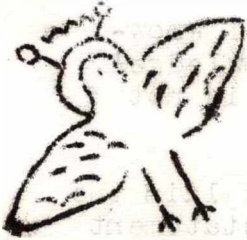


The



# NEOLITHIC

Borogove in orbit No. 9, August II, I guess, 1960: a monthly mag  
"Do you know who someone with real will power is? Someone  
who can eat one peanut," Dick Schultz said.

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|                               |                                     |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Editroolings.....1            | NeoLithic, with All Mimsy,          |
| An Effect of Television.....3 | will go to all who send con-        |
| by Mike Deckinger             | tributions or letterofcomments      |
| Clay Tablets.....5            | (sent at the rate of four a         |
| by Divers Persons             | year), five cents in postage        |
|                               | (also sent four times a year),      |
|                               | or who trade on an all-of-ours      |
|                               | for all-of-yours basis. <u>Neol</u> |
|                               | comes from the basement of Ruth     |
| with the pictorial aid of:    | Berman at 5620 Edgewater Boule-     |
| Jeff Wanshel and Ron Whyte    | vard, Minneapolis 17, Minnesota.    |

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In this day of failing stf mags and autopsy-articles on "Who Killed Science Fiction," I would like to put forth one small gripe. Certainly this pet peeve of mine did not kill science fiction all by its little self. But I suspect that it was one of the drops of poison on the arrowhead. Or perhaps, since this is science fiction and not Cock Robin, you won't mind if I mix the metaphor and say one of the drops of poison on the missilehead.

Now let us take the latest issues (as of this writing) of F&SF, FANTASTIC, and ASTOUNDING-ANALOG: September, August, and August, respectively. Now let us take the fairly representative sampling of the first story in each. "Well," say you, "The Word to Space" by Winston Sanders is an amusing story, and highly amusing if one is a Sherlockian; 'The World-Timer,' by Bloch, is a fair Utopia story; and Reynold's 'Adaption' is not bad." Just so. Now take a look at the editors' introductions.

"The only world Ozma could pick up was governed by religious crackpots who refused to devote broadcast-time to any subject other than proselytizing sermons couched in pseudo-King James," says Robert Mills.

In FANTASTIC, "Definition of a time capsule: you put things into it for posterity to find. Definition of a Time Capsule:

you put it in you and find yourself. Dr. Morton Placebo was not at all sure he liked the idea."

And Campbell writes, "When a man has a great deal of knowledge, it becomes extremely easy for him to confuse 'knowledge' with 'wisdom'...and forget that the antonym of 'wisdom' is not 'ignorant' but 'folly'."

These illustrate my gripe nicely. The first two explain the situation, the background of the story; the third is a statement of the story's theme, or moral. What's wrong with this, in the first place, is that it's an insult to the writer. It is the writer's business to lay out the story's background material. If the editor finds it necessary to tell the reader the scene or moral of a story, he implies that the writer did not do the job. In the second place, the insult is double-edged: he implies that the reader is too stupid to understand without help.

What is most important, once the editor has pointed something out in his introduction, it seems important. I find myself watching, as I read, to see how the story brings in the points the introduction mentioned, when, and where, and why, and how fairly the introduction represented the story. And the result is that I find it rather difficult to concentrate on the story.

I once considered subscribing to ASTOUNDING, but Campbell's introductions (he is the worst offender) stopped me. Now I only buy the zine when there is a story in it I want to read very much. If any number of readers feel as I do, the editors are hurting science fiction by writing bad introductions.

And don't tell me to skip the introductions. Once in a while someone comes up with the chatty, irrelevant, totally delightful introductions which were typical of Anthony Boucher.

I am not going to attend the University of California this year. I wanted to go the U. of C.; I wanted to spend a year among all you west-coasters. And, believe me, on the off-chance you weren't aware of it, you west-coast fans are wonderful people. But I can't find a place to stay, the U. of Minnesota wants me, and I am tired of red-tape letters that must be beauracratc nonsense, but read like insults. I will be coming out to California for a visit from the Pittcon, and I will be coming with the Calivan as planned.

I plan to put the September issue of NeOL out a little early so that I may gallivant through California for most of the month with a free conscience.



