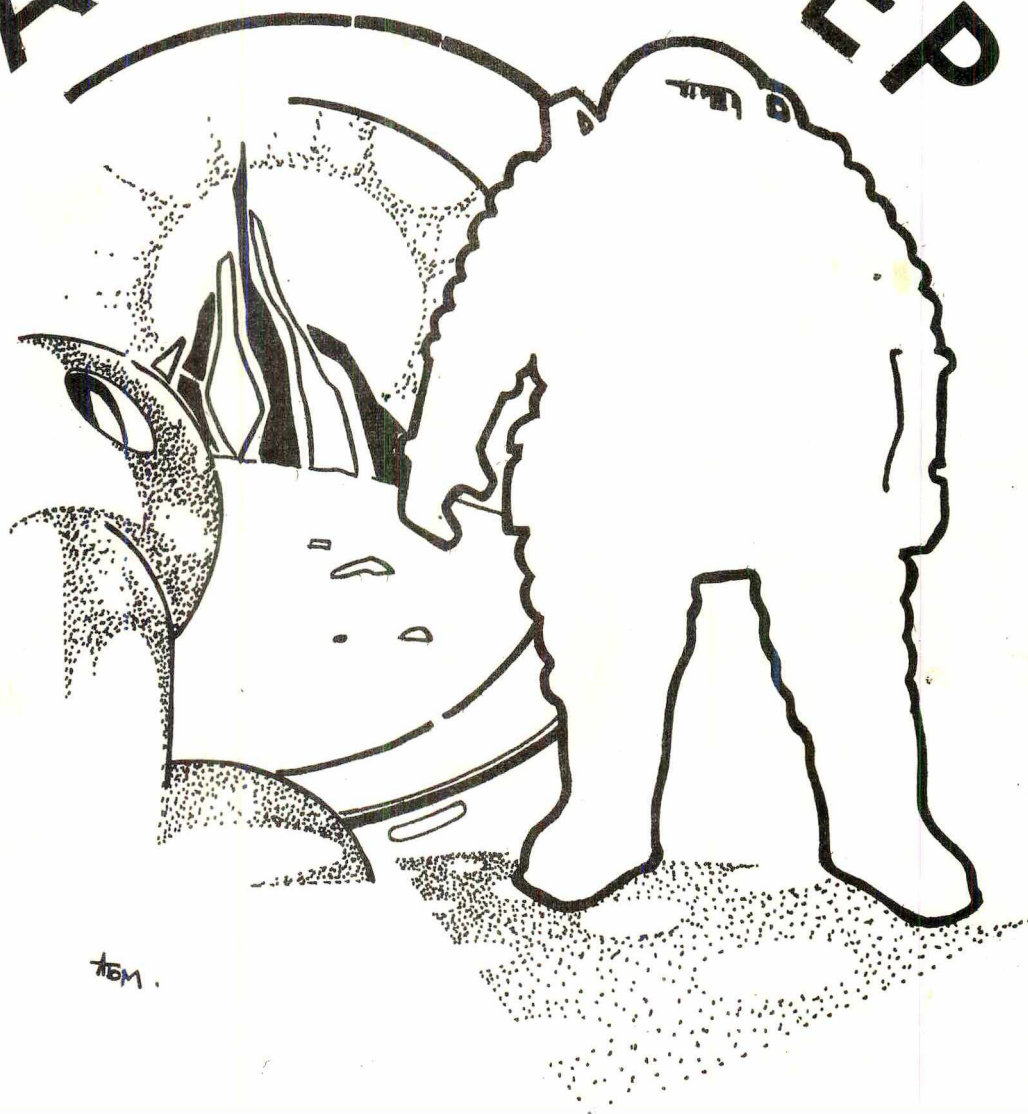


NYARLATHOTEP



NO. IV

NYARLATHOTEP

NYARLATHOTEP, a fanzine for the totally alienated, is edited and published on a non-existent schedule by Ben Solon, 3933 N. Janssen, Chicago, Ill. 60613. It is available for contributions of material or artwork, letters of comment, in trade for your publication, 30¢ the copy or 4/\$1. British agent is Alan Dodd, 77 Stanstead Rd., Hoddesdon, Herts., Great Britain. His price: 1/9 the copy or 4 for 6/0. This is issue number 4 dated December, 1966. All material is editor created unless otherwise credited. The editor is responsible solely for the opinions expressed in material credited to him. The opinions expressed in material written by others are those of the authors' and not necessarily those of the editor. All letters will be considered for publication unless otherwise specified. A Chaotic Publication and a genuine 13 line colophon. It certainly is a wonderful thing. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

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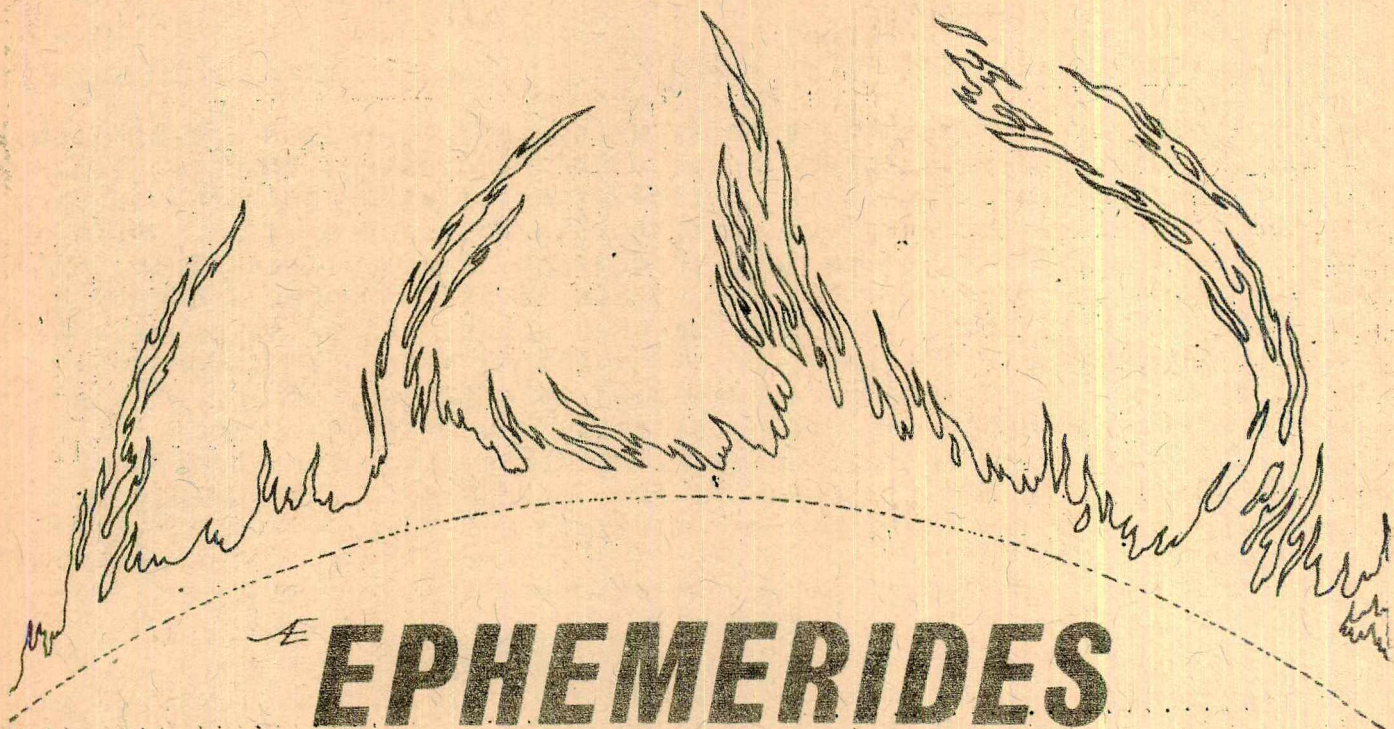
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Trade for SF 5 Yearly?



Occasionally people ask me how in the world I write "Ephemerides" for Nyar. "How in the world do you write "Ephemerides" for Nyar?" is generally the way they phrase it. I have worked out a standard, uniform, unvarying answer: "With Great Difficulty." "No," they clarify, "how do you approach writing it?" "With leaden feet," I reply, amplifying, "With gnawing dread and a deep sense of Nameless Horror."

Seriously, I have a file. It is not an elaborate file, in fact it is merely a file-folder. Into this, in the interludes between issues, I am given to placing all sorts of newspaper clippings and other odd items which, at the time, appear to be suitable grist for an editorial. Unfortunately, by the time I get around to writing an editorial, these clippings and such have lost most of their appeal; there's nothing left for me to do but throw them away.

They give my wastebasket a nice, lived-in appearance, though.

Aside from a desire to obtain egoboo, the raison d'être for being a fan seems to be a wish to communicate with like-minded individuals on paper. This craving eventually leads one to contact with (dis)organized fandom and thence to amateur publishing. It is probably the reason for the recent proliferation of apas and lack of worthwhile genzines: It is far easier to slip a stencil into the typer and write pages and pages of mailing comments than it is to write something in the more formalized style required for genzine publication.

The apas specialize in Instant Egoboo; almost anything sent through an apa mailing will be commented upon. Genzine publishers, on the other hand, have to work for their egoboo; there is no way of telling in advance how successful a given fanzine will be. Enjoyable publications such as Dave Hulan and Ed Cox's Auslander wither and die for want of reader support while crudzines like ----- (fill in your own choice, who needs trouble?) give every indication of going on forever.

However this may be, it isn't my purpose to launch a lengthy dissertation on Why The Genzine Is Dying And What To Do About It. Almost every fanzine I've recieved recently has featured said lengthy dissertation; and I feel no urge to duplicate the efforts of others. But from where I stand, it is obvious that the face of fandom is changing; there seems to be a definite movement away from the apas and back to genzine publication.

I'm a bit hesitant to say exactly what these upcoming fanzine will be like, but I would guess that many of them will be slanted more towards general discussion and fandom itself than towards science fiction.

I enjoy stf; I make no secret of the fact that I am a science fiction fan. Yes, really. But the field's present state of ill-health doesn't lend itself to in-depth analysis. Can you imagine anything less interesting than dozens of fanzines filled from cover to cover with Penetrating Criticisms of the latest issue of The Magazine of Horror, Amazing, Fantastic...?

Let's not mince words; there simply isn't that much to talk about-- rather, there isn't much that's worth talking about. For every novel written on the level of The Moon is a Harsh Mistress and This Immortal, there are five written on the level of Thongor of Lemuria and Too Many Magicians; for every novellette like "The Sliva Tree", there are ten like "CWACC Strikes Again" and so on...

The contents of the average issue of If or Galaxy or F&SF are entertaining, and as forgettable as yesterday's headlines. Analog has become a monolog. Amazing and Fantastic, once the White Hopes of the field, have given themselves over whole-heartedly to ~~reprinting~~ reprinting some of the god-awfullest tripe that ever defaced good pulp paper. The less said about the quality of the average original paperback novel the better; most of them are worth far less than the paper on which they are printed.

----- God isn't dead. He just doesn't want to get involved -----

General discussion of world and domestic affairs, philosophy and such, though often interesting and occasionally thought-provoking, is not entirely without fault. As Norm Clarke points out in this issue's letter column: "...but where there is nothing to distinguish a fanzine from the Hip Slick mags, excepting the vast inferiority of the former, then one begins to wonder, 'Why Read Fanzines?'"

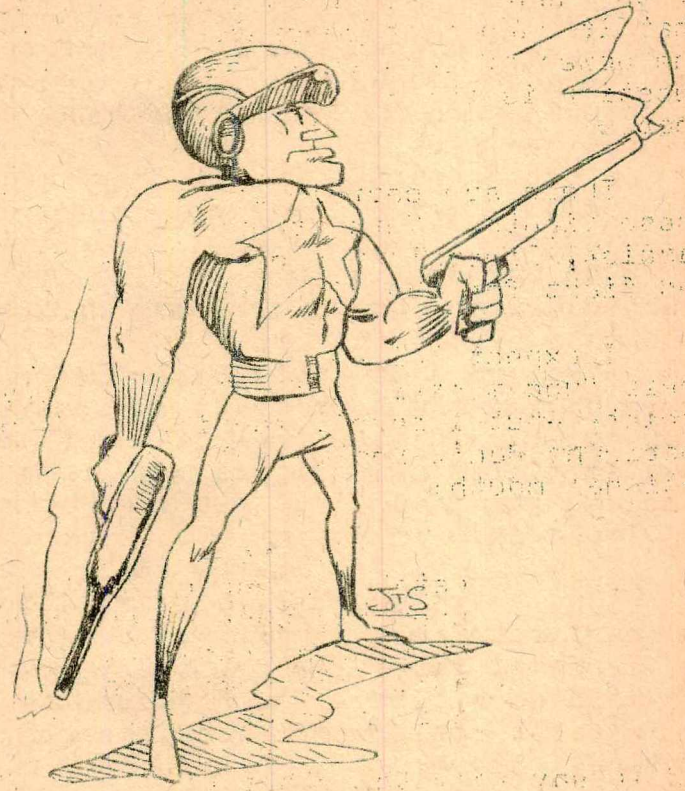
Why indeed?

Fandom is a microcosm, but it is not and it cannot be totally insulated from the macrocosm. It is impossible for fandom to keep the macrocosmic forces out completely; some are too strong, some are too subtle and some are desirable; one doesn't check one's education at the gate upon entering fandom. And if the real world changes in some important--or even in some unimpor

and it will continue to exist only so long as this conflict remain unresolved. Our society will remain stable only as long as the tendency toward unification is stronger--but not overpoweringly so--than the trend toward anarchy.

An anarchy, a society of complete individuals, is undesirable to say the least. In such a state--if that is the word I want--the strong have almost unlimited freedom, and the weak have no freedom at all. A completely unified state is equally repugnant; in a communist or fascist dictatorship individuality is sacrificed to conformity; the individual exists only to serve the state--and in many cases, he continues to exist only as long as he is useful to the state.

A democratic society cannot endure without change; democracy is a quiet, continuing revolution; a revolution-through-evolution, as it were. The dissent that is the sign of a healthy democracy cannot be tolerated in authoritarian regimes; in such states the appearance of dissenters is an omen of the regime's imminent collapse. Democracy is distinguished from authoritarian ideologies in that to oppose specific aspects of a democratic government's policies does not signify per se opposition to that government. If you are a Chinese communist, for example, and you happen to oppose the Red Guards' book burning activities, you are, in the eyes of the Party's leaders, as much of an "anti-communist" as Robert Welch. Democracy, however, is not authoritarian; it imposes no particular conformity with respect to policy issues.



We therefore have a paradox: On one hand, we have the non-conformists who are in conflict with some of society's institutions, and who are seeking to reform or abolish those institutions which are objectionable to them. On the other hand, we have the conformists who think we have already attained perfection; they can see no way in which society can be improved. Progress is usually made in spite of them, but it is because because of these conformists that we have any social structure at all.

Any state which forces conformity upon its citizens too strongly, which cnesures its critics, is doomed to collapse. Similarly, a society that does not place some restrictions upon its non-conformists is sowing the seeds of its own destruction.

This conflict within society, then, must be kept in balance; a stable society is one that enforces conformity but doesn't enforce it too strongly.

This is why censorship is unavoidable; this is why it must be avoided at all costs.

It has become fashionable to dismiss the entire censorship issue with a comment to the effect that "It stinks!". And while this is true enough, the quality of the language used in these remarks is a reasonably good indication of the depth of thought they reflect. The problem of censorship is so basic that it cannot be separated from the other great political issues of history. The power of censorship is customarily endowed to the government; the question is this: Should the government have this power, and if so, to what degree?

There are certain rights guaranteed to me by the Constitution. I demand these rights. Furthermore, I expect every man-jack of you, communist or fascist, liberal or conservative, to be given these rights. Or to stand up and fight for them if they are denied you.

I expect this--a willingness on the part of the citizenry to fight for their fundamental rights is necessary for the preservation of a democratic society--but I rarely see it. I am more and more inclined to believe that Americans don't really believe in democracy. We say out of one corner of our national mouth:

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

and we say from the other corner: "The people of America must be protected from insidious propaganda that might give them the wrong idea about our American Way Of Life. They must be sheltered," the argument goes, "from mind-rotting pornography, from communist subversion, from..."

...from whatever the would-be censors are afraid of, apparently.

There is more than a reasonable doubt that censorship programs have ever contributed to the preservation of any social order that was worth saving in the first place. Rather, they have been one of the numerous emergency tactics of embattled hierarchies; and they are the stock-in-trade of totalitarian regimes. Censorship is a mark of national insecurity, of fear of the possibility of alternatives to official government policy and programs, not of confidence that the Good Guys Will Win In Spite Of All.

When censorship programs are instituted, the citizens of a particular state have no control over the fallibility, prejudice or indigestion of the censors. It is all too easy for honest, dedicated censors (aren't they all?) "acting in the best interests of the people" to generalize "I don't like this," into "It is a subversive, corrupting evil; it is totally unfit for decent people."

The possible consequences of abuse of the power of censorship, no matter in whom it is invested, are so grave as to make one hesitate to agree to this power being given to anyone at all. Specifically, censorship represents a breakdown in the checks and balances system which operates in our government; censorship makes it possible for state-employed censors to prevent people from gaining access to anything but the official government propaganda line. And this, in case you've forgotten, is nothing more than a variation of the Big

Lie technique which has been employed by every entrenched political and/or ecclesiastical hierarchy to suppress criticism of its policies since the days of the Pharaohs.

I am of the opinion that most censorship of the press in this country is a voluntary thing. Editors and publishers censor themselves to avoid creating "unnecessary" controversy among readers and--especially--among the distributors. In fact, the key to censorship in America may well lie among the ranks of the distributors, although I doubt very much that the distributors themselves censor. Rather, when a particular pressure group decides to make trouble for a magazine or book of which it disapproves, it is the individual retail outlet that gets it. An individual storekeeper or newsdealer may find himself confronted by a group of picketers from the local Legion of Decency. The dealer knows nothing, but to avoid trouble, he takes the offending item from his shelves, calls up the distributor and says to take it back, he "don't want no trouble". The wholesaler, after he gets a few of these kicks, throws his anger back at the publisher. Nobody passes judgement on the item; it is simply that "We can't risk offending anyone". And that is how a good deal of the censorship of our "free" press operates.

A relatively small pressure group, if it is noisy enough, can make trouble way out of proportion to its size. The John Birch Society or the DAR, for example, can force dealers to remove publications dealing with communism in an objective or sympathetic manner from their shelves; left-wing groups, using similar tactics, can force pro-fascist material off the stands. And there is very little the average person can do about this; if one makes an objective stand for freedom of the press for everyone, he is accused of being a communist, a Nazi or a nut. Damn few people are willing to take this kind of abuse publicly.

I'm rather hesitant to state the obvious, but certainly every reasonably well-educated person knows that one cannot win a debate by ignoring the opposition's arguments. Indeed, I can think of no better anti-communist or anti-fascist propaganda than the incredible drivel spouted by the doctrinaire proponents of these ideologies.

