

The



# NEOLITNIC

RIP

Borogove in orbit

No. 4, March 1980: a monthly mag

"We're mimeo'd now, and the spirit is excellent"

NeOL is put out by Ruth Berman, 5620 Edgewater Boulevard, Minneapolis 17, Minnesota. ALL NIMSY, an amateur literary magazine, and NeOL will go to those who send articles, letters of consent, or five cents postage, sent at the rate of four a year. All and NeOL will also go on an all-of-ours-for-all-of-yours trade basis.

Since the Detention, many people have joyously quoted in their zines their favorite bits of High and Noble Wisdom which the, culled during the conversation. My favorite bit, however, seems to have gone unculled. It happened during the Psionics Debate.

Psionics has had pragmatic use.

[scornfully] Witch-craft has had pragmatic use for centuries. Exactly!

And which of your favorite quotes have gone unquoted?

## NEOL FLASH

R. N. Firestone (see portrait) says he has been tracking the Orbiting Borogove and has gotten this scoop:

Decision handed down in Boojum Case (Bellman, Ho, et al vs. Boojum Snar). "Widow of Baker definitely entitled to Workman's compensation," says K♥ (noted judge of case state vs. Jack of Hearts, also known as Tart case). For further study of both disappearance cases, read accounts by L. Carroll, court reporter and chronicler. Further References: Die Versewindene Juwelen, a German case, and the hexa hexa flexagon disappearance. See also The Report on U.F.O.s -- transmitted by Bandersnatch



Firestone

That picture of R. M. (Comet) Firestone is by R.I.F.

I am no longer quite sure of the trustworthiness of eaa, my fellow editor on AM. A while back we found ourselves in the U. of Minnesota Library where eaa grabbed and took out all three volumes of THE LORD OF THE RINGS. A harmless, even commendable action, you say? No doubt, but on the bus eaa sat silent, stroking the blood-scarlet (the U. has the English edition) volumes, murmuring, occasionally, with a slight hiss, "Precious."

There's been a lot of discussion about the THE BLESSING OF PAN by Lord Dunsany, since I first described it and said I couldn't figure it out. Ideas started barrelling, and now I think I have a possible explanation. The story, if you came in late or have forgotten, tells how Pan came to an English village. The villagers were slowly won over to Paganism while their minister tried to draw them back to Christianity. At last even the minister was won over to Paganism. Then, when the village was completely pagan, life there became utopian, idyllic.

I think that the story tells not so much the defeat of Christianity by Paganism, but rather the defeat of modern life (and modern, watered-down religion) by ancient life. Pan's first appearance in the story is not on the side of Paganism; he comes in disguised as a priest and acts as an ordinary priest (except when he thinks no one is around, when the disguise falls). The disguised Pan stays some years, goes, and is replaced by the story's hero. Then the actual temptation towards Paganism starts. The minister goes to his religious superiors and is let down completely. First they give him the wrong sort of help and then no help at all. The "blessing" that Pan meant to give is not the blessing he gave in the end. Pan meant to draw the villagers back to Christianity by tempting them with Paganism (else why would his first appearance be as a well-behaved priest). Unfortunately, the brand of Christianity practised by the villagers and their authorities had no strength, and they fell to worshipping Pan. So Pan, who had meant to give them the blessing of a strengthened religion, had to give them instead the blessing of a pagan idyll.

What do you think? Does my interpretation sound plausible? What would you add to it?

I was rather surprised when only one person could identify the quotation in the last NeOL. Still, Redd did his identifying in such a scholarly fashion that if anyone else had, it would have been very anticlimactic. Redd also proposed a counter-quote. I didn't know it, but I was able to find its origin. I wonder how many of you can do as well -- or how many know without needing any reference books.

-3-  
CLAY TABLETS

from REDD BOGGS February 13, 1960

NeOL #2: Of course Fanac is a fanzine, since by tradition all fan publications are termed fanzines. However, the people at the con who objected to its receiving a Hugo as best fanzine may have grounds for objecting. After all, the second syllable in "fanzine" stands for "magazine," and Fanac is clearly a newspaper and not a magazine. I still can't believe that you waste 50 per cent of your paper when you try to ditto both sides. Unbelievable. No one can be so thumb-fingered as that. Can they? Surely the machine must be at fault.

NeOL #3: The combination of the rime scheme, the iambic pentameter followed by an alexandrine, and the pseudo-archaic language narrows the probable origins of that quoted passage down to one poem. Spenser's "Faery Queene." Those lines come from the third stanza prefacing Book II of that poem. Please give me my \$64,000 as soon as possible. Thankee. The report on the Great Fire at the Dicksons was beautifully done, and causes me to wonder (belatedly, I'll admit) if the advent of NeOL isn't comparable in importance with the advent, nine years ago this very month, of Richard Elsberry's Snulbug. Remind me to remark something to this effect in my History of the Fan Movement in Minnesota which -- honest -- I will write someday. As long ago as 1952 I asked Kay-Mar for some info about his fanzines to include in the report. This report is on the agenda directly following "Legion of the Lens" (first projected in 1948) and "The Case Against Insurgentism" (first projected in 1948 or 1950). "This Bouillabaisse a noble dish is--/ a sort of soup, or broth, or brew,/ Or hotchpotch of all sorts of fishes,/ That Greenwich never could outdo..." So where are those lines found?

from BRUCE PELZ February 16, 1960

What we need is something like a Union List of Fanzines, giving fanzine titles, dates of first and last issues, and a couple names of fans who have complete or nearly complete runs of them. Hmm. That might not be too bad an idea at that. I'll have fanzines organized under library science principles yet (though not under the "fussy rule" principles).