## AN EFFECT OF TELEVISION by Mike Deckinger

As I sit here to begin this article, I'm reminded of a cartoon I once saw in a newspaper picturing an exasperated husband staring at the swirling, wild screen of a television set which is obviously out of order, and stating angrily to his wife: "TV certainly is wonderful; with radio we could hear static; now we can not only hear it, but we can see it." Is this all that television has done to enrich our lives: permitted us to view picture distortions and faults within the transmission? Many media introduced for the first time offer new effects and results which may not become apparent at first, but require a little time.

I was never much of a radio listener when radios were the thing, and only rich people who liked to experiment bought televisions. Nostalgia does jog several memories up, though, and such shows as SKY KING and THE LONE RANGER I recall with vivid imagination. Since I had no idea what the characters looked like, I liked to build up dream-images of my own. Sky King was a tall, mustached handsome man who wore an antiquated plane helmet, a brown leather jacket, and always traveled in the company of a young girl named Penny (his mistress no doubt, though this fact was always glossed over in the radio show) and was a cracker jack when it came to airplanes. The Lone Ranger, of course, always wore his mask, but he too was tall, sunburnt and with tremendous muscles. His silhouette leaning against a window would be enough to frighten away any outlaws or Indians who were foolhardy enough to actually try to draw with him.

Then, too, there was SUPERMAN, and since I was hopelessly addicted to the Superman comics at the time, I thought of Superman as resembling in certain ways the figure in the comics, with a slanty jaw, dark hair, and, when as Clark Kent, in a conservative suit with glasses which somehow magically, completely altered his appearance, so he in no way resembled Superman. Lois Lane was a young, pretty girl with a trim figure, whose hair was in a constant mess because she was always dashing about.

And when I used to listen to them on the radio, while the announcer told of each daring trick performed by someone like Superman or Sky King, in my mind I could picture plain as life those characters going through their acts. Sometimes I would even fall asleep listening to the radio.

For quite a while this went on, and I had fairly well built up my own little dreamworld of my pictures of these faceless characters, when I was jolted by sharp reality. We bought a television set, and my carefully built-up dreamworld crumpled up and was dissipated.



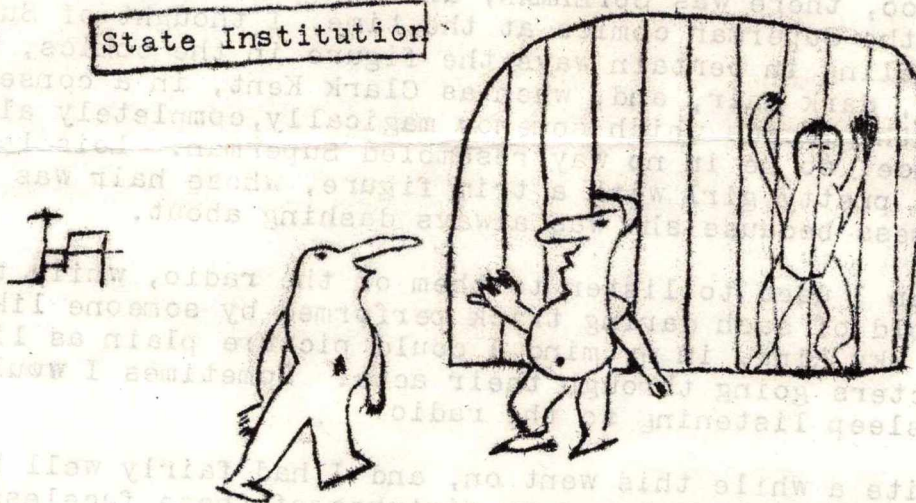
After a short while, shows like SKY KING and THE LONE RANGER on. I was disappointed to see an almost paunchy, nearly blond Sky King and a tall Lone Ranger who talked as if he had a cold in his nose. But I probably received my greatest shock upon perceiving George Reeves as Clark Kent/Superman, who reminded me of Steve Allen more than anything else. The first time I saw him on his show I was terribly disillusioned. Is this the mighty Superman, I thought to myself? Even though he performed the regulation stunts, I could not get myself to believe that this was Superman.

Operating on this faulty bit of logic, I managed to eliminate from my viewing schedule such shows as THE FALCON, SERGEANT PRES-  
TON OF THE YUKON, and many others. GUNSMOKE wasn't too bad, how-  
ever, and for once the change was for the better. William Conrad, who played Matt Dillon on the radio, is a fine actor, but after seeing him, I could never picture him as the hero type. Jim Arness is closer to that elusive breed.