For far too many years, our schools have ignored communism. Just why this situation exists, I cannot say. Possibly our educators feel that the best way to prevent children from being converted to communism is to tell them nothing about it. Possibly. But from where I stand, it is painfully obvious that the Great Red Scare and the rise of McCarthy are at least partially the fault of this "if we ignore it, maybe it will go away" attitude on the part of the schools.

The anti-communist hysteria of the early Fifties, the continued existence of HUAC and the John Birch Society call all be attributed to this national ignorance: Comparatively few people know what communism is and what it is not; it is only human nature to fear the unknown.

The best possible protection against communist subversion is education. However, such education (unless it is to be pure brainwashing such as is currently attempted in our schools--unthinking Americanism, etc.) must point out the faults of our society and our nation honestly. This is what most people are afraid to have done; but this is what must be done. It is not enough to tell children that democracy is better than communism or fascism --you have to show them why it is superior to authoritarian or totalitarian ideologies. Failure to do this results in the periodic rise of demagogues

like McCarthy who are thus able to parlay a national fear into mass hysteria for reasons of their own; and in a field day for the communists: their charges that the U. S. is a "pseudo democracy" take on an unpleasant ring of truth in the face of McCarthyism.

Unfortunately, a number of Americans--a growing number, I fear--seem to feel that McCarthy had the right idea; that the best way to deal with unpopular idea is simply to suppress them and their advocates.

When Playboy interviewed George Lincoln Rockwell (April, 1966), he was his usual bastardly self. He ranted and raved against everyone to the left of William F. Buckley; he declared a war to the death against all Jews and Negroes.

Needless to say, his remarks produced quite a bit of comment. A number of these comments were restrained in tone; the letter-writers obviously realize that the freedom of speech, if it is to be meaningful, must include men of Rockwell's ilk. But all was not sweetness and sanity; a number of correspondents submitted missives of the "Dear Sir: You Cur!" type.

Consider, for example, the remarks of Donald Tasker*:

"Your publication of Rockwell's virulent anti-Semitic mouthings can cause incalculable evil by giving him a far wider audience than he could ever hope for. I am opposed to censorship; however if I had the power to do so, I would suppress the printing of such material, if only for the sake of good community relations between peoples of all faiths, creeds and national origins. Maybe you think Rockwell's interview shows him up as stupid and laughable, etc. That's the way "Kultured" Germany viewed Hitler before he rose to power and Nazified it. Like it or not, Rockwell's appearance in you pages can be construed as an endorsement."

I shan't bother to point out the specific faults in Mr. Tasker's reasoning; they're obvious. And so is the underlying implication: "Everyone is entitled to free speech except those with whom I disagree."

When individuals express views similar to Mr. Tasker's, it is unfortunate; when governments espouse them, it is time to get worried.

Consider the case of Julian Bond:

Bond, a Negro, has been elected to the Georgia House of Representatives not once but three times. But the House has refused to accept him on the grounds that his statements opposing the war in Viet Nam made it impossible for him to take the oath of office with sincerity--although Bond himself has insisted that he is willing to swear to the constitutionally prescribed oaths.

Without going into the question of whether or not the United States' present Viet Nam (you should pardon the expression) policy is the correct one, it is obvious to me that the interests of the public are hardly advanced by denying legislators their Constitutional right to free speech. If a legislator is denied the right to speak his mind because the other members of

*This letter originally appeared in Playboy for July, 1966

legislative body disagree with him, what is the point of having legislative bodies and representative government at all?

More recently, two members of the Chicago unit of the American Nazi Party were fined \$200.00 for distributing hate literature. Without for a moment defending the sentiments found in this "literature", I would like to point out that Nazis have at least as much right to put their white supremacist views before the public as Elijah Muhammad has to distribute Muhammad Speaks, the house organ of the Black Muslims, which often carries material attempting to prove that Negroes are inherently superior to whites. And yet, to the best of my knowledge, Elijah has never been fined for distributing his brand of hate literature. The only conclusion that I am able to draw from this is that the city fathers somehow find the doctrine of black supremacy less offensive than that of white supremacy.

But, in truth, this is all beside the point.

That the members of the Georgia House of Representatives disagree with Julian Bond's opposition to the war in Viet Nam; that a large number of Chicagoans, myself included, find the viewpoint of the ANP and the Black Muslims objectionable has nothing to do with the right of Bond, of ANP members or of Black Muslims to publicly express themselves: The freedom of speech is guaranteed to everyone, regardless of his political or religious affiliations.

If Julian Bond cannot sit in the Georgia House of Representatives, if Nazis are denied the right to distribute their "literature" on the grounds that a large number of Americans disagree with their positions and find their proselyting objectionable, a precedent is set. And this precedent can be used again and again to suppress unpopular minority views and spokesmen.

But perhaps I'm too pessimistic. The suppression of Bond and the Nazis may well herald an entire new interpretation of the First Amendment, a new dawn of freedom. Indeed, I look forward to the day when the only public speakers will be those individuals who are truly objective, speakers who don't offend anyone at all.

Anyone in Washington, that is.

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A QUOTE WITHOUT MUCH COMMENT (from Chicago's American, July, 15, 1966):

"The Milwaukee police today investigated a 'happening' in the Milwaukee Art Center. The police were attracted by the sight of a nude man and a nude woman bathing in two beer coolers.

"The museum director explained that a 'happening' is a 'kind of extension of abstract art in which the artist is a performer with his canvas.' He also said that this particular happening would give the art center a bad name.

"The two hundred fifty people in attendance were required to follow the performers to different floors of the art center. In an elevator they saw a girl shave a man who was covered with thick lather. At one level motorcyclists roared by. In the basement, the man and woman sat in beer coolers while a stage crew threw water and red paint at the audience."

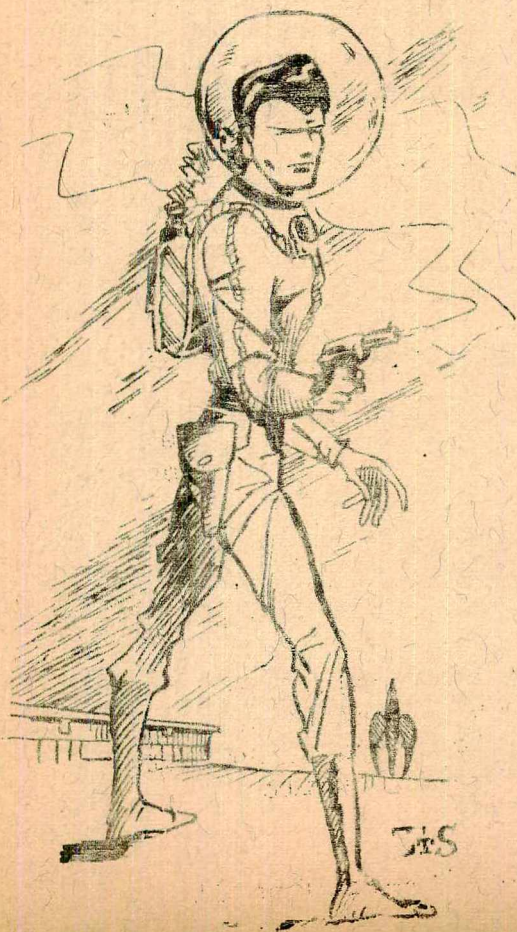
Well, some people just don't recognize art when they see it--or when it splashes over them.

BY LEWIS GRANT

Quite a number of my friends have expressed a fear to me that the American news media are controlled by the government or the "establishment"; they don't trust the news they get about Viet Nam, the UFOs or what have you. In my opinion, they are quite right; not as right as they think, but to some extent the press of any country is controlled by the "establishment"; not by any direct or indirect direction, but because advertising revenue is a good part of almost any newspaper's finances, and people who print too much that is distress or distasteful to the advertisers don't seem to get much advertising. This is not "control"; it is simply that a good deal of advertising space is bought on the basis of hunches and feelings; any papers whose readers believe that crap is probably not going to sell much of my product to such clods. Cadillac doesn't advertise much in Mad magazine, because there is some doubt that Mad readers buy many Cadillacs. (There is also a fear that the readers may think a Cadillac ad is another put-on.)

If you are one of those who believe the real story is being cut off by the Johnson Bar, there is a simple answer; an answer which can be quite entertaining as well: Buy yourself a short-wave radio. At any hour of the day or night, someone, somewhere is broadcasting "news". I imagine that with the success of WNUS and its imitators, there will shortly be all-news stations on the high bands; there is plenty of activity right now.

At the present time, I have two short-wave sets. One is a seven tube Phillmore kit put together by my boss, a real solder-dripper; the other is a 1951 Zenith Transoceanic "portable". (I dragged this monster to work, then found it weighed twenty-six ~~xxx~~ pounds; I then found that six pounds of that was a dud battery.) I picked the Zenith up for ten bucks at, would you be-



TOM SWIFT
AND HIS
ELECTRIC
ENTHUSIASMS

lieve Maxwell ~~Street~~ Street? It works quite well here in my apartment, but not at work, surrounded by one hundred motors and five hundred fluorescent lights. Before I took it to work, I picked up Radio Moscow, which came in sounding like WGN. Well, not exactly like WGN, but you get the idea. The Phillmore does even better; I have picked up Melbourne, Australia, which is about as far as you can go; I once picked up what I think was Radio Peking. One thing that entertains me about picking up Moscow, Peking or Havana is that you may read the same thing in the Chicago rags the next morning, relayed from "our monitors" in London or Miami. "Our monitor in Chicago" doesn't sound quite so exotic. However, you can see that with an expenditure of ten dollars (within an order of magnitude), you can hear quite a bit.

If you do get a short-wave, keep a large box of salt handy, and take a grain with every other sentence no matter who you are listening to. There is a lot of American history and current events that is on the seamy side, and you will be surprised by what strange effects you can get by telling the truth, the whole truth, and about 90% of the whole truth. The best propaganda is composed of 99.44% soft soap and .56% pure lye. Everyone broadcasts propaganda, even without meaning to, because all available channels would not transmit one millionth of what someone wants broadcast, and whoever is weeding out the 99.999999% is doing so with preconceived notions, notions which even he may not be aware of.

One thing you will find while listening to short-wave is how free our "controlled press" really is. "The Establishment", in this country, has quite a bit of control, but it is not a tight little clique of a few hundred. It numbers in the millions; they range all the way (from L. to R.) from G. Menen Williams to H. L. Hunt.

The people at the top don't know exactly what they want us little people to believe; their ideas fluctuate with their digestion. They are also very inept at propaganda. And with five hundred "establishments" deluging you with inept junk, you wind up not believing much of anything. In fact, you wind up with the current American syndrome of not believing anything you are told, and believing anything you think you weren't supposed to be told. Of course, if anyone is really apt at propaganda, you won't know it until too late.

Moreover, newspapers and radio stations are not staffed by the people at the top. They are staffed by thousands of men with very strong but conflicting viewpoints, including a large number who believe that distorting the news (much) is either immoral, or doesn't do any good in the long run, so why bother. Even in Communist nations and/or dictatorships, control is not monolithic and efficient but fluctuates quite a bit from day to day.

So, if you are one of those people who can't see DeForest for the treasure, get yourself a short-wave and a long wire, and join the superheterodyners club.

You will soon find you are one of millions of people all over this small spherical puddle who are taking it all in. Some are engaged in putting their own out. (This is the eighth stage of short-waving.) And if you are one of these sercon types who think fanzines are full of inane chatter, just spend a few hours finding out what hams talk about.

You will also be part of a new factor in human evolution: plugged into the "electric media", as Marshall McLuhan calls them.

The electric media: telegraph, telephone, teletype, television, radio and facsimile, are something completely new in the history of human evolution. Seriously. (To quote a sentence in advertisenglish I love.) They are co-cooning the Earth in the thickening web of communication (and, boy, is thum of it thickening), which Dr. Teilhard de Chardin calls the noosphere; the sphere of human thought covering the lithosphere. Even the daily paper is an electric medium; the news collecting is done by telephone, teletype and cable. The daily paper is no longer a "story" with a begining, an end and a story line; it is a "happening", consisting of thousands of unrelated events which happened at the same time. This is the essential point of the electric media. For all practical purposes, here on Earth, their speed of transmission is zero, so we can talk of events happening simultaneously. We used to have relativity in news; nothing happendd simultaneously. Events which happened further away were heard about later, so they had lost some of their immediacy and impact. (Like the girl at the dinner party who said: "Gee, wasn't it too bad about poor Marie Antoinette!") We used to use a phrase quite a bit: "long ago and far away"--I haven't heard it recently. Places which were far away felt far away, and they also felt long ago. Today they don't. Seeing a guy get shot in Viet Nam twenty feet from your living room is something different than a report about a train wreck in which two hundred Turks and an Irishman named Clancy were killed, poor fellow.

The guy in Viet Nam is a human being, even if he is slightly shorter and darker, whereas the "natives" weren't. We are now entering an era in which there are no more "natives"; everyone is a next door neighbor. (Would you believe down the street a couple of blocks?) As McLuhan says, we are entering an era where the whole of Terra is one huge village--with too many village idiots. This is the start of the Terrene Era, the age when we think of Terra as our home, instead of America or England or Viet Nam. I figure the Modern Age died on 6 August 1946, and the Terrene Age began on 4 October 1957, when the Russians launched their Jack O'Lantern at the wrong end of the month, but succeeded in scaring people anyway. And if you think that was bad, wait until the Red Chinese launch their first satellite, and thousands of stout Americans look at each other with a wild sumise, silent upon a Pekin durian.



People are not only talking about world-wide television in five years, but are fighting about who is going to do it. Early Bird and other synchronous satellites have proven highly successful. I have just figured out that if we put two large synchronous satellites over the Amazon delta and Singapore, we can cover 75% of the world's surface and 95% of the population,

since the vacant areas will be in the middle of the Pacific and the Polar regions. Moreover, the two satellites will be in position to beam programs to each other. A saving of 33.33% of the cash with a loss of 5% of the customers sounds like a good business proposition, especially when the Pacific can be covered with a small satellite, or other methods.

For instance, an Idea I was fiddling with recently is a combination of two I have heard about in the last year or so. Alexander de Seversky has been experimenting with an "ion copter", a changed grid arrangement which produces a blast of air powerful enough to life the grid, etc. It works much better at high altitudes than at low.

And a month or so ago, the excellent British Magazine, Science Journal, published an article on beamed power and using a power beam to power a helicopter which hovers above the ground antenna, carrying TV or FM antennas. They reported an efficiency of 26% for one experimental setup; they estimated costs would run abo't \$150.00 per hour. (Maybe that was ±150...)

Combining these two, we can visualize an ion-copter hovering at fifty miles, carrying two dozen TV and FM antennas. At an altitude of twenty miles, a TV antenna would cover about 675,000 square miles. Mounted on top of the grid would be a parabolic antenna, locked on to the stationary satellite transmitting programs from all over the world. You'd turn to Channel 69 and get France. If enough people think they can make money this way, we could have such a system in five years.

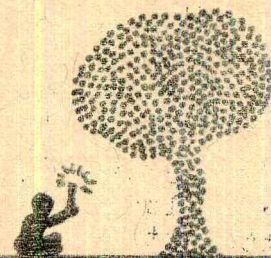
Remember Jaxo, the hero of the far future in "The Machine Mother", who had a warped box and secretly warped the boxes of many others, thereby causing the Jaxocrat Rebellion? I walk down the street, and I see a lot of teen-agers who have their boxes alread installed, and some of them sound pretty warped to me.

I just wonder how far ahead Jaxo was.

Lewis Grant



THE LOVELY LEMON TREE



BILL BOWERS

KANSAS CITY BLUES

Strange, isn't it, how one almost instantly begins to dislike a locale --solely because he is...ummmh..trapped there through no choice of his own? Had I arrived in the Heart of the Nation by reason of my own incentive, I have little doubt that I would have enjoyed Kansas City; even if not immensely, at least with the comforting realization that I might take me leave at will.

As it is, the choice was not mine. The dislike is. Then too, by a process of simple extrapolation, I find equally little joy in residing in the State of Misery.

Richards-Gebaur Air Force Base lies some twenty-odd miles south of K. C., Mo. There is no such thing as regular bus service to the base; hence, any excursions to the City are made by utilizing the thumb, or by knowing Somebody with a Car. Airman Somebody usually has no great interest in exploring used book stores, and after a few episodes last winter of thumbing back to base at 3 AM on a Sunday morning to the tune of -20°F--well, expeditions have become increasingly rare.

Before advancing age and a renewed interest in Writing did me in, however, things were a bit different.

For the first five months after I arrive here last year, I had a roommate. Oh, I've had roommates since, but (perhaps unfortunately) none were quite like Dick Dodge.

Now Dodge didn't consider himself a beatnik despite his tenure in the Villige, but that didn't stop everyone from labelling him such. His most prominent feature was that he had a moustache, a huge, hairy thing. (I also had a moustache--although not quite so huge or hairy; and since our then First Shirt hated moustaches with a burning passion beyond belief, having us in the same room was terribly convenient for him.)

I guess you would call Dodge a folk-song fan. He could play a mean

guitar, had appeared on tv's Hotennany--the segment taped at Syracuse U.--and had organized several half-successful folk groups before joining the Air Force. (While stationed in Texas, he was apprehended for running Mexican guitars to the U.S....but that's another story.) Dodge was quite firm in stating that he had joined under the Influence--but that's what we all say. It was a fact, however, that he had joined on the first of April.

He had read some science fiction--and after reading them at my urging, was somewhat more than mildly enthused over "...And Call Me Conrad" and Dune. This in itself made us more or less kindred souls, as did our abiding unlove for things military.

His hatred for this base was a little stronger than mine. I've mentioned the distance between here and K. C.; it was nothing to Dodge. He was downtown every weekend, as well as many times during the week itself. While there, he stayed with another one of our nation's finest. Richard Dixon certainly demands a story of his own--but for the moment it should suffice to say that, by some means or other, he had managed to ~~live~~ live in K. C. for almost three years on \$60.00 a month, while commuting to base every day via the thumb.

This was the status quo until late last November. Then Dodge met a girl. Two weeks later Dick and Mary were married in a Mormon church, which really wasn't Very Strange unless you knew that both had been raised Roman Catholics.

Mary was quite a girl. She was big, shall we say well-endowed, with shoulder length black hair--usually uncombed. She was attracted to boots and slacks; in three months I saw her only twice in a dress.

Mary's arrival in Kansas City was nothing less than spectacular, particularly to someone as sheltered as myself. It seems that she had hitchhiked from Seattle, Washington with baggage and four-year-old son in tow.

The Kid was unbelievable. Dixon has characterized him as being "the single most destructive force on earth". I cannot but agree.

Now Dodge is perhaps one of the most vividly imaginative story tellers I've ever encountered. It seems he had been in San Francisco about four and a half years back--this being when he had thumbed from coast to coast and back in the interval between his junior and senior high school years--and had met Mary there. He hadn't known that he'd knocked her up when he left San Francisco, but over the years he'd heard rumors that he had a kid, and was intending to look them up--someday. So, when Mary conveniently showed up in Kansas City, it was only his duty to marry her.

