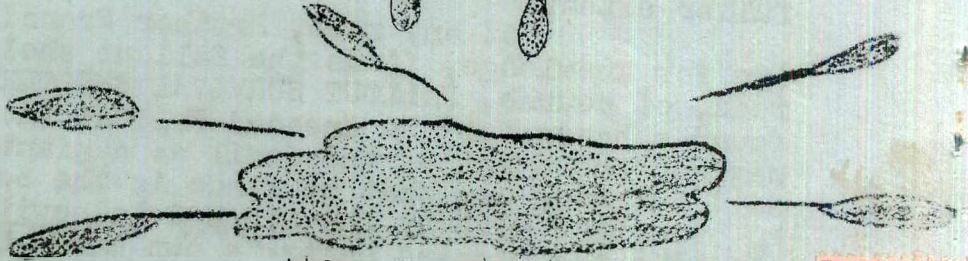
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