After George Reeves went home and put a bullet through his head (which didn't bounce; odd thing!), I was completely disillusioned by it and vowed never to watch SUPERMAN again. At the moment, the only shows I bother watching regularly are TWILIGHT ZONE, GUNSMOKE, THE PLAY OF THE WEEK, and ALFRED HITCHCOCK, as well as some specials.

But I'm through with radio-television heroes. Through with them forever. I can never swallow a more bitter pill than that which came when George Reeves shot himself, or when I caught my first glance of William Conrad.

That is what television has done for me.



I dunno. All he does is scream  
all day about some crazy armadilloes.



CLAY TABLETS

from REDD BOGGS, 9 July, 1960

I did not receive the July NeoLithic. I tell you this merely to show you that you aren't getting away with anything. I don't even want a copy of the July issue. This is the issue, I feel sure, in which you unwarily peeled away the fine veneer of erudition and cultural preoccupation you've been showing us for a semester and revealed at last the real Ruth Berman.

I can see that issue so clearly that it almost seems that I have it here, preserved in formaldehyde against sudden and terrible corruption. You start off, I'm sure, with a three-page "Editroolings," couched in your everyday speech, a jargonese that, on paper, looks at first glance as formidable as a page from the Pardoner's Tale. In this first significant feature you escort us, at long last, to the fabled Basement you've been so secretive about, and here, between toppling stacks of well-thumbed and much-cherished True Confessions and Silver Screen magazines, we disocer your record collection. If we translate your junior beatnik patois correctly, we learn that this is the choicest collection of caterwaul and yowlery upon the palm-dotted shores of Lake Nokomis. With infectious enthusiasm you recount for us some of the triumphs of high art represented in this record collection -- the golden glories of Elvis at his zenith -- and end with a stirring quotation from "Heartbreak Hotel."

Sniffing back tears (for the esthetic distance became so narrow that we nearly suffered heartbreak outselves), we pass along the feature of the issue, Karg and Arnason's magnum opus, a pianissimo little epic depicting Fabian (going Elvis one better) in the Foreign Legion -- surely the season's most charming conceit. And then the issue closes with a delightful colloquy by Divers Persons discussing such matters of primary concern as "Like, Should 13-Year-Olds Go Steady?" and "The Case for Wearing Slacks to Grade School Commencement."

Yes, the July NeoL must have been the finest publication since the official organ of the James Dean Teenage Mourners' Club folded up. Thank you for failing to send it to me.

Your August issue, now, partially restores the false picture of yourself you have built up, but even so, it seems clear that TV is far closer to your heart than fairy chess, Tolkien, or higher calculus. It is obvious that the slightly sardonic note in your discussion is mere subterfuge to hide the fact that it is Ruth Berman, not Ruth Berman's little brother, who mono-

polizes the television set. Mike Swifka's tale gives me hope that Minneapolis, cradle of the genre, may once again become the home of the Silly Story.

[People have so little faith.]

from GEORGE W. KARG, July 10, 1960

It is your sort of editorial timidity that is losing us the cold war: pussyfooting about the stark, bare truth, hiding reality from the American public. Only by facing facts can we survive in today's complex world, and your sort hides the facts, gilds the facts, swathes the facts in a rosy and obscuring mist. Miss Ber-  
man, you are Un-american!

Miss Arnason and I both feel that your un-called-for use of the blue pencil in my letter of June 26 is the outward sign of a deep-seated moral cowardice. In the first place, Miss Arnason's statement in the Ten O'Clock Scholar (which you have down as "A viper, George") was actually "A viper, George; a viper nursed on my own heart's blood." You also felt it necessary to censor my comment on Miss Arnason's comment, which has made her fairly mad, since the line you attributed to me, "I think the gin does it," was the stinger on her remark. Your excuse, that your foul-minded little readers might take my original comment, "So she's turning nasty, is she? She does when her pusher's late coming around" to mean that Miss Arnason took dope, is pretty feeble. That is exactly how it was meant to be taken. I will grant that, ignoring her extensive profanity, Miss Arnason has all of the homelier virtues: she does not take dope; she is uneasy about taking aspirin. Still, after four years of verbal feuding with Miss Arnason, I find that I have expended all the nastier home truths about her, and am forced into a little harmless prevarication in order to keep up my end of the crossfire.