(I had a nice long talk with Mary one night after Dick had gone to bed. "San Francisco?...Dick? You're kidding!")

There isn't too much more to this tale. For several months earlier this year, I spent virtually every weekend down at the Dodge's pad. Yes. For a while, I became involved in the folk/Art Institute set, and discovered some of those historical landmarks you won't find on a map of Greater Kansas City: 'The Loft', a condemned, barn-like affair with a couple of stripped down Jags downstairs and a few blankets in the 'Loft' for those with no other place to stay; 'Toad Hall', a lovely old mansion across the street from the Kansas City Art Museum with a long and varied career--at one point it had

been a 7th Day Adventist Church, before being sub-divided among the Art Institute crew; and, of course, the 'Rat Castle'--but I don't really think you'd believe that one!

Now? Well, Toad Hall is no more; it was torn down to provide a parking area for the Art Museum. 'The Loft' has been reconditioned to accomodate the influx of refugees from T. H.; and only one of the Group still resides in the 'Rat Castle'.

It's all rather sad.

Dodge? Well, Dick isn't in the Air Force any more. He got Out in July --how I'm not quite sure, but two and a half years certainly don't make a full tour. Mary left him early in July; he spent his last week in the service in the base hospital--the result of a nervous breakdown.

Me? I'm still here--hating every minute of this self-volunteered white slavery.

I guess you might say that it all goes to show that the Defense of the Country is still in capable, sane hands.

I wouldn't drink to it, however.

A SEARCH FOR PURPOSE

I mentioned that Dickie-Garbage AFB is some twenty miles from Kansas City. I might also note that the nearest town is Belton--birthplace and home of one Carrie Nation. Belton's dry as a bone. And, by sheer chance I'm sure, about eighteen miles from here is Independence, Missouri.

In some fifteen months here, I have yet to unearth a reasonable explanation for the existance of this base. Except...possibly....

It certainly is a Wonderful Thing to be stationed here at Uncle Harry's Areoplane Patch...

A MODESTLY IMMORAL PROPOSAL

It is, I suppose, impossible to describe to one who has not had the experience. I am referring--it you're wondering--to that joyful bringing-back-of-one's-Sense-of-Wonder which results from leaving a military base to attend a science fiction convention.

The Midwestcon was a blast; the Tricon even more so. Except in one respect.

I am assuming that by this time even those of you who didn't attend the Tricon are aware of the Hugo winners. If you aren't, Ben can list them--I'm not.

To some of you the following may sound like sour grapes.

You're right.

At the panel on Specialized Fandoms, Vern Coriell made quite a production (seemingly directed at Bruce Pelz) out of the hypothetical fact that

somewhere around 1945 Burroughs fandom was cast out into the cold by some Evial individual in the mainstream of science fiction fandom. He was unable to name said individual, but was quite adamant in stating that Burroughs fandom had been Wronged.

Yes.

Came Sunday evening, the Banquet, and the disclosure that the best fanzine of the year was ERB-dom.

Being one of the eligibles for that category--objectivity therefore being impossible--perhaps I should ignore the situation and keep quiet. But, for numerous reasons, I believe comment is demanded.

I would be less than truthful if I didn't admit that I was disappointed Double:Bill didn't win. Not that Mallardi and I were really counting on it; we half-suspected that the nod would go to Neikas. Nevertheless, it was surprising and immensely gratifying to have quite a number of people come to Mallardi and myself to offer their condolences--as well as their observation that D:B had gotten the shaft.

I don't think of it quite that way.

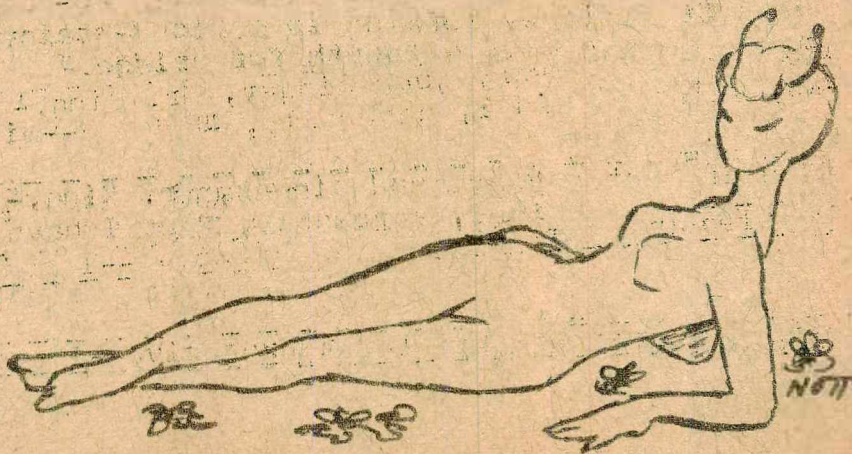
I think four fanzines were screwed.

Bloc voting can be a frightening thing at times. I would suspect that a large number of those non-attending Burroughs advocates joined the convention for the sole purpose of railroading their preselected choices through. I have no factual evidence with which to prove that statement. (save one), but from where I sit, it's self-evident.

The one piece of material which I have before me is perhaps the most disreputable piece of self-glorification that I've ever seen in cold print. It occurs on page two of the third Tricon Progress Report. After extolling the (debatable) virtues of Barsoom, ERB-dom and Frank Frazetta, the ad concludes with: "EACH DESERVES YOUR HUGO VOTE!" Now then...it has been put forth to me that Caz (as he persists in signing himself) should not be personally held accountable simply because some of his more avid followers railroaded ERB-dom to a rocket. This seemed logical and I found myself agreeing...until one unanswered question started bugging me.

Who placed that advertisement?

It is a moot point now; the farce is done. There remains only the question of whether, once done, it shall be condoned by default as a regular practice. Obviously, the Burroughs fans with their one-ghod concept could regularly outvote the more diversified mainstream fans--year in and



year out. The question is: Do we accept this? I say nay!

Hence my modestly immoral proposal.

Assuming for the moment that the Nycon III Committee will offer five candidates in each Hugo category--next year's final Hugo ballot will put forth four science fiction fanzines and ERB-dom. Which leaves us nicely split ...unless we play dirty, dirty, dirty.

Let's consider playing dirty.

Let us move forward in time to next July. There are three fairly obvious contenders for the Best Fanzine Hugo: Yandro, Trumpet and Neikas. The fourth position is up for grabs; possibilities include Quip, Algol, Double: Bill, Zenith and...yes..Nyarlahotep*will be eligible if Ben gets this issue out before December 31 st.

So...once we've established who the Hugo contenders will be, it becomes very simple. I can see it now...a conclave of the selected editors will be assembled and by a yet-to-be determined process (drawing straws? flipping coins?) conducted by an impartial outside party--Stephen E. Pickering seems to be disinterested enough--the Winner is chosen. Afterwards, the other three editors simply send out a flyer to their mailing lists--and throw their votes to the selected winner.

Ummh!...Say? Do you supposed that it just might work?

I guess not...but it might be *f*u*n* trying...

AN OPINIONATED THOT

Perhaps, now that Harlan Ellison and ERB-dom have received their personally asked-for Hugos...do you suppose that next year we might just go back to the rather humdrum business of giving Hugos to the best--and not necessarily the loudest--in the field?

Bill Bowers

*The views of the columnist are not necessarily, etc....--BCS

"American Weird Tales authors had a penchant for setting their yarns in London, which they imagined as eternally fog-bound, with Fu Manchu, Dracula and Professor Moriarty lurking in a blood-stained cellar, waiting for a victim to turn up and make a fourth for bridge."

--William Temple, Double:Bill 10

"You are not a very good singer, Mr. King."

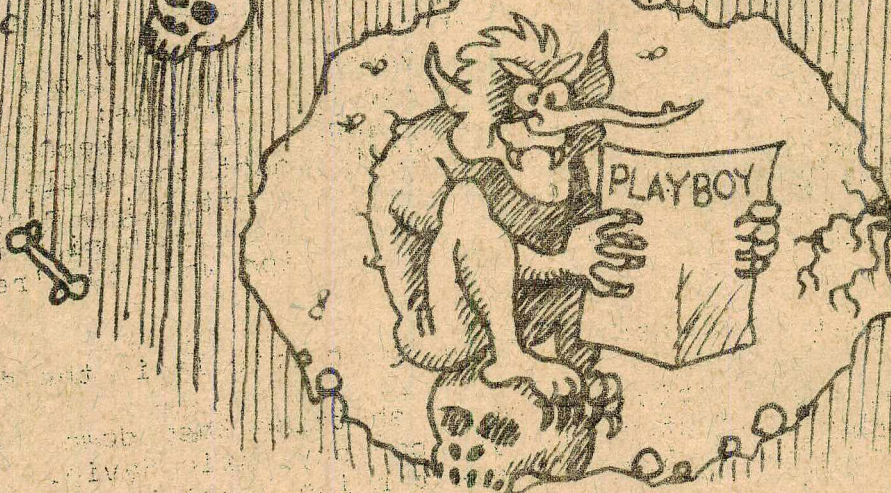
"No, ma'am," said I, agreeably, "but I have grand tuens in my head."

--Maurice Walsh, The Key Above The Door

The best pleasures are the least expensive--I prefer cheap cynicism.--F.M.--

THE TROLL HOLE

BY
DEAN
NATKIN



THE GREATER IMPOSTER

What many of us have long suspected has now been proven; Adolph Hitler is alive and living in China under the assumed name of Mao Tse-tung.

Ahgdoud Abidjian, special correspondent for The Psychedelic Review, has kindly permitted the use of material from his exclusive interview with Chairman Mao, which Der Chairman graciously consented to give in private. The material used in this article has been taken from Abidjian's forthcoming book, Hong Kong and Back Again. I wish to thank Mr. Abidjian and his publishers, Vanity Press, for their permission to use copyrighted material.

Abidjian, after worming the world's best kept secret out of his victim, relates how Der Chairman described the radical plastic surgery that enabled him to regain face. Chairman Mao spoke excellent English during the interview, though he occasionally lapsed into what Abidjian describes as "a caricature of a German stage dialect" whenever he became excited. The remainder of this article is taken verbatim from Abidjian's interview:

"Chairman Mao," I asked Der Chairman, "why is it that, after having kept your secret for so many years, you have now permitted it to be revealed?"

"Well, I'll put it to you this way, sonny: Don't you think that the current stage of my revolution reveals it anyway? Who else but me could have put into effect the sweeping reforms that are effectively modernizing the most backward nation on the face of the earth?"

"Some people don't consider China's culture to be backward. Even though it has never been a technological nation, China has always been regarded as having produced one of the richest cultural heritages ever to exist. How can you destroy the most ancient civilization on earth?"

"It's easy. I use will power. I also use mein Red Guards. Ach, vat a thrill it is to vatch them in action. Of course, they're not as efficient as the old Hitler Youth, but they make up for that by being a great deal more idealistic. That's what I like about youth--they're so idealistic. If you don't believe it, just ask any youth; or--better yet--ask people like myself who manipulate them. I've seen a lot of idealistic youths in my day, but these Red Guards have got it all over every one of them. I tell you it's such a pleasure to watch these idealistic young people go about burning books that don't conform to my teachings, just like the old days; and the way they go about beating up old people and smashing shops all to pieces brings back memories of Kristalnacht, only here it's Kristalnacht the whole year around --sort of Kristaljahr, you might say; and they are attacking minority groups and religious organizations like der Mooslems with an enthusiasm that would warm the cockles of Himmler's bowels, not to mention what they're doing with the schools."

"Oh, you mean that they are chnaging the curricula in the schools?"

"Who's changing the curricula? We're shutting them down. My Red Guards are closing schools faster than you can say Mario Savio. Boy that John Kasper must be jealous. Say, why are turning purple? Closing schools doesn't bother you, does it?"

"No! No! It's just a touch of purple Jaundice that I picked up in Hong Kong. Don't worry, it's not contagious. Er--tell me, Chairman Mao, don't you consider it just a wee bit gauche to initiate book burning in the country whose people were the first to make paper and who also invented printing."

"Nein. It serves der slant-eyed yellow bellies right for inventing it in the first place. If they had never invented printing, we intellectuals wouldn't have had to invent censorship. They invented gunpowder, too, didn't they? Why didn't they quit while they were ahead?"

"Er--uh--quite. Now for another question: Why do you find it necessary to have your idealistic youth attempt to eradicate the traditional respect and deference of the young for the elderly? Didn't this concept spring from the teachings of Confucius?"

"Because there is no room in China for the teachings of anyone besides myself. Besides, Confucius and that other guy--that Lao-tse--they were nothing but a couple of bums. Chiang Kai-shek read them, didn't he? And look what happened to him. Can't you get it through that dumb Armenian kopf of yours that mein Red Guards are chust a bunch of youthful philosophers who are preaching a new morality?"

"I know, Chairman Mao, I know. Wasn't it Eric Hoefffer who pointed out that it took a nation of philosophers to produce Nazism?"

"Correct, and I wish that that loudmouth longshoreman would stop reminding people of it. What is he, anyway, some kind of troublemaker? He's always preaching distrust of us intellectuals. He's an anti-intellectual, that's what he is, an anti-intellectual. Where would you common people be, anyway, if we intellectuals weren't here to tell you what to do? Probably out having a good time someplace.

"Well, we're putting a stop to that nonsense here in China! We communists are moral; Fidel Castro closed all the whore houses in Cuba didn't he?--which is more than the Catholic Church could do, though I have to admit that they tried hard enough. There can be no pleasure except through serving the people. You must understand that we communists are a very moral people; even our wars are moral, which is more than I can say for the capitalist finks in Viet Nam. Why don't you listen to your Yankee intellectual class, anyway? They keep telling you that your war in Viet Nam is immoral, don't they? Why don't you pay attention to them? Why don't you end your immoral war so that we can win our moral one?

"No one is as moral as a communist; just look at how my Red Guards are trying to eliminate drinking. Doesn't it remind you of Carrie Nation? Der little rascals also tried to eliminate smoking, but I put a stop to that--fast. I became a chain smoker as part of my disguise to keep people like you from guessing I was Adolph Hitler; I got so that I liked the stuff, and I'll be damned if I'll give it up now.

"Say, you want I should help clean up that little LSD problem you got over in the States? Just let me send over one or two million of my Red Guards, and the only trips that those beatniks will take is to the crematorium. What do you say?"

"Chairman Mao!! You forget which publication I represent! Let's just stick to the interview. One last question: I notice that your Red Guards have demanded that all landowners, capitalists and right-wing elements--upon leaving their homes--must wear a tablet with the word "Scum" inscribed upon it. Did you get this idea from the law in your Germany that forced all Jews to wear a yellow Star of David and a sign with the word "Jew" on it?"

"Certainly. All of my old ideas have worked over here. And what difference does it make whether we kill Barry Goldwater because his father was a Jew or because his father left him a department store? Either way we get all of the power-worshippers. Say, what's the matter with you? You're turning purple again. You don't happen to be Jewish, do you? With a name like Abidjian, I took you for an Armenian."

"I am an Armenian, Chairman Mao; it's just that some of my best friends are Jews."

"Oh, then you're one of us? In that case, let me emphasize that the only difference between National Socialism and International Socialism is but a single prefix; and only a philologist or a neurotic mind would be able to discern any distinction. Are there any more questions?"

"No, Chairman Mao; thank you for permitting this interview."

"You're welcome. Ach, if only Goebles could see me now."

THE SECRET NAME OF GOD (Part 1)

One evening as I was walking home, mumbling to myself about Lewis Grant's idea that Western religious thought had evolved from a state of countless gods to one of none (see Nyarlathotep 3, pg. 43), I became so fascinated with my own brilliance--my mind frisked through the universe upsetting time and priestly notions--that I neglected to watch where I was going. Instead of walking through a quiet residential area, silently playing tag with Grant's stimulating concept, I discovered myself walking down Wells Street, thus initiating a series of events that eventually resulted in my learning the secret name of God from Aghdoud Abidjian.

I usually avoid Wells Street; but there I was walking down it, just as if I were some middle-aged matron from the suburbs who is publicly carrying on a love affair with the artificial quaintness that is sold in Chicago's Old Town at implausible prices to those affluent enough to purchase (and simple enough to invest in) commercial illusion.

Reader, avoid Wells Street. You who live in Chicago will need no warning; those of you who do not live here could do a lot worse than to listen to my warning. My warning is simple. It is: Beware.

Wells Street happens to be infested with an obnoxious variety of night-crawling insect called the Teeny Beat. The Teeny Beat (also known as the Teensy in its larval or pre-sex stage) likes to amuse itself by blowing grass and someone else's mind. The grass is of no concern to me; I leave matters like that to the Narco Squad. Besides, I believe that there is something sacred about the relationship between a man and his probation officer. I greatly resent, however, the type of personality that gets its kicks from blowing some perfect stranger's mind, and what's more, I resent its hanging around the neighborhood where I've lived for ten years.

I used to live in Old Town when it was a quiet, pleasant rundown place; a deteriorating neighborhood that was turning into a nice, cozy slum where you could rent a storefront for \$40.00 a month, and fix it up so that you could actually live in it. Those days are gone forever. Today, that same storefront rents for \$800.00 per month, and you have to put your name on a waiting list and stand in line for months before the real estate company will give you the opportunity to sign a ten year lease with yearly options on your left arm. Not all change is progress.

But enough of this bitterness. There I was, walking down Wells Street and doing my best to avoid the artsy-fartsy, suburbanite couples who were coming out of the antique stores that sold genuine horsecollars and authenticated whiffletrees. Unfortunately, I was unable to avoid thier fad-conscious daughters who, this season, have taken to stuffing their fat, teen-aged rumps into an invention of the devil called hip-huggers and wearing gobs of buttons on their Pussy Galore sweatshirts.

It isn't the button wearing itself that is bad; it is the banal sentiments that they express. Once in a while one will come across a good button, a clever button, a button that has something to say; "Dracula Sucks", for example. However most of the buttons that are worn by the Wells Street teenies Dwight Frye is alive and living in Transylvania are incredibly dull and imported from New York. Buttons like "Don't Flush-- There's A Water Shortage" and "Make Love, Not War." Can you imagine? A water shortage in Chicago? There are many things which Chicago is lacking

--things like art movies and Republicans. But water? Never! Still, one just can't think of nothing; and, in order to avoid the ugliness of it all, I concentrated on reading the buttons that passed by. I rationalized this decision by observing that mortification is supposed to be good for the soul.

I tortured myself for about a block by reading the political inanities that passed for rebellion among this year's crop of college drop-outs before I finally returned to my senses. Wait a minute, I thought, mortifying one's flesh may indeed be healthy for one's soul; but mortifying one's mind is sheer masochism--and a waste of time to boot. I no sooner had made up my mind to abandon button watching when, all of a sudden, I saw it: The combination of buttons that blasted Grant's thesis splat into its constituent atoms. They were "God Is Dead" and "I Love The Beatles"; they were pinned to the fifteen-year-old, twenty-nine inch chest of the ugliest runaway that I had ever seen in my life. As ugly as she was, however, she still inspired the train of thought that refuted Lewis Grant; and if you think that refuting Lewis Grant is easy, I'd like to see you try it some time. Getting Jerry Lewis to relinquish the center of the stage would be far, far easier than refuting Lewis Grant, but I DID IT--thanks to that little monster with acne all over her face and all those buttons pinned to her poncho.