A fantasy fan named Ruth Berman  
One time fell in love with a merman,  
Und sie lebten, die Beide,  
Auf bewässert Getreide.  
(Or don't you dig lim'ricks in German?)  
- - - - Ed Manyoya

I should have warned you about Manyoya -- any remark about him is likely to bring on a piece of bad verse, unless the remark is

complimentary -- in which case he goes around chortling for a day or two, and THEN writes a piece of bad poetry! It's just that someone else is the victim in that case.

Hmm. Here I am working at the Univ. of SoCal. Maybe they have The Blessing of Fan. Will come anyway.

I give up on the source of your... Nice one, though. (I've progressed to #3 in case this... is more confusing than I think.)

Bob Fattrick makes some very valid points, and I can see where I'd better scrounge up the loot to get the couple of Tolkien books I'm missing, and re-read it myself. As I recall, the colors of the Wizards were sort of a power-rating, since Gandalf became The White after his ordeal with the Balrog, and before he confronted Saruman. Previously, Saruman was more powerful: White vs. Grey. Therefore Radagast the Brown would have been considerably below both Gandalf and Saruman. But the question of the other Wizards and their work is a very good one.

from JEFF WANSHEL February 26, 1960

It is a very unusual and highly to be cherished moment when the great and faanish J\$E\$F\$F W\$A\$N\$S\$H\$E\$L takes a moment out of his eternal contemplation of the inner meaning of life, and comments on a pitiful effort of creation by some lesser mortals. Put this down in your book so that you will have something to tell your grandkiddies when they grow up, and want to know if old Grannie ever knew anybody. Then you can say, "Well, one time JW and I were correspondants... That is before he was driven into exile by the Fifth Reich..." Of course, you won't have to say my full name. Everyone by that time will know me. (Whether for upholding law or order or befuddling it I can as yet not predict.)

Anyway, deleting the flowery phrases (psst-dropping the doubletalk) I practically never comment on a fanzine the day I get it. If you are extremely witty, you may get out a clay tablet and start scribbling. That's it. Hmm...lemme see...Time I mailed it...time it takes for it to get there...time for the post office to find out who the hell JW is...and it should have arrived...Eureka!!! On...Oh Ghod...that's the day before I mailed it...

Egad, Ruth, you must be really cracked. You doubted that Djinn could provide incidents to write about? LiGhod. Do you want an incident to write about? Just send Djinn out into traffic with a bathing suit on. Ha-ha indeed. You'll get your incident, alright. You must have had a great time there. This was ok, could have been better written in spots.

Having not seen what Vic Ryan is harping about in the left col, I am sort of left out. If it's about Pan, I am out to collide with the dognik. However, let me add my 2¢ worth on Utopia: There will never be one. Every person on Earth (which in Ghu's name I hope is the world I am squatting on) is a completely different unit, an island unto thyself. Each unit has different likes, dislikes, etc, etc, ad infinitum. Can you imagine what a world would have to be like to fit exactly the likes of a couple of a billion crazy neurotic fuzzbrained beatnikerinos, running around looking for the ideal thing they want and being discontented if they don't have it thrown at their feet? Of course, you would have a number of noncoms who wouldn't dig all this utopia jazz, and like presto-there goes your utopia. Oh you might please the great majority, but there would always be that leetle factor-the malcontents who would ultimately end it all. Sorry-no utopia. Not for a long, long time.

Speaking of Tolkien, I have just persuaded our school librarian to buy all three of TLOTR. Yuk! Eviel triumphs again!

The cover was nothing. Was it supposed to be? The editorial essay, as far as I can discern, is nothing in the way of the editorial. It should be the introduction to eaa's story, which was OK, and the best thing in the way of fiction in the issue.

Well, a pretty fair couple of fanzines, but AM is too little in the way of fanning. Let us see more fanstuff in future AMs, and bigger NEOs.

What is there to say now? Only cheers and farewell. And remember-don't take any wooden mushrooms.

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This is a good spot to remark that in CLAY TABLETS I try to observe what MEZB calls the "difference between cutting & gutting." Like, for instance, comments on each individual item in AM are perfectly fascinating to me, but I won't print many of them because I don't think most folks would find a lot of them interesting. Or like, for other-instance, I try not to find reasons for not printing something I disagree with.

Neol gets recognition all over the place. "The presence of alcohol in practically all existing Neolithic cultures does more than indicate its early origins." Page 33, NEW YORKER, January 9, 1960