I do not think it is your place to delete what was an essentially friendly statement [I do. - RB], thus disturbing the delicate balance of power between Miss Arnason and myself. As a result of your careless action, an active war may be precipitated. I will just add, for Miss Arnason's benefit, that I am stock-piling loaded pens in the editorial room.

[Hmmm. Nobody likes me.]

from BOB LICHTMAN, 15 July, 1960

NeoLithic #8 showed up yesterday and was pretty well acceptable all around. One question: what's with your mimmygraf that it gives you that odd smudgy top line on only one side of the paper? The repro is quite good otherwise, but trying to figure out why it doesn't do it on both sides or on no sides at all is maddening.



Swifka's vignette is rather well-written, and quite humorous to boot.

Your essay on the old Captain Video shows brings back a lot of memories, ones that had pretty well become indolent in their lazing around in my subconscious. Let me put them painfully on to paper as long as I can stand it. Does anyone in your readership remember a radio science-fiction children's show which featured a Captain-Something-Starr of the Space-something. This Captain Starr had the usual male side-kick, whose name skips my mind entirely or is buried so deep that it'll be sometime after this letter is deposited in the postbox that I recall, and he had a mad and sexy femme sidekick (was he married to her? I know not) name of Gail. Anyway, every Wednesday evening, I think at either 7 or 7.30, they used to ramble merrily across my radio tubes, and I thought it was the best stf radio show on. This was when I was living in Cleveland, I believe, or maybe when I had just moved out here. In any event, it was early in the last decade.

When we moved out here and finally got a TV, I opened up to the worlds of Rocky Jones, Space Ranger; and Flash Gordon. But it was too late; I was getting too old to dig that sort of stuff, and Rocky and Flash never held much charm for me. But, for some reason, I never did watch Captain Video. Maybe because out here it was on in the afternoon, when I was still out gamboling around and doing whatever I did when I was younger.

So that's why I can't tell you the name of Captain Video's ship.

[Ah, some egoboo at last.]

from BRUCE PELZ, 18 July, 1960

On the fantasy empathy project: it cannot be stressed too strongly that amateur hypnosis on a project like this is downright dangerous. And on the hypnotic drugs part, I'd like to correct one statement I made: the supervision would be by a medical laboratory rather than just a hospital; this part is much more dangerous than straight hypnosis, of course. A person with very strong empathy could get lost with very little trouble one one of these deals.

Thanks for NEOLITHIC 7 & 8. I am delighted to find that Dick Schultz writes well. All I'd seen previously were his letters of comment... I still like your ramblings and commentaries, and thanks to your two ~~psychopathic efforts~~ friends, Karg and eaa, the lettercol is hilarious. Sometime you should try slipping a tape recorder into the room and record about an hour of conversation.

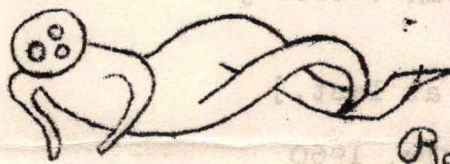
### THE KARG CAMPAIGN

Special to NeoLithic, by Eleanor Arnason: July 11, 1960

Mr. George W. Karg, prominent Minneapolis citizen, last night opened his campaign for presidency of the United States with a speech given in the editorial room of ALL MIMSY. Mr. Karg, who is running on the Anarchy ticket, promised to eliminate corruption in government if he is elected. He voiced again his controversial plan for averting nuclear war: unconditional surrender to the Soviet Union, but agreed with the major political parties in his refusal to consider the recognition of Communist China. "If we ignore it long enough, it will go away," Mr. Karg remarked.

After the speech, Mr. Karg released the results of a recent private poll. The poll, which took extensive samplings in the lower loop area of Minneapolis (picturesquely known as skid row), showed that, while Mr. Karg was totally unknown, the Anarchy platform of his party had considerable popular support. In an earlier poll, taken in and about the University of Minnesota, there was a higher percentage of name-recognition, although most of those recognizing Karg's name expressed a strong dislike for his person and politics.

Mr. Karg told this reporter before his speech that he had the highest hopes for success: "There is a tide of anarchy rising in this great country of ours, and nothing can stop it."



Rowdy

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VOTE ANARCHY!

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