This was my clew: Since when do gods have to be supernatural beings? All they have to be is worshipped. Certain generations, in fact, demand living gods. Look at Caesar. Look at Hirohito. Look at Mao Tse-tung. As Lewis Grant himself pointed out, past generations of Americans referred to Jesus Christ in the present tense. I myself remember reading references to Jesus Christ as "the living God"; and if God is dead, what do we do now? Why we... --say, do you remember that old cliché from your high school days: "If there were no God, it would be necessary to invent Him." What passed for adolescent daring and a covert expression of non-belief might very well, in this age of disbelief, have a grain of psychological truth to it. Instead of no gods, we might very well turn to available substitutes.

The primary function of a religion is to turn-on its worshippers. That is the reason why organized religion is in trouble today. The organized religions have neglected their primary purpose in favor of achieving temporal influence and now they are paying the price. With the exception of the evangelical churches and the fundamentalists (of whom we like to make fun), all of the organized religions are dying. It is not God who is dead but those religions who take our money and tell us how to run our lives, vote and everything else but who refuse to turn us on because it's not dignified. Or something. Don't worry, though; someone will invent the Church again. They always have.

But what do we do in the meantime? As I said before, we turn to available substitutes. John Lennon may be a loudmouth, but what he said is true; in England, the Beatles are more popular than Jesus. The Church of England is an anachronism, and England's teenies have found an available substitute.



There have been other substitutes, traditional substitutes; men who live in the world of politics, and men who excel in the art of waging war. We have always given our hearts to our rulers and to those who bring us victory in battle; nor do the participants in these lively games of life and death seem reluctant to receive our offerings. The statesman's search for fame and the soldier's hope of glory are what caused them to enter their particular arenas in the first place.

Nowadays, either because we have become more civilized or grown more effete (probably both), we seem to have transferred our allegiances to professional athletes and amateur singers. Not me, though; at least not entirely. My substitute for God is Winston Churchill. I mean it. Churchill is an authentic Hero--just like Cuchulain or Beowulf. Even the way he died was heroic. When his ninety-year-old body--bloated beyond repair by all those glorious years of dissipation and joyful achievement--was in its final coma, it still took Death a full week to do the job; for Churchill died as he lived--resisting Death. I'm not even sure he's dead. Oh, I know what you're thinking. Didn't I see his funeral when all of the world except Lyndon Johnson (and I'll never forgive him for that--not even if he balances the budget) assembled to honor Churchill? Yes, I saw it on television; and I even wept. But it wasn't for Churchill that I wept; it was for my lost youth. When Churchill died, my youth and all of its illusions died with him. But do you want to know something? I've begun to feel young recently, and even to believe some of the old lies again--lies like Truth and Honor and Integrity. Maybe Churchill isn't dead after all. How can he be dead when I feel young again? That's the answer: He isn't dead! Forget about his body; Churchill is not dead--he but sleeps in the Great Forest; and, if the time ever comes that he is needed, he will wake again and once more lead us into battle against the Narzees or the Roosians or whatever the forces of Death may call themselves; for the names of Death are many, and Death can never die. Like Churchill, it but sleeps.

Would you believe that there are people who feel the same way about Bob Dylan? Well there are; I even know some of them. I don't go for Dylan myself; but Elizabeth Schwartzkopf or Tito Gobbi... ahhhh.... Not like an AHHHHH for Winston Churchill, but like an ahhhhh by a man who need substitutes for all the gods he never was able to believe in.

I remember one Schwartzkopf recital particularly well. She was even more magnificent than usual; and, at the end, we gave her all of the applause that we had inside us; we held back nothing and drained ourselves completely dry; it was more than applause that we gave to Schwartzkopf that night. Without our knowing it, the auditorium had changed itself into a temple; and we, the audience, had become a congregation that had assembled to worship our goddess--she who turned us on. Our applause was merely the medium through which we gave our hearts to her; just as in older, more barbaric days, hearts were given to Quetzicoatl. It is a far, far safer thing to offer your heart to Schwartzkopf; also much more rewarding. It is not completely unintentional that the admirers of Maria Callas refer to their goddess as "La Divina".

Sophia Loren and Elizabeth Taylor are fertility goddesses; Ernest Hemingway and Errol Flynn are virility gods; Humphrey Bogart has been resurrected and is worshipped by a cult in the northeastern section of the country. Just look at Shakespeare; dead all these years and still worshipped--not to mention the Marquis de Sade and Edgar Rice Burroughs.

Every Easter, hundreds of millions of Christians gather together to observe that "Jesus Lives". Little sects in jazzdom sneak along dark streets in order to scribble "Bird Lives" on some indifferent wall; jazz fans are notoriously uncouth. I will personally fight any man who says that Bach is dead.

There is a Heaven, but such is God's mercy that it is unpopulated--F. M.--

Once, long ago when I was young and didn't have anything better to do, I made a discovery. It was a simple discovery; nothing earthshaking; nothing that had never been discovered before. But I made it, and it caused me to change my entire outlook toward those people who are engaged in artistic endeavor or any other type of show biz. I discovered that the important thing to these people is their need for our applause, our approval, our love, our attention. These people always knew what they wanted; it just took me a little while to figure it out. Does anyone in his right mind think that they would turn down our worship? There are gods, and there are congregations; sometimes it takes a little doing to match up the right sets.

My mind did somersaults as it raced around the inside of my head; it had become so stimulated as to approximate a state of intoxication. Spinoza is often referred to as being "God-intoxicated"; could the same thing have happened to me, I wondered; I began to monitor my thoughts:

"In view of the ecumenical spirit and the liberalization of the Catholic Church, it would only be appropriate that the next Pope should call himself Pope George; and his successor should call himself Pope Ringo. After all, John and Paul have both had their opportunity.

"Jesus looked out on the crowd that had assembled to stone the woman taken in adultery and spoke: 'Let him who is without sin cast the first stone.' Whang! A stone came buzzing by his ear. Jesus looked out into the crowd. Could it be his mother? No, it was only Bob Dylan, faking his guitar and singing, 'Everybody's got to get stoned.'

"Wouldn't it be lovely if Prince Ranier announced to the world that he had been a secret convert to the Shaker religion for the past fifteen years? Then he could change the national anthem of Monaco to that old Shaker hymn, 'Amazing Grace.'"

There could be no doubt; I was intoxicated
TO BE CONCLUDED WHENEVER I CAN SOBER NATKIN UP

BREAD, LOVE AND DREAMS, A poem in bad
taste, by Flanders Modrian

I call my baby "Traffic Jam".

I keep her in my closet in an old tin can.

When I'm feeling lonely, I spread her on bread.

Oh, I'm sorry that my baby is dead.

And as I munch my jam on rye,

I wonder why we have to die?

But a taste of her keeps me going on,

It makes me feel that she's not all gone.

My baby died three months ago,

And now the jam in the can is getting low,

So I don't let it drip, and I don't let it run,

And I lick my fingers when I'm done.

A ROTTEN APPLE FOR BUCK COULSON OR

THE HARLACON-A PREJUDICED ACCOUNT

by EDWOOD

The trip started badly; American Airlines flight #253 was two hours late on a four hour flight to San Diego.

J. Ben Stark and Alva Rogers Very kindly met me at the airport; they gently informed me that the Stardust Motor Hotel was sold out, but that arrangements had been made for me to stay with Ben and his son. It being after midnight July 1st when I arrived, no bed could be put up in Ben's room and I checked into #102 as a single.

There was a party going on with Phil Bronson, Alva and Sidonie Rogers, Poul and Karen Anderson, Jean Bogart and others in attendance. It was a good party; I stayed until 4:30...

Earl Kemp called at about 8:15 the next morning to say he would lunch with me, and then invited me to have dinner with his family in El Cajon. The telephone operator called a few minutes later to say, "Mr. Wood, are you in charge of this convention?"

"Good Heavens, no!" I replied, "local San Diego people are supposed to be in charge."

"Do you know any of their names?"

"I believe a Mr. Dennis Smith is the chairman."

"Do you know where he is?"

"No."

End of conversation.

Already, I could see my plane fare going down the drain. And when I registered and got the program book and second progress report (which had not been mailed out), I was stunned. The entire program for Saturday was, and I reproduce it direct from the program book in all its grotesque stupidity:

1:00 P. M. Official opening of Westercon XIX
Stardust Room, followed by an Impromptu
Panel or something ("something" being
civil disorder)

8:00 P. M. Costumed Festivities
Stardust Room

All day Book and magazine sales and displays
Art Show

Swearing for the rest of the morning, while helping Ben Stark in the book room and setting up some Advent:Publishers materials, I kept thinking of the Edmund Burke quotation printed every morning in the Milwaukee Sentinel: "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing." I firmly resolved that there would be a program on Saturday.

I was again amazed at 12:30 to meet an Earl Kemp with 1/8th of an inch of fuzz on his head and dressed like a movie cowboy. Could it be true that when they stood America on end everything loose fell into southern California? There was the usual banter and joshing around:

"How's the wife and kinder? What happened to your head?"

"When are you going to move out to California?"

"I brought the manuscript of Bob Tucker's fan novel; you're going to read it over and send it back to Tucker when you're through. Warner's finished the first volume of the fan history, and I'm looking for some good, clear pictures of Laney, Degler and Kennedy."

"Have you tried Walt Daugherty?"

Kemp looked tanned and healthy; he had to get back to his job at Corinth Publications immediately after lunch, but promised to rent a car after work and come back to the motel.

I made a pest of myself for the rest of the afternoon, insulting fan after fan and thinking darkly of brewing up tar and feathers for the con committee. To labor for a year and come up with the program listed was nothing short of criminal, to my thinking.

Earl returned as he had promised, and we stopped off at Corinth Publications on the way to El Cajon. The layout is a far cry from Advent:Publishers. But then, Earl has always been a hard worker; it is only just that he pile up a few dollars. And besides, working for William Hamling is an alcohol making activity; I don't envy any of those associated with him, regardless of salary.

The Kemp home is of the style termed "California carckerbox", and has the only swimming pool on the block; such are the advantages of affluence.

I hadn't seen the Kemp family for eighteen months, since the farewell party for Earl and Nancy at Martha Beck's home. Nancy was her usual charming self; and daughters Edith and Elaine and sons Terry and Eric are growing

like weeds. Nancy and Earl have done a very fine job with the children; they are lively but not wild. Edith, the older daughter, is going to graduate from high school at the age of 16, and Earl is going to have to ride shotgun to keep the dirty old men (like me) away--to say nothing of the dirty young men. Still, the California influence shows; they are much more permissive with the youngest, Eric, than they were with the other three.

After a typical Kemp meal and the wonderful Kemp hospitality, Earl, Nancy, Edith and I returned to the Stardust and the parties which are always a feature of fannish affairs. In A. M. MacDermott and Lester Anderson's room, there was enough talent assembled to put on three Westercons with enough left over to put on a Worldcon. Fandom has many deficiencies and to even list a few would be heartbreaking, but no one can deny that it has many delightful, warm, human, talented persons. And so in rapid order, I was able to round up for the first item of the program Ackerman, A. M. MacDermott (who in spite of ill health was wonderful), Sam Russell, J. Shepard Mertz (who was to be the star of the panel), Al Lewis (West Coast) who substituted for Bruce Pelz when the latter's voice gave out and Mike McInerney. I realized that a panel of this caliber needed a moderator of peerless objectivity and merciless honesty, namely myself.

A number of other people were approached, and for one reason or another, bugged out. No blame should be placed on such people because they are honest and in a situation like this, someone forced to do something he resents will certainly not be at his best. Truly, the response was wonderful; some of those who volunteered were not called because of lack of time. Dennis Smith was informed as to what the program would consist of, and he rather happily acquiesced.

The parties continued until the early hours. On the whole, the attendees were extremely well-behaved, and only on the noise-level could anyone possibly complain. To watch the liquor flow, one would think that fans believe happiness is to be found in a bottle, and can be poured out with liquid measure. If happiness is truly in a bottle, there were a lot of people in paradise during the convention. At about this time, Harlan Ellison arrived with friends, male and female; he made a point, rather pointedly, to all and sundry, that his third marriage had lasted forty-five days.

After a few hours of sleep and a late breakfast with Alva Rogers and Al Lewis, I looked over the Stardust Room and discovered that there were no chairs for the audience; no microphone, table or chairs for the panel. In other words, chaos. Being a nervous, excitable type even in times of calm, I was about to go berserk. And so to find Dennis Smith and see if it was possible to rescue the incompetent from their own incompetency. When I found him, Dennis was looking for the catering manager but finally managed to find the head of the motel. I said: "Tell him the situation, Dennis!" Smith, in his typical incoherent manner did get the substance of the situation across.

The manager opened up his daily schedule and said, "It says here, Stardust Room for the Westercon, and that is what you have."

"But-t-t-t I told..."

I could see the whole sad story unfolding before my eyes. I said: "Pardon me, sir but there's evidently been a mix-up somewhere; there are about two hundred people waiting for the program to begin--if we could get some

tables, chairs and microphones, it would be appreciated."

"I wish that you had contacted me earlier; I've only one man, Mike, available right now."

"Fine. If Mike can get the microphones and tables set up, I'll get some fellows and we'll get the chairs set up."

Things went well, and at about 1:30, the panel was ready to begin.

The panel's topic was, technically, "old fandom versus new fandom"; not in the sense of a battle, but rather the attraction fandom held for each individual: What had brought him into fandom? What did it offer him? Where, to his way of thinking did it fail? Would he enter fandom again? And so on.

I started off with Forrest J. Ackerman, introducing him as "a man who has done a lot to and for fandom." The audience laughed and we were on our way. FJA related his experiences as a letter hack in the late '20s and early '30s; how he had helped with The Time Traveler; Ackerman is an effective speaker and always adds to a program. Al Lewis followed, saying that he had entered fandom in 1950 because of his science fiction reading... A typical fannish career...related in the forceful and dynamic Lewis manner. A. M. MacDermott related how he would walk miles to save a few pennies so he could buy second-hand magazines, and how he thought he was the only person--this was during the pre-Weird Tales period--in the United States interested in stf. Someone should encourage MacDermott to write down his experiences; he has a lot to say, and he says it well. Mike McInerney then told how he had been in fandom for five years, had made many friends and thoroughly enjoyed the many interesting people he'd met.



I made a special dispensation to the next speaker, Sam Russell, that he could talk about Francis Towner Laney; then I did the unforgivable: I made all the comments about Laney that he intended to make. Sam noted this and the audience laughed. Russell noted that Laney was much too ideal-

istic for his own good, and in many cases criticized fans for doing the very things he himself did.

J. Shepard Mertz was the youngest of those on the panel but was probably the best. He made the most truthful statement of the XIXth Westercon: "You older fans seem to form cliques." It was pointed out to the audience that there was a need for new people in fandom, and that fandom's in-groupishness tends to scare off potential new-comers. Mertz went on from strength to strength on the basis of this simple truth. Amazing. I only wish my memory were better so I could repeat more of what he said.

There were a number of questions, answers and comments from the audience. Some good, some bad and many pointless. Harlan Ellison, for example, berated fans for being old fashioned, for being proud of not owning TV sets, for dressing in 1941 suits and so on.

I couldn't resist the opportunity; I said, "Well, Harlan, at least they don't dress like fairies."

The panel could have gone on for another hour without faltering; but other commitments pressed...

The audience was given a break before a pitiful excuse of an auction was held; Harlan Ellison was auctioneer... anyone who has seen the passion and verve with which he auctions, knows that Ellison could sell snow to Eskimos and leave them thinking they had gotten a bargain. The auction materials consisted of a small pile of pulp magazines, a large box of fanzines and some paperbacks. Harlan took one look and said, "You must be kidding." I replied, "If I am, tell me the joke so I can enjoy it too." Fortunately, Ben Stark took pity on the committee and donated a fair amount of paperbacks.

At about this time, in my estimation, the con committee had a score of minus five on a scale of zero to one hundred...

Alva Rogers gave a talk dealing with Requiem For Astounding and the recent article in Habbakkuk on Charles Schneeman. Rogers had thought he would only talk for about ten minutes, but he went on for roughly half an hour; questions from the audience, naturally.

Ted White, who was leading the New York contingent in what is supposed to be a yearly pilgrimage to the West Coast, was next; he spoke on the writer in New York City. He admitted that it was not absolutely necessary for a writer to live in NYC, but it is helpful since so much of the publishing activity of the United States is quartered there.

White then related his experiences as a writer and editor; he has courage and lays his cards on the line. Refreshing. Those who missed his talk, missed one of the better items on the program.

The afternoon program ended, and on the whole had worked out better than anyone had a right to expect. A number of people congratulated me on having shaped up an effective program on such short notice. I feel that the participants deserve all the praise, and I thank them in print as I thanked them in public.

At dinner, Forrest J. Ackerman was at my right, and A. E. van Vogt, who could only stay one day, was at my left. Van Vogt related some of his writing experiences and was charming--as was his wife. I related some of the events that occurred at the Lunacon, and stated that Asimov had not received anything from the serialization of Fantastic Voyage in The Saturday Evening Post. Ackerman couldn't believe this and I explained that Asimov had said this publicly during a speech on his favorite subject--himself. "And you know," I said, "Fantastic Voyage wasn't nearly as good as that story in the Gersback Wonder, though it reminds me of it greatly."

Ackerman replied: "You mean 'A World Unseen'? It's a funny thing, but _____ months ago, Bixby borrowed..."

I don't think it's necessary for me to go on, dear reader; you fill in the story yourself...

The costume ball that night was not handled by me; my guidance of events

ended at 5:00, contrary to the implication in Ratatosk 36. I did, however, help Lois Lavender (My God, what a beautiful girl!) and Luise Petti sell some raffle tickets for an Emsch painting which, so-help-me, Harlan Ellison won on a 14¢ ticket--he didn't have two bits to pay the regulation price at the time. The raffle, incidentally, was held to help the LASFS bidding fund.

At the banquet Sunday, toastmaster Theodore Sturgeon started things off by awarding the "Invisible Little Man" award to Cordwainer Smith.

Fan Guest of Honor, John Trimble, then gave a most moving talk: a marvelous tribute to his wife, Bjo.

The main event was, of course, a speech by that complex character, Harlan Ellison; Ellison was fittingly introduced by Ted Sturgeon; Ted spoke of Harlan's enormous talent and generosity, citing events from his life.

During the course of his remarks, Ellison related how the "Milford Mafia" (Fred Pohl's term, not mine) had put him down a decade ago, and how he went back last year and wrote "'Repent, Harlequin!' Said The Ticktockman" only to have Damon Knight and his coterie put him down again. But now Knight would have to put "Repent, Harlequin!" into an anthology since it has been voted a Nebula award by the SFWA. Harlan rejoiced in an honest hatred, and many rejoiced with him. He then got into the main portion of his speech, saying that science fiction didn't need to seek acceptance any longer; it has been accepted by the movie, television, book and magazine people; and now was the time to reap the rewards of sf's long apprenticeship in the pulps. No words of mine could even begin to give you a hint of the effect Harlan's speech had on the audience; he recieved a standing ovation from most of the crowd upon concluding.

The second pilot film of the new TV series, Star Trek, was shown; it was almost first-rate. Note that I said almost...the production values (acting, sets, models etc.) were very good but the ideas were little improved over the average mundane movies or TV shows. According to Earl Kemp, the first pilot was really way out in its originality. Well, I disagree with a lot of Kemp's ideas, but I can't really judge something I haven't seen.

The parties that night in the Berkeley and LA suites were excellent and well-behaved. But this didn't stop the police from coming in at about 2:30; the hotel management stated that a guest had called the police because of the noise...

The parties were effectively squelched, although a fair number of party goers continued their activities in Poul Anderson's room.

The election for the site of the XXth Westercon was a classic example of fannish absurdity. Burlingame, Berkeley and Los Angeles were competing; all three had given good parties and had made effective presentations. In fact, someone in the audience moaned that it was too bad that there couldn't be three Westercons in '67. Burlingame and Berkeley killed each other off, and LA won in a walk.

In a way this is a sad thing: it means that northern California hasn't had a seperate Westercon since 1963, and probably won't have one until 1969. It may well be necessary to have two Westercons; one for the southern part of the state and another for the northern portion.

At about this time, there was some commotion over people being overcharged for their rooms. Luckily, Dennis Smith had the promised room rates down in writing, and the motel grudgingly refunded the outrages. A rumor circulated that the manager was going to talk to the assembled audience but he never showed; the situation was settled without a major confrontation.

The last formal item of the Westercon was a panel moderated by Harlan Ellison (and who, in my opinion, did a much finer job as a moderator than I did) dealing with his Doubleday anthology, Dangerous Visions. The panel included Theodore Sturgeon, Philip Jose Farmer, Larry Niven, Ted White, Poul Anderson and Norman Spinrad. Ellison explained that the authors were asked to submit stories that were too "advanced" in concept or style or that dealt with some social taboo to be published in the regular markets. Ellison said that he had turned all the money from the book back to the authors and that there would be no paperback edition for at least two years. There was a lot of talk about unwritten stories and why an author would be foolish to write on certain topics. I was unable to hear the entire discussion, but from the portion I did hear, it was apparent that Ellison was again in his glory.

During the question and answer period, I made the point that many of the older stories were cornball not because their authors lacked ability but because of the pulp strictures enforced by the editors and publishers. I used Edmond Hamilton's "What's It Like Out There?" as an example; the story appeared in the December, '52 issue of Thrilling Wonder Stories but according to Seekers of Tomorrow, it was written in 1933. Therefore, it had taken almost twenty years for the story to find a home...

The convention was over and I again traveled to the Kemp home; we made some long distance phone calls to Jon and Joni Stopa who were having their annual 4th of July picnic. That evening, I left with Charles Ammann for Los Angeles to visit my brother in Lancaster. What little energy I had left was swiftly dissipated by his children who, like kids everywhere, want to play from morning to night.

The airline strike caught me without a reservation, and I was forced to take a bus back to Chicago-Milwaukee. This, needless to say, strengthened my belief that airplanes are the only way for civilized men to travel. Since I had made a similar trip in 1947, I could say that in nineteen years the only improvement is that the buses now have toilets. Regarding restaurants and waiting rooms, there has been a definite retrogression. And to put the icing on the cake, in none of the more than two dozen stops made during the trip did I find a single science fiction magazine on sale.

No, not one!

Ed Wood

"Conversations are held by the English and the French; Talk is done by the Irish, the Jews and children; Discussions are the province of Italians, professional men and men; Monologues are the property of cab drivers, politicians, John W. Campbell and women; Dialogues are held by actors and lovers; Remarks are made by farmers, strangers and soldiers; Repartee is created by authors, wits and children."

--William Rotsler, Quotebook II

andrew.
offutt



A REPLY TO ROBERT BLOCH

i read your open letter in Nyarlathotep 3, overlooking George Progress and your occluded coroner as well as i could. i wish Ben had printed the letter rather than the envelope.

Yeah, you sure fooled me. i was expecting something sensational, perhaps even a little dirty! The devil you say!

Stepping into a nearby bank, i stealed myself to meet your challenge with my usual intrepidation, writing about every suggestion you subjected, just to prove how socially occidented i am. i decided that as soon as i'd done that, i'd rip off a few words such as earlbergey and gafiato and rick-sneary and dero and then flip the cap off a jug of xeno to prove my worthiness.

Then i read the suggested titles.

Well, good grief, theres nothing chatty or controversial about these!

RELIGION:
IS JOHN W. CAMPBELL DEAD?

Any fool knows that JWC was killed in 1933 in an astounding explosion in a dowsing-rod manufactory at 6061 Dean Drive, Chicago, Ill. Any fool--i mean "intellectually disadvantaged citizen"--knows that Lang T. Darrelgart and Anna Logarithm have edited his magazine, E=mcSquares, ever since. And i wouldnt needle RANDALL GARRETT in that vein, if i were you. Take from his obvious pseudonym the ancient occult letters RA-NDG-RETT and what do you have left? "ALL ART"! Surely anyone whose real name is that is analogous to god.

PSYCHIATRY:

WAS JOHN BIRCH REALLY A MUTANT?

Oh, come on. This query is purely academic to those of us who read his stirring biography, The Thousand Nights' Entertainment (a very blue book, incidentally), and saw the film version, retitled Psycho. i would even offer to bet with you, but i have been told that you, robert, welch!

RACE:

SHOULD CIVIL RIGHTS BE EXTENDED TO THE NFFF:

Look now, get serious. Hassan Ben Solon is a nice guy, and as Ev Dirksen says, some of my best friends are solons. But i certainly wouldnt want my sister to marry one!

CAMP:

THE TRITONIAN RING:

Ever since George O. Smith penned his mortal line, "Lyon Sprague decamped with alacrity", i have assumed he had a--pardon the expression--patent on the subject. Besides, i understand that since returning from his vacation to his old fraternity, Mu Mu Mu, the glory that was deCamp has grown in all directions. He is now, i am told, a colossal bronze god, and thats high camp.

i avoid, even as you do, the likes of George Prograss and Henry Plague.

FOLKSINGING:

FLENTS vs. SLEEPWELLS:

Since learning that the white dinner jacket and moustache worn by one of the 'con guests were really an anti-sonic field projector and its control device, tuning out all save the word-combination "Hugo+Heinlein 1241C", i have worn a white d. j. and kept my ears well-stuffed with Nash Cotton.

Now i am the happiest kid on the bloch.

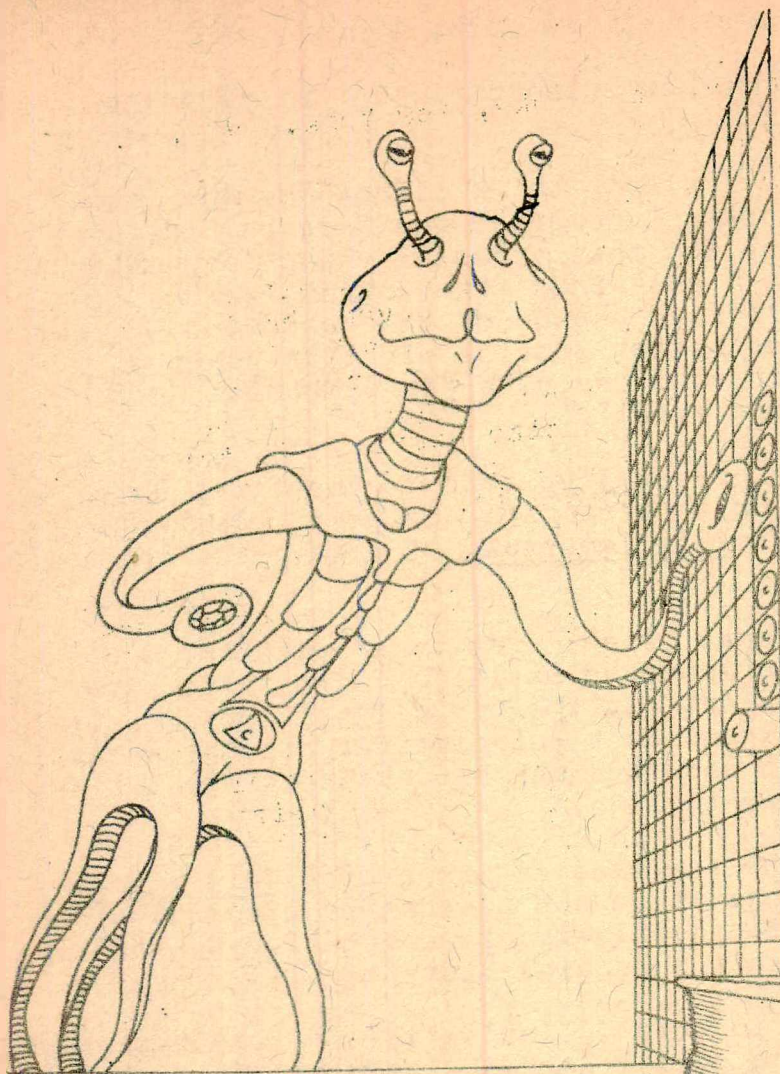
andrew of butt

I have no taste for fancy perversion; I'll settle for standard deviation.--FM

A LIMERICK

by Phyllis Eisenstein

A hexapus from outer space,
Though imaginative for his race,
Said, "Bipedal motion?
Ridiculous notion!
'Twill never become commonplace!"



Alexei
Panshin:

KASHA

This column is intended to be the first in a series of book reviews that will appear regularly in Nyarlathotep, the regularity depending on Ben Solon's licking the secret of mimeography. Each column will contain discussions of two, three or four works of fiction. The choice of books will be eccentric. They will be science fiction for the most part, but not necessarily science fiction. They will be new for the most part, but not necessarily new. They will be adult for the most part, but not necessarily adult. Feel no surprise if you see a review of Louise Fitzhugh's Harriet the Spy, John D. MacDonald's End of the Tiger or Victor Appleton's Tom Swift and His Flying Lab--I have every intention of talking about them or others like them, particularly if the supply of new and interesting adult science fiction runs thin. I intend to state my likes and dislikes as clearly as possible, and do my best to state the reasons for my feelings. My purposes, and I say it unashamedly because I enjoy both science fiction and reading and general, are serious and constructive. I will do my best along the way to be interesting and entertaining. And, from those who share my predilections but disagree with my conclusions, I welcome whatever reasoned argument and comment comes forth. Now pardon me while I sharpen my knife. I have work to do.

THIS IMMORTAL, by Roger Zelazny; Ace Books, New York, 1966, \$.40

This year I've probably read more new science fiction stories than in any year in the past seven or eight.

There is good reason for this: I didn't think either "He Who Shapes" or "Repent Harlequin!" Said the Ticktockman" deserved the Science Fiction Writers of America Nebula Awards they won this year. I voted for best-novel because I had read the nominees, but I abstained from voting for the best short fiction awards because I hadn't read enough of the nominated stories to make an honest vote. I'd like to see better stories win this year, so I am reading the magazines regularly again so I can vote for something better. I've even made a couple of nominations myself.

Of all the many science fiction novels I've read in the first seven months of this year, the only one I found entertaining enough to deserve a Nebula Award nomination was Zelazny's This Immortal. I take pride in having nominated the book. But...

Let's start with a quote from James Blish: "He began with three apparently natural gifts: a free, witty, unmannered style; an almost frighteningly fertile imagination; and a special talent for the visualization of physical detail. Any one of these gifts in excess in a young writer can prove fatal, since they can be and often have been used to mask a substitute for the essential construction problems of story-telling."

There you have both what is right and what is wrong with This Immortal. It is a charming, witty, stylish, imaginative and altogether original piece of work. It has urbane dialogue, a thoroughly-imagined background, striking and individual characters. And it isn't a genuine story at all.

Before we go on to examine this in detail, let's fill in some background. The book was originally published as a serial in F&SF last fall in a shorter version under the title "...And Call Me Conrad", which I take to be Zelazny's own choice. This Immortal, the Ace Book version, is a restoration of Zelazny's original manuscript. The new title is inane, left-footed and dull but its obvious advantage is that it is a "science fiction" title, where the original title is not. You would have thought that they would at least have called it This Bright Immortal, and I'm just a little surprised that they didn't call it One Against Vega:

It is many years since Earth was ruined by atomic war. The majority of Earthmen live as resident aliens on the various planets of the Vegan Combine and run Earth via an absentee government. In times past the Vegans have bought parts of Earth to use as resorts, but a terrorist campaign culminating in the destruction of the Earthgov Realty Company offices on Madagascar has brought things to a long-standing impasse.

The narrator is Conrad Nomikos, large, ugly, gimp-legged and a mutant who has lived for several hundred years with the prospect of who knows how much more. At one time he was "Karaghiosis", leader of the terrorist campaign to keep the Vegans off Earth, but in more recent times he has become disillusioned with terror as an instrument and is doubtful that those Earthmen off Earth will ever actually return home. At present he is Commissioner of Arts, Monuments and Archives for the planet Earth under his current identity.

The meat of the book concerns a visit to Earth by a Vegan journalist, Cort Myshtigo. Nomikos is assigned to give him a guided tour of the planet. The "Radpol", the terrorists, take his coming as a sign of a new Vegan attempt to move in on Earth, and consequently attempt to assassinate him. Nomikos is afraid of the consequences of his death, for Myshtigo is an important man with even more important connections, and accordingly attempts to keep him alive.

In actuality, the Vegans have traded citizenship to the Earthmen among them for full rights to Earth. They really have no interest in the planet for themselves, and Myshtigo's real purpose on Earth is to find a trustee for the planet: he is checking out the most likely candidate, who is, of course, Nomikos.

Now, the only way this would make a story is if we were given this information at the beginning of the book so that Nomikos would, in effect, be proving himself before our eyes. But, because Nomikos cannot know he is on trial if there is to be a story, this is impossible: Nomikos is the narrator and knows all that is to be told. Instead we get the information at the end of the story, and it provides a cap for the material, but does not shape it.

The nearest thing we do have to a story here is the attempt to kill Myshtigo, and that is a false story line predicated on a misunderstanding that could be cleared up at any time with one word from Myshtigo. This apparent issue is no genuine issue at all.

But we most certainly do get the impression of a story. Why? How? The answer is by one of the god-damnedest set of devices: inventions, subterfuges and outright lies you've ever seen.

The book is 174 pages long. If you have any clear idea of the situation, the background, what the hell is really going on, in the first forty or forty-five pages, you are amazing. Bit by bit, Zelazny reveals his background and his characters, and they are so well-realized, so detailed, so believable and it is so much effort and so much fun to fit all the pieces together, that we are kept interested, even fascinated, and we don't realize that nothing is really happening.

Then we are given action compounded on action. This doesn't advance the situation, but it keeps our attention, and again we don't realize that we are being led down the garden path. We are given a voodoo ceremony; a dismantling of the Great Pyramid; fights with a whole series of monsters--a killer robot, a boadile, a giant albino Mongoloid who lives on blood, and the Black Beast of Thessaly; a dash of telepathy; the arbitrary death of Nomikos' wife in an earthquake; her arbitrary resurrection, elephant gun in hand, in time to kill the Black Beast; a duel; a giant immortal dog; a meeting with Nomikos' old old son on the Acropolis; and a good deal more. This is inventive. Most of it is good; much of it excellent. Almost all of it is irrelevant.

Finally, Zelazny lies. On the second and third pages of narrative, we get the following: "In attempting to reconstruct the affairs of these past six months, I realize now that as we willed walls of passion around our October and the isle of Kos, the Earth had already fallen into the hands of those powers which smash all Octobers. Marshaled from within and without, the forces of final disruption were even then goose-stepping amidst the ruins--faceless, ineluctable, arms upraised. Cort Myshtigo had landed at Port-au-Prince in the antique Sol-Bus Nine, which had borne him in from Titan along

with a load of shirts and shoes, underwear, socks, assorted wines, medical supplies and the latest tapes from civilization. A wealthy and influential galacto-journalist, he. Just how wealthy, we were not to learn for many weeks; just how influential, I found out only five days ago." That isn't just misleading. That paragraph is a lie. The forces of final disruption are not goose-stepping anywhere and Myshtigo is not a goose-stepper.

I envy Zelazny. He is a tremendously gifted writer. He has a free, witty, unmannered style, an almost frighteningly fertile imagination, and a special talent for the visualization of physical detail. I recommend This Immortal wholeheartedly. If you haven't yet read it, I'm sure you'll enjoy it. I hope at the same time, however, that Zelazny doesn't continue to substitute his gifts for genuine plotting. On the evidence of This Immortal, it is something he needs to learn.

The quote from James Blish, by the way, that I used at the beginning of this discussion and applied in the last paragraph was written in 1952 about Jack Vance. Though he doesn't always apply his knowledge, Vance has learned how to plot. I hope Zelazny will follow him in this.

THE WITCHES OF KARRES, by James H. Schmitz; Chilton Books, Philadelphia, 1966
\$4.95

Every so often somebody writes a story that is so basic, so clever, so witty, so brilliant, so warm, so touching, so pleasing or so profitable that pressure is immediately brought to bear on the author to write a sequel. This, if you are curious, is the raison d'etre for Return To Peyton Place--Grace Metalious wrote the book under advice and pressure, not of her own accord. For good reasons--money, most usually--writers do bow to pressure and write sequels, but--pace, Tom Wolfe--these Returns-to-This-Place-and-That are seldom, if ever, the equal of their models, seldom, if ever, anything but disappointments to those who have waited for them most eagerly.

There are good reasons for this, too. If the original story was solidly constructed, it posed a problem for its characters and resolved it. The author said what he had to say the first time around, which means he left nothing on which to base a new story, and the better the first story was, the



more likely this is to be true. The author of a sequel has a choice: he can put his characters in a new situation, which most often does not display them to the same advantage as the original, or he can put them back in the same situation and have them perform their tricks all over again, which most often is a bore for the writer and a bore for those of his readers who appreciate variety. The first of these, I think, is the reason that Pauline Ashwell's "The Lost Kafoozalum" was nowhere close to being the equal of "Unwillingly to School". The second is the reason that almost any series--The Bureau of Slick Tricks, for instance--quickly begins to pall: you know the trick by heart and all you can say is, "Here comes that damned old rabbit again."

Let us be fair and say right away that there may be characters like Sherlock Holmes that we can stand to see doing the same sort of thing again and again, and there are some few story worlds with enough room built into them for more than one story to fit comfortably. But this isn't true in most cases. Harper Lee had her say in To Kill A Mockingbird. A Return To Kill A Mockingbird or a Daughter Of To Kill A Mockingbird would be pointless. Worse, it would be point-destroying, compromising the worth of what was previously both sufficient and good.

In the December, 1949 issue of Astounding there was an altogether delightful story called "The Witches of Karres", by James H. Schmitz. I've liked it from the first time I read it. The charming first sentence sets the tone: "It was around the hub of the evening on the planet of Porluma when Captain Pausert, commercial traveler from the Republic of Nikkeldepain, met the first of the witches of Karres." I don't know the opening sentences of many stories, but I've known that one for fifteen years.

Surprisingly for Schmitz, whose interests have always been in Galaxy-wide, van Vogtian complication, the plot and scale of the story were simple, clear and almost homey. Though the background of the story was given as being large enough to hold an interstellar Empire, a Regency, a Republic, a Prohibited Planet and the implication of a good bit more, this was really a comfortable backyard sort of universe in which a stiff, but friendly young hero--the sort of fellow the artist would imagine and draw wearing a bristly British mustache--could buy three misplaced little slave girls and have them turn out to be the offspring of his long-lost great-uncle Threbus. Being friendly, he would take the strays home, and in the process lose just enough of his stiffness (though not so much as to change his essential nature) for the straitlaced Republic of Nikkeldepain to seem less attractive than it formerly did.

In August, 1966, we have not a story called "The Witches of Karres", but a novel with the same title. That one story we had for seventeen years was enough by itself to keep me reading James Schmitz, and if I had ever had to nominate a story by Schmitz to go on an all-time great list of science fiction, it would have been that one, untypical though it was of his work. If I had ever had to nominate a story that could not stand further tinkering, it would have been that one. How would one, could one, make a novel of "The Witches of Karres"? I didn't think it could be done, and knowing the novel was coming, I waited, curious and apprehensive.

The Witches of Karres is not delightful. The Witches of Karres is not even a good novel.

The first thirty-six pages of the novel are, with only slight changes, the original story. The same comfortable warmth, the same backyard-sized

universe, the same three little witches, the same slightly out-to-lunch but curiously effective hero.

After that, everything changes. We get plots and spies and counter spies; energy-entities; mad robots trying to take over the universe; the robot's former masters from another dimension who, as soon as the robot is disposed of, start trying to take over the universe; evil worm-creatures; and super-pirates; all of these mixed together until there is no telling what is going on, or caring. We get dues ex machina on top of dues ex machina. The ship our hero runs, in the first pages healthy enough to win races right and left, suddenly develops lung trouble and must be sent to a sanitarium. The "Sheewash Drive", which, in the early pages, run by three little witches for thirty seconds takes the ship 1/26th of a light year, suddenly, run by one witch for two minutes, takes the same ship "back into the Empire, then all the way through it and out the other side" to latitudes no Nikkeldepainan had visited in a hundred years. We get beautiful, meaningless magic phrases like "relling the vatch"--e.g. "You're very good on klatha locks. A valuable quality in many circumstances... Then, of course, you're a vatch-handler. A natural quality again, though a quite unusual one." And, most important, our hero, once uniquely and unmistakably himself, has been changed into nothing more than a standard, psionically-gifted adventure-surviving cardboard figure.

The original story was a jolly little warm-hearted story about people. The novel substitutes complications for people, and gets lost. H. G. Wells once said, "Nothing remains interesting where anything may happen," and precisely because there isn't anything that couldn't happen in The Witches of Karres, I found the novel a bore. If it had been an ordinary Ace book for which I had paid forty cents, I would have never finished the story.

Go back and look up the original in the December 1949 issue of Astounding, or read it in The Astounding Science Fiction Anthology, or, though there have been changes and not for the better, read the first two chapters of the novel. I think you might enjoy that.

And if the day ever comes when you write a basic, clever, witty, brilliant, warm, touching, pleasing and profitable story, please consider very carefully before you go back and tell people what happened afterwards. Let "and they lived happily ever after" be enough.

THE JUDGEMENT OF EVE, A Novel of Human Inquiry, by Edgar Pangborn; Simon and Schuster, New York, 1966, \$3.95

Some months ago I was criticised in a fan magazine letter column for having given away one of the plot surprises of The Sirens of Titan, a novel published seven years ago. (In case any of you haven't read the book--which I recommend to you--and missed my transgression as well, what I said was that in this story all human history turns out to have been for the purpose of getting a small repair part to a robot traveling from one end of the universe to the other to deliver a message that reads, in its entirety, "Greetings".) The writer of the letter felt that my letting the cat out of the bag might spoil the impact of the book for some people and thought that I had shown either gross carelessness or extremely bad judgement. It wasn't carelessness--I knew quite well what I was saying and I didn't give a damn--so if I did make a mistake it was through bad judgement.

I realize that some people can't reread a book because they know how it comes out and the story no longer holds suspense for them. I always wonder how they can stand to listen to a piece of music twice. To me, stories are like music: I'm interested in their sound, their unity, and how they get where they are going. It has never particularly bothered me to know how a story ends. In fact, with some stories--particularly some mysteries--I've preferred to know the ending so I can stop worrying about it and concentrate my attention on how the author gets to the ending.

The reason that I say all this is the accuracy of the title of Pangborn's novel. The central figure of the novel is a girl named Eve and the crux of the story is a choice she has to make. It is the one excuse the novel has for being, and the nature of the choice is the focus of suspense. I intend to have the decision over, so if you are bothered by that sort of thing and intend to read the book, you'd best stop reading now.

The time of the story is about the year 2000, twenty-five years after an atomic war that, coupled with plagues and the general inability of people to cope with the situation, has left the United States sparsely populated. Is this an earlier state of the same world we saw in Davy?--possibly.

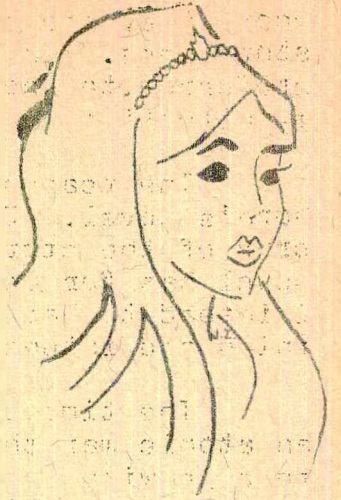
A beautiful twenty-eight year-old girl--Eve--lives in isolation with her blind mother in what was once East Redfield, Massachusetts. She has read widely but has never seen a man. Then, one night, three turn up together. One, Claudius, is a one-time concert violinist of international reputation in his early fifties. He has a damaged arm and can no longer play. He is educated, perceptive and sure of who he is. If you want, his personality has been firmly set during the last twenty-five years, which he has spent in wandering. The other two are younger and less well-formed. One, Kenneth, is near-sighted, handsome and charming. The other, Ethan, is ignorant, but very large and very strong. The girl is attracted to an educated mind, to charm, and to strength. Faced with all three at once, she is overwhelmed and confused. Consequently, she takes a suggestion from her mother and a leaf from Grimm and sends the three away for the summer while she sorts out her emotions. The three are to return in October, tell her what love is, and then she will render her decision.

This is a very difficult sort of business to bring off, and you don't ordinarily find anything like it in science fiction. It is all delicate shadings of character and emotion and for the most part Pangborn hits the notes he aims for. The girl's excitement, delight, joy when the three arrive is nicely delineated, the sort of effect that is completely foreign to a novel of The Witches of Karres variety. Pangborn's writing is sensitive and delicate and I (who, you will recall, likes the way books get where they are going) would recommend The Judgement of Eve for the sake of Pangborn's prose alone. However, I think I should say that on other counts I find this a most irritating book, and so, I think, will many other readers.

For one thing, the story is not just told--it is told from what is given as a far future point of view. In those times this story is considered one with considerable significance. It is a historically based legend that has been told and interpreted and retold for at least several hundred years. In the twenty-fifth century it was evidently presented as a knightly quest type story. In the twenty-sixth century as allegory. One takes the present version as a twenty-seventh century version that combines quest and allegory in small measure, but is mainly interested in telling what actually happened. Now this is a definite promise. Having gone to this trouble, Pangborn owes

us the significance that this far future viewpoint implies the story holds. No story is going to be told and retold for several hundred years if it is not deeply meaningful to a large number of people. I may be wrong, but I just do not believe that this promised significance and common meaning is present in the book. And part of the trouble is that the ending of the story is not explicit. Part of the trouble...not all.

On page 78, the old lady, Eve's mother, says, "I wonder, haven't people always lived in a legend? They write it themselves. Sometimes they've made it a ghastly story, sometimes dull, sometimes lovely. Sometimes like poor writers or beginners, they're haunted by the notion that stories must to have endings." I have no hesitation in saying that this is Pangborn speaking for himself, consciously driving home the point that this is a legend and consciously preparing us for the close of the book. The trouble is that this statement isn't true; it is doubly untrue. If lives are stories, they do have endings--if nothing else, people die, and that is an ending, at least as far as living people are concerned. Secondly, it is not just poor writers or beginners who are haunted by the notion that stories must have endings. Books are composed of a finite number of pages--they have to be closed somewhere, and that closing is an ending. How the story ends is up to the writer, but stories do end. What Pangborn is doing is trying to justify the fact that he doesn't tell us what Eve's judgement is. And I don't think his justification is really applicable.



When the three men return at the end of the summer, they each tell Eve what has happened to them, some of which we have seen. What has happened struck me in reading as interesting but not significant in any overwhelming sense, but here it is presented as though it were. Then:

Eve stood in the candlelight with her glass of golden wine and said, "As a last small pleasure before I tell you my decision--and I will, I will, that is if all of you still love me--let's drink to every kind of waking!"

All of those who told the legend in the past and sometimes wrote it down were agreed in saying the ending of it was happy... And they say that after Eve announced her judgement there was no heart-burning or jealousy--oh, that's good also, and may even be true, though not everyone would necessarily swear to it on the Unabridged.

...And there began a marriage which endured with as much happiness as can be expected when the contestants are well matched and the qualities of laughter and kindness never too long forgotten. Forever afterward is considerably too long for human patience; besides, it brings up the touchy question of human mortality. But this marriage did endure until Eve herself, lovely Eve with the blue-green eyes, grew old and died...

As for the ending of it, finding your own answer is simply what Claudius would have called a necessary part of the human condition.

In other words, Pangborn does end the story. He simply evades telling us directly what the ending is. He leaves it up to us to work out, do let's

try:

Within the terms of the story, all three contestants are attractive to Eve and are relatively decent human beings. Claudius, perhaps because he is older, is a bit more decent, but not significantly so. In terms of story construction, if the author wanted us definitely to put our money and our sympathy on one of the three, he could easily have done it. I don't think he does. This is clearly not a case, as in the Grimm fairy tale, of virtue being rewarded and evil being punished. Pangborn spends about an equal amount of time with each of the three and each acts according to his nature in his own relatively decent way. One of the reasons I fail to see great significance in the summer experiences of the three is that they all act so much in accordance with their natures that no factors seem greatly changed when they return. The factors in the human equation are about what they were back in May in the early pages of the book. So Pangborn gives us no real help in making a decision.

Does he mean this to be a Lady or Tiger? problem for us? Whichever one of the three we endorse as Eve's choice reveals something about ourselves. But while my favorite of the three is Claudius, I cannot say that this would be Eve's choice. Besides, in the terms of the story, this sort of decision on our part is impossible. As readers of a twenty-seventh century version of an old, old legend, presumably we know quite well how it all comes out.

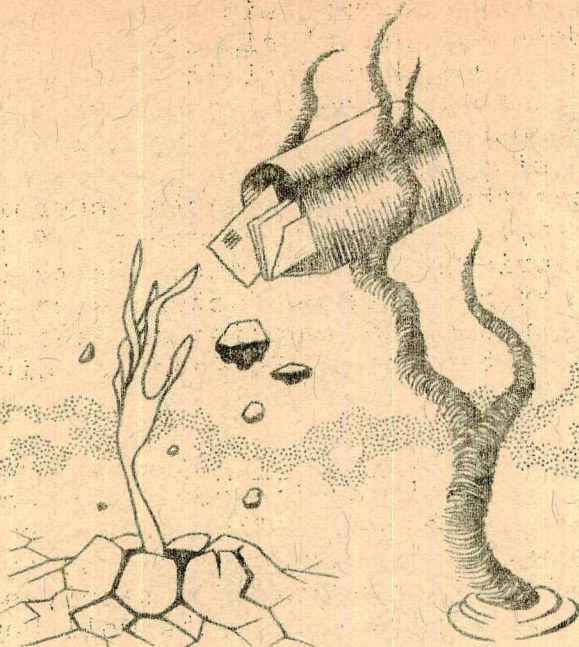
So, we're left with one more possibility, that she takes all three. This is perfectly compatible with the final paragraphs that Pangborn writes. It isn't satisfactory for a number of reasons, however. First, she might have taken all three of them in May and the difference of the summer makes no difference. Second, this is not a world in which breeding populations are so extremely slim that this 3-to-1 marriage makes sense (as it does, perhaps, in Pangborn's first novel, West of the Sun), so there is no justification for it in practical terms. Third, Eve is given as the product of her mother's influence and her reading, and neither of these has been given as anything that would cause her to choose more than one husband or to see this as desirable. Fourth, throughout we have been led to expect a choice of one and led to think from things that Eve says that she plans to choose one. Fifth if this is the ending, where is the promised significance in the girl choosing all three? Where is the great meaning that would cause the story to be repeated for hundreds of years? Nevertheless, in spite of all these objections, I suspect that this is Pangborn's intended ending, and the reason that I suspect this is so is the lack of penny-weighting in clear favor of any one of the three and the lack of clarity in the ending.

I respect Pangborn as an intelligent man and as a particularly talented writer and this causes me to question this book and my interpretation of it more closely than I would for something from a less intelligent and less talented man. He says his story has significance. I don't see it and I don't think it is there. I see some good writing, but that is all. I wish I did see more.

Alexei Panshin

THE PASSIONATE BUTTERFLY
TO HIS HESITANT LOVE
Flanders Modrian

O lovely one of fragile beauty made,
In a week, mayhap two, thou wilt be dead.
O loved one, do not deny me now!
Yield up to me thy maidenhead!



quagmire

Roy Tackett, 915 Green Valley Rd NW, Albuquerque, N.M. 87107

Ben:

Pickering's concept of science fiction is not uncommon, particularly among younger fan and fandoms. (Goddamit, I HATE the terms "fan" and/or "fandom" in reference to stfnists and the assorted hangers-on. The terms are too general. Quick, Solon, think up a new word.) In Japanese stf circels, for example, all is much seriousness and science fiction is looked on almost as holy writ. (Two dozen Japanese stfnists will now refute that statement.) Likewise, Gerfandom is overly loaded with seriousness. But then almost anything German is overloaded with seriousness. It is only in the long established Anglo-American stf circels that one finds great gobs of faanish foolishness. And even we weren't that way thirty years ago.

Okay, so the fanzines and the fan clubs and the fancons are loaded with faannishness. But what Pickering and the other critics fail to see is that there is also a tremendous amount of good, solid stfictional criticism, analysis and discussion mixed in with it. Sure. Fannishness is the frosting on the cake. At a con, for instance, there is much guzzling and wenching and chasing around. And talk. Great Klono, there is talk. And 50% of it is stf discussion. A pox, I say, on anti-fannishness.

That a Chicago firm should be doubtful as to the ability of a London firm to reply in Anglais comes as no surprise to this part of the country. New Mexico residents, businesses, government facilities, et cetera, are constantly receiving inquiries about passport regulations, tariffs and the like, and notices that firms in the east do not do business outside the United States. Local sport is that when some iggurant lowlander purchases a gift for the folks at home and inquires about the payment of the duty on it--we let him.

Dean Natkin's remarks about "teach-ins" (whateverthehell that means), and professorial mandarins and the sheep-like tendencies of the New Left (and they are, egad, as sheeplike as their antagonists on the opposite side of the

Roy Tackett, concl.:

coin) struck a most responsive chord. Not completely so, mind you, for there are things about which I would take umbrage, but on the whole, I admire Natkin's comments. I would point out, though, that free speech does need defending at present. The conservative editor of the Albuquerque Journal gives frequent indication that he favors curbing the freedom of speech as pertains to certain portions of the population.

("Conservative" and "liberal" are two more irksome terms. As they are applied in political useage these days they are meaningless: those who call themselves "conservative" are not, and those who call themselves "liberal" are anything but. Most of the public spokesmen for the Right (whateverthehell that is) indicate their dislike for freedom of speech; most of the public spokesmen for the Left (whateverthehell that is) indicate their dislike for freedom.)

Panshin: good sir, your comments in regards to pistols are not entirely true. Granted, as you say, that a pistol that has been used as a tackhammer or wire cutter or for some other purpose than the one for which it is intended is not going to be an accurate weapon. The sights are easily misaligned. Granted also that the fiction of whipping out the trusty pistol and shooting the gun from the other chap's hand is just that. But a pistol properly sighted and cared for is a good weapon within its effective range--said effective range being twenty-five to thirty yards (unless both weapon and shooter are exceptional). Certainly a rifle is better but to say that when one is close enough to hit a man with a .45, one is close enough to hit him with a rock--and would probably do more damage--is asinine. Also stupid. Trouble is, you see, most people don't know how to shoot a pistol. They've been brought up on western movies wherein the hero whips out his trusty pistol and fires from the hip--a practice guaranteed to have no results at all. A pistol must be aimed and when it is properly aimed--dear sir, don't stand in front of it.

George Price says that witches are dangerous to have around and society has a right to protect itself against them. A base canard, that. George is afraid, maybe, these witches are going to turn all the gold into something else?

Bloch was superb.

John Boardman's piece is a good summary of the KKK and I find only a couple of minor quibbles in this otherwise excellent analysis. I quibble with his use of "Rebellion of 1861-65". Depends upon one's point of view. The seceding states considered that they were legally right in withdrawing from the Union; they voluntarily signed the contract that brought the Union into existance, and felt that as independent states, they had a right to withdraw from that contract. Union guns proved them wrong. John is correct in his assessment of a campaign of naked violence and intimidation sweeping away the Reconstruction governments of the southern states but fails to note that those governments were put into power by a campaign of naked violence and intimidation--hardly a democratic process.

Much enjoyed Zelazny's "Brahman Trimurti"; I would be, I guess, a follower of Shiva.

Good words and true from E. Hoffman Price.

Felice says that a society as rich as ours can well afford to support even its bums but decries just supporting them. Oh, yes, certainly. I agree that welfare has its place, but I prefer the WPA to the War on Poverty. Get something in return.

Five of the Great Olympians are going to be unhappy with Lewis Grant and that remark about the "seven major gods of the Greeks". Verily.

[The next letter is one of the most, ah, erudite I have ever recieved. It is published in its entirety for your edification; I have not altered a single comma.--BCS_7]

Stephen E. Pickering, 46 Wainwright Dr., Bakersfield, Calif. 93308

Dear Ben:

As a sociologist, I am always pleased when a magazine consistently sustains a social perspective or honesty and intelligence, insight and critical objectivism. Thus I found your publication Nyarlatqteq not only excellent, but the best fan magazine of diverse views (rivalled, I believe, only by Felice Rolfe's Niekas). The implacable sociologist William J. Goode has written (The Family, Prentice-Hall, 1964, p. 12) that "Many societies can be conceived that have perhaps never existed, and science fiction has sketched some of these over the past half-century. Not all societies are sociologically possible." Carrying Dr. Goode's reasoning further, we can, in turn, say that many fans' magazines and articles are not sociological, i.e., they lack the firm, disciplined perspective of my field. And the problem is acute, I believe.

Hence, while I agree with your additions to my arguments in your editorial, as a social scientist I don't believe that we are debating over antitheses. Rather, we have viewed the same phenomenon with different impressions. I do not define fannishness per se as non-science fictional in nature and do not wish to see McCarthyism eradicate any one fan's interest. Articles about fans and their travels are nothing more than nonsensical reiterations of garbage; often, that articles read like the worst reports and test answers students haven't handed into me. Unfortunately, there is a dividing line between what is "fannish" material in your mind, and what I consider "science fictional" material. "Fannishness" is the manifest functions of innate prejudice and childish emotionalisms, whether in the form of trivial banalities or travelogues. Hence, our useages of the term are different, e.g. your own magazine is not particularly "fannish", and one does not have to gag over bull and garbage.

And your interpretation of my sentence toward the argument that science fiction is for ostetacious, complacent "fun" surprises me. There is considerable difference between entertainment and trash, trash which is both sociologically naive, but somewhat immature as well. Thus, I agree completely with Alexei Panshin's article in Yandro, but feel that, as a sociologist, even the so-called "mainstream" novels are written for a "low level of intention". But, this is a personal taste on my part. As a social scientist, I expect the writer to prove his assertions. Otherwise, the story may be entertaining, but completely lacking in social insight.

I appreciate your contention that the brilliant talents of Warner and Willis should be recognized as "fannish" fans of note, but do not agree with your analogy between fannish "classics" and the manifest careers of so-called "fannish" fans. Ted White, for example, has produced no exceptional fiction, despite the success of Void, and, as a sociologist, I can further see that White's own lack of social mobility has prevented Fantasy and Science Fiction from improving. Terry Carr is on the editorial staff of Ace Books, but his fiction is sporadic, and likewise for Marion Bradley. However, their former fan careers (which I do not particularly consider banal fannishness, save for White and Carr) do not make them anti-intellectuals.

You ask for my working definition of anti-intellectualism, Ben. Quoting from Richard Hofstadter's Anti-Intellectualism in American Life: "One reason anti-intellectualism has not been clearly defined is that the very vagueness of the term makes it more servicable in controversy as an epithet. But, in any case, it does yield very readily to definition. As an idea, it is not a single proposition but a complex of related propositions. As an attitude, it

Stephen E. Pickering, concl.:

is not usually found in a pure form but in ambivalence--a pure and unalloyed dislike of intellect or intellectuals is uncommon. And as a historical subject...it is not a constant thread, but a force fluctuating in strength from time to time and drawing its motive power from varying sources...The common strain that binds together the attitudes and ideas which I call anti-intellectual is a resentment and suspicion of the life of the mind and of those who are considered to represent it; and a disposition constantly to minimize the value of that life. This admittedly general formulation is as close as I find it useful to venture toward a definition."

While I highly respect your talent and propensity toward honest appraisal of another social scientist's ideas toward varying ideas, I cannot think that banality in fan magazines will either help the field, or the individuals themselves. And, as an active member of the National Committee to Abolish the House Un-American Activities Committee, I am well aware of the fearful, often altercative effects intolerance has upon free thought. However it takes outstanding patience to ascertain when a fannish fan is merely spreading excretion through his magazine. But, often, the banalities only make stupidity a virtue.

Poul Anderson

Dear Ben:

Since my name got mentioned in connection with the Ace-Tolkien matter, I'd appreciate it if you could find space in your next issue for the following statement: The dispute has now been settled to Professor Tolkien's own satisfaction. Therefore, in my opinion, everybody should stop making self-righteous noises from either side of a fence which no longer exists. Let us rather heal whatever wounds we may have inflicted on each other and go on to something new. In this connection, Ace has recently made me a reprint offer which I have accepted.

Enough on that. As long as I'm typing, I may as well add a remark or two on a different subject: Of all people, I find myself at odds with my beloved Felice Rolfe.

Not about carrying personal weapons, which I've long advocated too. (Suppose those student nurses had had a gun on hand when Speck Walked in!) Nor--oddly, perhaps, for a conservative--about Medicare and Social Security. These things I have watched in action abroad--in fact, my Danish grandfather practiced medicine under a system of government insurance which we Americans have yet to arrange--and, while they do have certain ill effects on society, this is pretty well counterbalanced by such good effects as optimum medical care for everybody and a dignified existence for the aged. My argument is purely economic.

What Felice says is true enough: in spite of rising prices, real wages have gone up. You don't have to work as long to earn the cost of a loaf of bread now as you did a generation ago. But, look, doll, this is only because productivity per man-hour has increased. And that is due simply to technological progress, which I suspect has been made in spite of unsound fiscal policies.

Let us not misuse language. Rising money prices are not inflation, rather they are one result of inflation, which itself is actually a cheapening of money. There is no mysterious virtue inherent in gold. But since the world's gold supply does not increase very fast, by making it the ultimate currency we automatically prevent ourselves from printing so many dollar bills that they become worthless. Fiat money has not such limitation on it, and no government in history has long resisted the temptation to issue ever larger quantities. And that wrecks the national economy. Just look at what happened to Germany in the 1920's or China in the 1930's--and look at the kind of regimes which presently took over!

Poul Anderson, concl.:

Inflation in the United States has so far proceeded fairly slowly, under some control. I doubt if this can go on indefinitely. But even if it can, certain effects are already apparent. Inflation amounts to a tax on savings and investments--and retirement incomes, Felice. Therefore, in sheer self-defence, anyone who thinks about the matter will put his funds into something different, such as real estate or certain types of common stocks. Or else he'll emulate the man in the cartoon, whose will was being read: "Being of sound mind, I spent it all." It doesn't take long before you get a lopsided economy in which more and more of the usual sources of credit have dried up. Then interest rates are bound to rise; or, if the government prevents this by decree, still more money will flee the banks and insurance companies. Trying to remedy this situation, the government will then increase the money supply ...and there we go.

It seems unlikely that we'll be able to reverse the process. So the far-sighted among us will try, while time remains, to acquire the kind of property and skills which will always be in demand; and, with society's organs for the care of the indigent headed for collapse, will simply make provision for "myself, my wife and my little Hassan with the bandy legs." We won't get a complete dog-eat-dog situation: people will always tend to help out their less fortunate neighbors; but the overall result will be unpleasant, to say the least.

Bob Briney, 176 E. Stadium Ave., West Lafayette, Ind. 47906

Dear Ben:

Both covers are very impressive. I have a feeling I've seen the Barr drawing before, but have no idea where. As for the back cover: the contrast between the carvings in the background and the--er--gentleman in the foreground provides quite an impact. The gentleman himself might have stepped out of one of Lee Brown Coye's more gruesome illustrations.

Was pleased to see Panshin's article on Donald Hamilton. Alex is the one who introduced me to Hamilton's work a couple of years ago, for which I've been most grateful. We differ on favorite Hamilton books--I favor The Steel Mirror and The Big Country--but agree that all are worth reading.

Alex comments that the reader's knowing what to expect is the basis of the popularity of series characters. A part of this "knowing what to expect" is the reader's confidence that the hero and usually also the hero's friends and family will emerge relatively unscathed at the end of the book. In recent years, a few authors have managed to disregard this rule and still manage to maintain successful series: Ed McBain's "87th Precinct" books and several of John Creasey's series are examples.

In his comments on the term "witch-hunt", George Price neglects to mention that one of the features of every historical witch-hunt--from the literal ones of the Inquisition and Salem to the figurative variety indulged in by Senator McCarthy--has been the principle of guilt by accusation. / Not to mention guilt by association.--BCS / It is not the hunt for witches that is bad in itself, it is the fact that an innocent person can be put in peril simply by having a zealot's finger pointed at him... I have always considered this feature to be the object of the opprobrium implicit in the use of the term "witch-hunt".

Greg Benford, Seahorse Inn, Apt. 141, 526 Grand Ave. Del Mar, Calif. 92014

Dear Ben:

Your reply to Pickering is well taken, and certainly (from my fannish point of view) correct. My view is that fannish material is generally much more creative than sfnal oriented matter, because, generally, more care is taken with style and technique. I think the people who are interested prima-

Greg Benford, concl:

rily in writing as writing in fandom (instead of just communication) generally tend to be fannish fans, because this is the mode in which writing is most honored (just as maneuvering and floor fights are admired--if that's the word --among political fans of the Moskowitz variety). So it's not surprising to see fannish fans who've tired of fandom somewhat then turn to writing stf. Of the examples you gave, I'm probably the best pure type--a fan who turned to stf because he was tired of the usual fannish writing and styles. Ted White has wanted to be a professional editor or writer for a long time now, and although he rarely referred to it, I think Terry Carr had such aims in a vague sort of way even before he started Innuendo. Personally, I've run out of material in fandom simply because I don't have as many fannish contacts any more, and I've lost my taste for the paper world that used to be so diverting to me. Whether this is a cause or an effect, I don't know. But I do realize that, subconsciously, I regard writing stf or mainstream material (I do both) as more worthwhile, in some sense, than fannish writing. I seem to have become much more interested in the idea content of anything I read or write, so fannish material--always strong on style--has lost some of its charm. Incidentally, it's interesting to note that while ideas have dampened my enthusiasm for fandom, they've also gotten me back to reading stf again; the mainstream, whatever other literary qualities it may have, just doesn't have original concepts laced throughout it the way good old stf does.

Your complaint that Pickering ignores the professionals is well taken (except that I don't wish to be classed with Carr, White, Bradley or Ellison--they write for a living, and to me it's just a hobby; I can make more money, as far as that goes, doing other things). However, there are more than two courses open to people who like stf--you don't have to write articles about it or write it. You can also let your views be known to the people who need them most: the editors and, most especially, the writers. Every statement, either public or private, that I've seen from the professionals stresses the importance he places on reader feedback--and the statement is usually in the form of a plea for more of it. If every fan who has a favorite author would drop him a line, outlining what he did or did not like about the author's work, it would probably result in a real boost in morale for them, and just possibly an increase in the quality of their products. If every writer of any import could depend on getting response to what he did (not just a check) it would give him some assurance that he wasn't just talking to himself.

Bloch is as pickled as ever. I have a feeling he can write an article like this in thirty minutes or less; more power to him; they're still good.

"Welfare" by Phyllis Kleinstein was interesting and pointed, but left me with a curious feeling of lack of balance. I wish the point could have been made more subtly and at much greater length; the authoress is beating us over the head here, and it hurts. She knows how to convey emotions to the reader, though, and with a longer length she could do much better. As fan fiction goes, it's superior.

Judging from her letter, she has a good feel for story content, too. Does she write stf? [She tries.--BCS]



andrew offutt, po box 115, morehead, ky. 40351
ben:

Alexei panshins article about donald hamilton points up something i am painfully--and amazedly--aware of: there are so many people who are writing so much. And weve never heard of them. Recently i bought twenty-three thrillers--market study--assorted intrigue and spy/secret agent stories; no

andrew offutt, concl.:

detective yarns. i was astonished to learn that a man named edward s arrons has apparently been earning a quite living for years writing a series of novels about a cia agent named sam 'cajun' durrell. There are about twenty of these novels, all ASSIGNMENT: something-or-other, all about durrell. Pretty much action for quick reading. Then there is another one...bill s ballinger. Barely competent, he too has published a bunch of novels, some about cia agent joaquin hawks, who seems to have a pact with the Great God Chance; coincidence plots all his adventures.

Every now and then lightning strikes one of these people. Helen mac-innes strings-of-coincidence are invariably bestsellers, and she apparently turns one out every two years. Probably for economic--irs--reasons. Lightning struck len deighton, of course, of ipress fame, and 'john le carre' of cold-spy fame. Lightning in the form of jfk struck ian fleming. Branches of the same lightning struck a fair actor named connery, an actress named undress or something like that and lots of other people. Why did it strike matt helm and not sam durrell or joaquin hawks? i don't know...durrell is a better character and aarons a better writer than helm/hamilton. You tell me. i think matt helm books are pretty much shoulder-shruggers.

George prices little article i VERY much enjoyed. For years i've been educating a select few that commandment #3 which moses made up on that mountaintop was an injunction against perjury: "you shall not swear falsely by the name of the lord your god, for the lord will not acquit those who do". Swear falsely means lie under oath; acquit doesnt mean from hell. Those ancient habiru mustve been swearing b'god all the time and lying like the bedouins they were, and moses thought hed put a stop to it. But you can say 'HOT DAMN' anytime you hit your pinky with a hammer... Theres no injunction against it.

There is an injunction against churches for those who accept the NT as the Word. In the sermon on the mount, jesus josephson said you should go into your house and go into a room and shut the door when you want to pray...do it in private. Thus neither chisters nor jews are forbidden cursing or cussing...they are forbidden churches, clothing and work--oh, and priests, or at least miracle-workers such as oral roberts--all in the sermon on the mount. Check matthew. Interesting reading.

i refuse to love my neighbor...unless he deserves it. And since 'neighbor' has been twisted to mean 'all men'...to love all men would be an insult to those who are deserving of my regard/love.

i see that phyllis kleinstein has two poems (brrr!), one story (good for you, p.k.!) and a letter in nyar 3. Lives just down the street, eh? /Sir! just what are you insinuating?--BCS/ Waitil drew pearson and his airy-apparent hear about THIS!

Robert Coulson, Route 3, Hartford City, Ind. 47348

Dear Ben:

Good reproduction this time, except--err--well, you see, when the stencil becomes wrinkled, you stop cranking, loosen the bottom edge of the stencil on the drum and straighten it. See? All nice and simple, and it eliminates all those unreadable lines. I mean, how can I argue with George Price when I don't know what he said? /Fake it.--BCS/

I do get the impression that George thinks that Communists exist, and that they can be caught by Congressional investigating committees. I'll go along with him on the first part. The trouble with public investigations, George, is that people have this tendency to sling mud at anyone who disagrees with them. John Boardman calls his detractors conservatives, Steve Pickering calls his anti-intellectuals and Congressmen frequently theirs com-

Robert Coulson, concl:

munists. I admit that there are communist infiltrators in this country, but by the time an investigating committee gets through, nobody can tell the genuine communists from the liberals. I'm in favor of quiet investigations, and arrests, as being more effective than noisy ones with publicity. (Now Boardman can say I've come out in favor of Secret Police.)

I've read The Blue Book; one of my co-workers at Honeywell was a Birch-er, and tried to get me interested. As far as I can see, The Blue Book is mostly full of noble sentiments about Country and Home and Mother that nobody can argue about--or at least, I didn't feel like arguing about them. It isn't a practical program; it's idealism and as such, not particularly objectionable or subversive. However, this same worker loaned me some other Birch Society pamphlets, and here we get into the propaganda. One of them was on U.S. history, written by a professor at Notre Dame, and the man was either an outright liar, or he knew less about history than I do. It was not only "slanted", it was false. Now here we get into a problem. I don't favor censorship--but at the same time it doesn't seem right to allow a group to disseminate falsehoods. There's really no solution, since every would-be censor has his own ideas of what is and is not true. (Of course, my ideas are the correct ones, but I'm not the sort to try to convince the nation of this fact.) Anyway, The Blue Book is hardly to be considered good reading, but I doubt that its publication will subvert anyone. It's too mild. It's some of the Birch Society's other stuff that we have to worry about.

Offutt (pardon me, offutt) has a nice definition of priacy. Unfortunately, it covers every "public domain" reprint ever issued. (Is the Bible the work of God? Let's see God's signature on a contract, then, before we publish the book.) To offutt, then, reprinting anything from Weird Tales is piracy (unless one can track down the authors, most of whom have disappeared), reprinting Shakespeare is priacy, a new edition of Milton is piracy. I don't happen to agree. Here is where I do agree with George Price; I am not my brother's keeper, and Ace Books has no moral obligation to pay for the errors of Houghton-Mifflin. Copyright laws protect authors; let the laws be followed.

I second Felice Rolfe's comments about guns and such. If more citizens went about armed, there might be more murders, but there would be a hell of a lot less rape, mugging and robbery. As for not allowing women to carry tear-gas guns, I never before have heard of such arrant stupidity.

John Boston, PO Box 2841, Station B, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn.
Dear Ben:

Your rebuttal of Pickering is correct, but I wonder why you bothered. I can't see that an attempt to dictate other people's leisure activities is deserving of anything but contemptuous silence. If Pickering doesn't like fannishness, let him stop reading fannish fanzines, and shut up! If he likes serconism, let him read sercon material, and if that isn't enough, start his own sercon fanzine. If he'll send me a sample of it, I will subscribe, comment or whatever he prefers. If he sends me his address, I'll send him a sample copy of Speculative Bulletin, which ought at least to satisfy him on the g ounds of serconism.

Whoever Dean Natkin is, his article is one of the best-written things I've ever seen in a fanzine. I'll go along with him with reservations. Academic freedom should protect a man's activities outside the classroom; a man should not be fired for belonging to the CPUSA or the JBS. A teacher who, instead of teaching, spouts propaganda--leftist, rightist or centerist--doesn't belong on a school faculty; he isn't doing the job he's paid for. Indoctrination is not teaching. This reminds me of my high school teacher in

John Boston, concl.:

American Government, who made it quite plain that he personally was a conservative (Nixon-style, not Goldwater) but who never colored the material he was teaching. He and the more liberal members of the class often spent most of the period arguing, but it was always quite plain that he was stating his own opinions and not taking advantage of his position to preach. If Genovese spouts Marxism in the classroom, he's not a competent teacher, and should be fired. If he presents his material with a reasonable degree of objectivity --at least as much as would be expected of any other faculty member--he's worth paying.

George Price, pay attention: Sunday school is now in session. If you'd read the Bible, the phrase "Love thy neighbor" would be much clearer to you. The full text, from Mark 12:31, reads: "...Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." As thyself. Understand? If you make a complete ass of yourself over some triviality, you should be disgusted with yourself; likewise, if your neighbor does the same, you should be disgusted with him. It's not a commandment to non-discrimination but to unselfishness. Another Biblical quotation comes to mind, which I'm not going to look up: "Hate the sin but love the sinner." If your neighbor does something that you thoroughly disapprove of, your disapproval should be directed to the action, not the individual. As a matter of fact, modern Christian theology with its tenet that we create our own hell here on earth, would have you feel sorry for him.

As for witch-hunting, the main characteristic of early American witch-hunting was mass hysteria, which was also the motivating factor in much of the Red-hunting of our time. The reason that it has never been applied, to any great extent, to liberal searches for right-wingers is that liberalism--or far-leftism, that is--has never had the popular sanction that the radical right has had. When J. Edgar Hoover opposed publicly the administration proposal to swap consuls with the Soviet Union, to great public outcry arose; but if an appointed official publicly differed with an administration-backed bill to, say, support an anti-Communist dictatorship like that of Formosa, you would hear the echoes in Antarctica.

I will not believe that Andrew Johnson was in sympathy with the objectives of the Reconstruction Klan until Boardman gives more evidence than his say-so. I also object to his attempt to align all conservative groups with the Klan; that is a cheap trick worthy of McCarthy and the Birchers. ("The Ku Klux Klan styled itself 'conservative' in opposition to the 'radicals' who proposed and tried to enact such things as voting rights for Negroes and free public education. As such, it is the oldest conservative organization now functioning, the spiritual parent of the more recent groups now functioning under that name.") I also notice that Boardman, in his listing of prominent ex-Klansmen, fails to mention Supreme Court Justice Hugo L. Black. Another statement which demands verification is that the Minute Men are an arm of the John Birch Society.

Now, hold on, Lewis Grant: the reduction in the number of Gods does not lead inevitably to no God; it reflects a greater sophistication in the concept of the nature of the divine. For an example of religion beyond the "old man in the sky" idea of revealed Christianity, read John A. T. Robinson's Honest To God.



Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

Dear Ben:

I can no longer comment on the Pickering articles in the calm and amused manner that you achieved. You compare him with lefrists who are out after neo-Nazis, but I feel that his recent propaganda has been more comparable with the original Nazis out after the Jews. The thing that gives him away but which nobody else seems to notice is his careful citation of the writer and source for every statement with which he agrees, coupled with an almost complete failure to identify the people and places from which he took the statements with which he disagrees. It's obvious to me that he's making up these statements and pretending the "anti-intellectual" fans made them, for whatever purpose he may have in mind over and above his obvious attempt to divide fandom and set up more hatred and feuding than fandom already possesses.

I'm not so sure that it would be logical for rape to occur more frequently in fiction. A lot of experience with rape cases in criminal court has left me more than a mite skeptical about the frequency with which rape occurs even under apparently favorable circumstances. The best test, of course, in all fiction is in Don Quixote. Sancho Panza is, in theory at least, the governor of an area and is hearing a rape case. He orders the man to pay the woman a large sum, then as soon as she leaves, Sancho orders the man to go after the woman and take the money from her. She puts up a good enough struggle to convince Sancho that she could have done more for the sake of her virtue if she thought as much of it as of the money.

Let's see how far George Price and I differ in interpreting these old maxims. "The exception proves the rule" means to me that we accept the existence of the rule because we are aware of an exception as an exception when it occurs. If there were no rule, we would not be aware of something different when the exception occurs. George calls it confusion resulting from a gradual shift in the meaning of "prove" but I think he's creating the confusion by assuming an extremely rigid meaning of "rule" which he seems to consider as something like a theorem in a valid system of geometry instead of a human trait or how to stay on the good side of the lieutenant. "Love thy neighbor as thyself" is much more impressive than it would be with "respect" substituted as the verb, because it's only human to love yourself in a special all-out way that really sets you a goal if you try to whip up that much love for your neighbor. I can't follow his reasoning on "witch-hunting" which seems tantamount to saying that people wouldn't have grown angry at Lee Oswald if he hadn't been accused of killing the president.

For the first time I'm starting to wonder about prescience. I read this Nyarlathotep just a few hours after thinking up a possible incident for one of the stories that I hope to start to write if I ever get finished with the fan history and caught up on fanzine locs. My idea involved a climax in which one character who was impersonating another character cut off a hand or a foot or something equally useful, upon learning that the person he was impersonating had gone through the same experience. I thought that this might cause some readers to assume that the impersonator was devoted to his work and even heroic, unless he was one of the bad guys, in which case he would be a helpless slave to the evil principles in which he had been trained or a complete fool to mutilate himself in a hopeless cause. So I then find a related conclusion in this little story by Phyllis Kleinstein. All this does not serve as a real criticism of the story, which I thought was well done but needful of more definite disclosure of just how serious the times were, over and above the characters' statements that things are in bad shape.

John Boardman's article on the Klan sounds curiously like the sort of articles that were still occasionally appearing about the Masons when I was much younger. I haven't the faintest idea if the Klan is as feeble a menace as Masonry, but I do find it curious that John emphasizes the people in high

Harry Warner, concl.:

places who are allegedly associated somehow with the Klan, just as the John Birchers keep pointing out how many high officials have communistic associations.

The letter section was extremely good. Science fiction stories in fan magazines are serving a function if they can inspire more criticism like the through dissection by Phyllis Kleinstein of Evers' "The Wasps". I imagine that the professional authors who are urging fans to pay more attention to science fiction would start to encourage faanish articles in fanzines, if Phyllis and some other fans gave to prozine stories the criticism that most of them deserve in just this manner. Curiously, in view of Earl Evers' letter, the Ballantine editions of the Tolkien books are much easier to find in Hagerstown than the Ace edition. (Of course, if all fans refused to buy Ace books because of the Tolkien situation, there would be no appreciable effect on Ace sales; the significant thing is that so many fans have at least talked about refusing to buy Ace books, which could mean that non-fans who have heard of the situation are independently considering the same punitive measure.) I can't believe that a writer boycott of Ace would do much harm; the quality of new fiction published by Ace is low enough to be duplicated by any hack who has been specializing in detective or western fiction. I'm on Felice Rolfe's side about social security, and I could tell a harrowing story about the retirement plan of the company for which I work, if anyone claims that private enterprise should be looking out for the elderly instead of the government.

[I hope I'm not as unfair as all that; I didn't compare Pickering to "leftists who are out after neo-Nazis", but to those leftists who consider all conservatives to be neo-Nazis. And likewise, I compared him to those rightists who consider all supporters of the peace-in-Vietnam movement to be Viet Cong sympathizers. But I've come to the conclusion that arguing with Pickering is a waste of time; the man is a True Believer; everyone else in fandom is out of step except him.--BCS/7

Norm Clarke, 9 Bancroft St., Aylmer E., P. Q.

Dear Ben:

Yes, I would "care to comment" on Nyar; in deed, I want to try to catch up on all the comments I've neglected to make on fanzines for months and years now, and a fanzine as good as this issue is seems to be a fine one to start with. This is the sort of genzine that I have lately become convinced is the most satisfactory...for the greatest number of fans to read: that is, it is neither totally faanish nor narrowly stf-centered. In fact, it is a general fanzine ("numerous contributors and a wide range of subject matter"), and one of the best I've seen lately.

Bloch puts his superb finger on it in his "Open Letter", when he mentions his discontent with the contents of many fanzines: articles or "things" about "LSD, songs of protest and high camp". Not that there is any reason whatsoever why fanzines shouldn't contain material about these things (it all started with those notorious articles on jazz and sports cars, I believe), but when there is nothing to distinguish a fanzine from the Hip Slick mags, excepting the vast inferiority of the former, then one begins to wonder, "Why read fanzines?"

Of course, this is just a quick generalization--and not even that, really, because obviously the number of fanzines devoted exclusively to "LSD, songs of protest," etc., are few indeed. And also of course, the fanzines that are dedicated exclusively to dozens of half-page (or less) "reviews" of purported stf that should never have been published, let alone bought, read

Norm Clarke, cont.:

reviewed, are just as dreadful. Worse, even: for while there may be a certain amount of morbid interest generated by a fan's account of his LSD trips, there can be nothing more undreadable than some thirteenth-year-old's three paragraph review of the "B" side of an Ace double novel (excepting an attack on "anti-intellectualism" by Stephen E. Pickering, of course).

But Why Read Fanzines? Many fans would reply that they enjoy reading material by and about other fans, for one thing. And that is what accounts for the plenthora of mailing comments, con reports, one-shots and faaanfiction. And I must admit that this is, primarily, my main interest in reading fanzines. But in my case, at least, I have found that every now and then I will chance upon a fanzine article that shows every evidnece of having been carefully written, and written so as to interest the reader in the subject, even though the subject be That Crazy Buck Rogers Stuff. And the question is, as Sam was once heard to murmur, "If we're not science fiction fans, then what the hell are we?" And I have to confess that I still am, or would like to be. I stopped reading virtually all stf years ago because it seemed to me there was nothing worth reading being published. Indications now are that a rise in quality is taking place, to such an extent that there are several recent stf novels I intend to read, as well as a couple I've already read. But I'd never have known about them if it weren't for those fanzines that actually Mentioned Science Fiction--at adequate length and with reasonable competence and literacy.

As a matter of fact, I started yesterday, before I got your fmz, to write an editorial for my own fanzine on this subject; so I'll drop it here, because (a) I don't want to repeat myself too much, and (b) I've just realized that this issue of Nyar really contains very little about science fiction, ahahaha. However, I gather that just happened this way, in this issue, for I note that the same Bloch mentioned above speaks in your local of Nyar's "considerations of sf and considerations of contemporary reality." Anyway, your zine looks to me like a good one, the kind one is always pleased to find in the mailbox. I surely hope that it will go on, issue after issue, presenting a heady mixture of stf, fannishness, sex and sadism. ~~XXX XXXX XXXXX~~
~~XXXXX XXXX XX XXXX XXXXXX~~.

I suppose it is the hasty intemperance of his speech that has caused Dean Natkin to neglect to include a single scrap of evidence to support his charge that Prof. Genovese was "proselytizing" and "indoctrinating" and otherwise abusing his "academic freedom". Instead, Mr. Natkin chooses to mention briefly that Prof. Genovese "identified himself as a Marxist and informed his audience that he would welcome a Viet Cong victory over the United States." I think it's significant that these alleged statements are not quoted, or even quasi-quoted. He "identified himself as a Marxist"? Does that mean he said, "Ladies and gentlemen, I am a Marxist," or does it mean that some Buckleyite in the crowd glowered thickly and muttered, "Then leftish remarks he's makin' identify him as a Marxist"? Did he really say he would "welcome a Viet Cong victory over the United States"? (they're planning to invade California right the minute, folks!) or did he perhaps indicate that he thought the Viet Cong are correct in their struggle to overthrow the puppet government of South Viet Nam? Or even merely that they have a right to be represented at any peace conferences? No matter; the base upon which Mr. Natkin builds his solemn argument against the abuse of academic freedom is so flimsy that the whole structure collapses at approximately the point where he warns that the next step, if we Don't Watch Out, might be the "introducing of politics into the classroom." And, dear me, everyone knows that that's never been done before, right? Any American teacher caught preaching about the Evils of Communism (or Socialism) in the classroom would be banished from the profession forthwith. Right? Right. (Left, left, left...)

Norm Clarke, concl.:

There is a little more to the "exception proves the rule" phrase than that "prove" originally meant test. First of all, the very fact that there is an exception implies that there is a Rule. E.g., "Fans are not racists." "Well, what about Eric Blake?" "Well...yeah, but he's about the only one I can think of, and he's such a glaring example, it must be a general rule that fans are not racists." In other words, a small and outstanding example of a contrary trait serves to point up the fact that there is a general rule, which might have gone unnoticed were it not for this glaring exception. (This is a hypothetical example, of course; I don't know how many fans, apart from Blake, are racists. But I surely hope that he is the "exception that proves the rule" that fans are not racists.)

That was the superbest Bloch fanzine article I've read in years. And Phyllis Kleinstein's fiction was as cruddy as any I've seen in years (I don't usually bother to read fan fiction, and I'm sorry I made an exception in this case); of course, it may be just because the *Message* of the thing turns me off so completely. Gee, there seems to be a lot of right-wing stuff in this issue, so far. Ooops, here's John Boardman. Yes. Well, of course, I agree that the Klan is a Rotten Thing, and that the JBS is a Bad Thing, but I'm afraid that the JBS does not come close to the Klan as an organization that must be stamped out. So the JBS "preaches distrust of the federal government"? So do lots of left-wing groups, and why not? Surely Boardman, of all people, is not saying "Trust in your federal government and all will be well"? I'll be persuaded that the JBS is a menace equal to the KKK the day I hear of a bunch of hooded Birchers lynching a socialist's family. Until then, I will regard them simply as another nut political fringe (though I'll grant that their political power could grow, like the Nazi Party's in the Germany of the '30s; but so far, there are few signs of that, thank heavens).

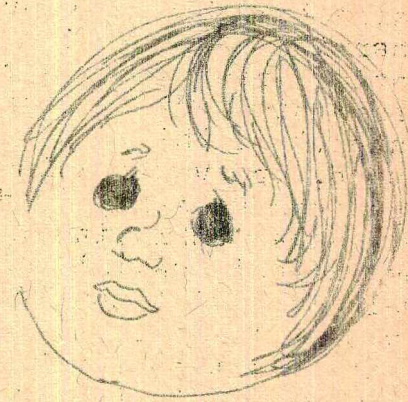
The letter column is a good one, although I might disagree mildly with E. H. Price's notion that if the Negroes in the USA just stood pat like the nice, quiet, un-pushy Chinese, then eventually the whites would "seek them out for their art and philosophy." First, I might point out that white patronization of Chinese temples and restaurants in no way indicates that the Chinese have "status" and are not discriminated against; similarly, whites have been flocking to hear Negro musicians and singers for decades--whites who would never dream of inviting a Negro into their homes, much less welcome him as a brother-in-law.

...One more thing: Lewis Grant says, "the fellow who seems to be dead is Jesus." Well, the big news around here today is that one of the Beatles --Lennon, I think--has been quoted as saying that the Beatles "are more popular than Jesus." Jesus, I think the Beatles are dead, now.

Creath Thorne, 189-B Baker Park Hall, Pershing Group, University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri

Dear Ben:

George Price attempts to put down a number of old sayings; he's so hasty in his attempt to do so that his lack of research and lack of understanding of what the epigrams mean backfire on him. George mistakenly believes that the biblical quotation "love thy neighbor" means to "indulge in



Creath Thorne, concl.:

"sirupy sentimentalism toward other people." If George had actually read the Bible, he would realize not only that such an interpretation was never intended (and is not taught in churches today) but that his version where he substitutes "self-respect" for "love" is wrong, also.

Probably the most concise explanation of what the "love" that Jesus taught means is found in Corinthians I: Chapter 13. For those fans who do not own a Bible, and who (quite narrow-mindedly) do not intend to ever read one, the twenty-second issue of Warhoon contains an explanation and interpretation of Paul's letter by Bob Lowndes. I highly recommend this essay to all your readers. [As do I.--BCS_7]

I'm not going to give the definition of Love (Bob has adopted the upper case to distinguish from the "sirupy sentimentalism") here, because to adequately define it would be to quote most of St. Paul's 13th Chapter. I do wish George had looked into the matter a bit more before he jumped on his horse of rationalism and rode off with a six-shooter of logic filled with semantic bullets. He may yet bite the dust of knowledge and acholarship, if he doesn't watch out.

George also errs in his interpretation of what "my brother's keeper" really means. When Jesus brought to earth the new covenant he abolished the old covenant idea of morality ("An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," and stuff like that). If you believe in the teachings of Jesus you must perforce believe that you have a duty to aid your fellow man in every way that you can. This basic tenet is apparent throughout the New Testament teachings. Thus that saying "Am I my brother's keeper?" takes on a new meaning; for the Christian (and the follower of Christ's teachings) the answer to the question must be, "Yes."

Understand, I'm not concerned here with whether or not George Price is a Christian or not. I am objecting to Price's obvious lack of knowledge in matters biblical. I am not a full-time biblical student myself; yet George's errors of interpretation were painfully obvious. It is a bad sign of the times that any grown man should have matured without knowledge of Christianity since the religion is still an important force in society. George's criticism might be compared to a high-school lit student criticizing James Joyce's Ulysses. Until he knows what he's talking about, it would be best for him to remain silent.

Archie Mercer, First Fl. Flat, "Rosehill", 2 Cotham Pk. S., Bristol 6, G. B.
Dear Ben:

Lovecraft, eh? I'd been fondly imagining that it was a genuine relic of Ancient Egypt. One-step, two-step, three Nyarlathotep (how's that for a spontaneous incantation? Or almost spontaneous.).

Personally, I find it hard to understand a single point that Stephen Pickering makes in his various appearances that I've noticed--and, if anything, even harder to envision anything more utterly trivial than is that (whatever it may be) of which he writes. If my understanding was to the high-flown obscurity of his diction, possibly I might think differently about the matter, but I seriously doubt it.

Although he speaks from a blatantly partisan standpoint, Dean Natkin nevertheless has something valid to say. Possibly there is justice in the specific instances he cites, possibly not--I wouldn't know. I'd have tended to suppose that a university teacher's political views were his own business, so long as (a) they had no particular bearing on what he taught, or (b) they were generally known and recognised so that due allowance could be made for them by the students--who would, one might be forgiven for supposing--be intelligent enough to make such allowance. A person of known politically ex-

Archie Mercer, concl.:

Trémist views teaching younger children might, with some justice, be treated somewhat more circumspectly, I think.

George Price is another comparative right-winger with something valid to say, and he makes some excellent common-sense distinctions. I note that the test of the pudding is in the eating, for instance. And to respect one's neighbor does indeed make a lot better sense than to unselectively "love" him. I note that the term "witch-hunt" may or may not be a legitimate metaphor depending--I myself tend to suppose that the political "witch-hunts" which he cites had the term applied to them more legitimately than he suggests, though less legitimately than some would. "Keeper" is, I think, an unfortunately loaded word for its context, whether one advocates a Geo. Pricean state of affairs or any other. But the whole article serves to clarify thought for the reader whatever his politics, and is most refreshing to encounter.

The fact that Bloch can still be funny about fandom is gratefully noted.

"Welfare" is very well-written, except that (I'm glad to say) she fails to make her gruesome point quite plausible enough in the circumstances. After all, presumably there would be some sort of escape-clause written into the welfare system, and some sort of check-up on each individual case?

AND SOME SHORTER QUOTES:

Don Wollheim: #...I take note of the various opinions of Ace's public image re LOTR. Re the predictions of hurt to us--no evidence shown at all in our business which is up and good. We have the Hugo novels this year; also just bought a new Poul Anderson novel for early next year. Even Andrew Offutt is trying to sell us a novel. He hasn't quite made it yet, though he has ability. #Our editorial policies are determined by the whims of a fan, namely me, and I am very much influenced by fan opinions. Which is maybe why Ace is successful. I have always held that fans are merely the vocal voice of the entire readership, and their views are no different from the silent mass of the other 99 per cent.

Joe Staton: #...George Price's sentence: "Keepers are for prisons, asylums and zoos, not for free men," is beautiful. All politics of its context aside, that is the most powerful line I've ever seen in fan writing.

Banks Mebane: #Phyllis Kleinstein is brave indeed to publish a piece of fiction in the same issue in which she tears 'EEvers' story from the previous Nyar apart. Much of what she says about his story applies to hers: it isn't, really a story, just an anecdote. Going beyond that, it's simply propaganda: she loads the situation and the characters just the idea she wants to put across, namely that welfare is evil. She does write well, though.

Betty Kujawa: #Naturally, I enjoyed and chuckled my way through Bloch's "Open Letter". Civil rights being extended to the NFFF is a daring thought. Gosh I don't know..would I want a Neffer as a neighbor? Would I want my daughter or sister to marry one? Now in all honesty can you say that you'd want such a thing? And think of their children... This is certainly not an easy thing to decide, no matter how open-minded we may think we are...

AND I ALSO HEARD FROM:

Terry Jeeves, Tom Reamy, Bill Bowers, James R. Seiger & Rick Brooks

