



In Memoriam:

A FEW WORDS ABOUT RON ELLIK

by

Robert Bloch

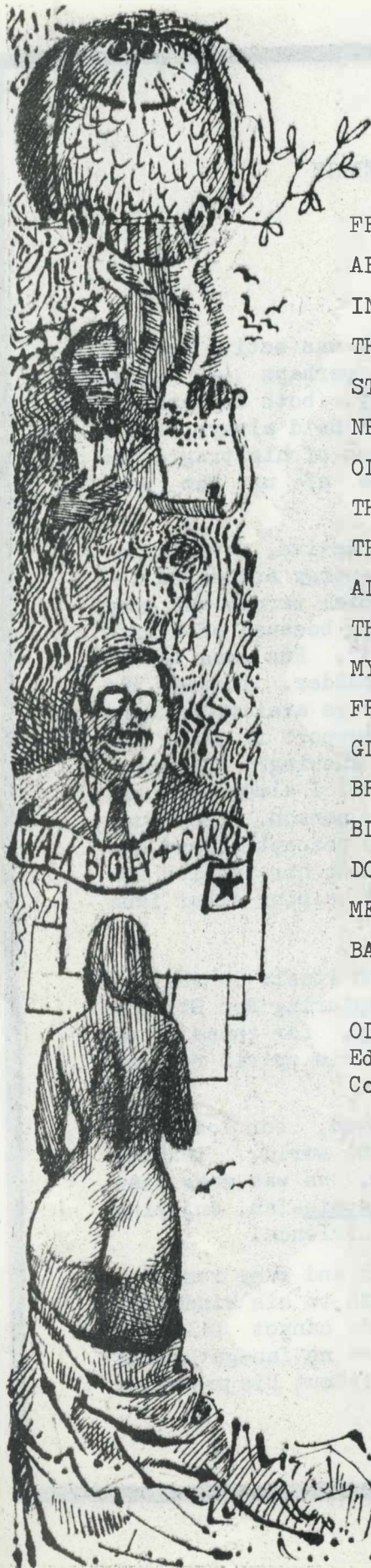
I don't know exactly how long Ron Ellik was active in science fiction fandom -- a dozen years, perhaps -- but so vivid was the imprint of his personality, both in fanzines and in person, that it seemed as though he'd always been a part of the fannish scene. And the news of his tragic and untimely passing is incredible to those of us who were privileged to have known him.

For Ron was always so very much alive; active, volatile, scintillant, exuding a special kind of energy and enthusiasm. More than that, he emanated a special warmth and good humor. Unlike many who turn to fanning because of difficulties in adjusting to the "real world", Ron came to the field without carrying a chip on his shoulder. Indeed, his shoulder was a broad and sturdy one, always available to be lent to those who needed comfort and support in their own difficulties. He could, and at times knowingly did, play the role of prankster and buffoon -- but I always had the impression that he was a very serious person. Serious, sensitive, and highly intelligent. His perception and empathy added sparkle to his wit and depth to his fannish endeavors -- not a few of which concerned helping other fans and furthering fannish projects.

Cliches? But what else is there? Death itself is the ultimate cliche, and the universal one. Capturing Ron Ellik's spirit is impossible -- but fortunately, for those of us who knew him, the task is unnecessary. His spirit remains fixed in memory.

Few fans were better-known or better-loved, for Ron wrote widely and travelled widely throughout the world. Despite his considerable contributions to fandom, he was more than a fan of science fiction -- he was a people-fan, enjoying and appreciating his fellow-hobbyists as friends.

There will be many memorials to Ron Ellik and many reminiscences. I myself could attest at length to his kindness, but that's superfluous here. Fond words cannot fill the void left by his passing and in the future no fan-gathering or convention will seem quite the same without his presence. That in itself seems epitaph enough.



ODD MAGAZINE

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by Chester Malon

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Even though I'd be the first to admit that it's not valid, I've developed an attitude about New Wave Writing — if it is a story or novel that I like, I tend to think of it as Science Fiction. And if the New Wave novel under question is one that I do not like, I tend to dismiss it as "New Wave" and move on to something else.

There is one particular point in common in all the New Wave writing that I dislike: the idea that it's not worthwhile to try to change what's happening; the protagonists that give up. The kind of New Wave writing that raises my ire seems to be strongly rooted in a philosophy that expresses the view that life is worthless; there is no point in trying; everything is futile; there is no hope for Man. I'm very much against this philosophy, and disagree with this entire idea. Even when these views are well-written, and conform to the highest "literary standards", I can't derive any pleasure from reading them. I suppose I support the idea that fiction reading is for pleasure; but that is actually an over-simplification: I have enjoyed fiction that didn't have everyone living happily ever after, or that didn't find satisfactory solutions to all the problems of the universe, or that even ended in the extinction of all intelligent life. But the difference between what I deplore as "New Wave Philosophy" and the unhappily-ending fiction that I have enjoyed is that the latter was not based on the theory that Man is basically an evil thing, unworthy of life, and pre-ordained to doom; that life is basically a worthless thing.

A second segment of this philosophy is less overtly contemptuous of Man. The proponents of this brand of negativism do not say that Life is Worthless; they instead say that Man is unworthy of Life. They say that the society is bad; that Man is petty — and then express the view that any change that might come can only come from some outside, Miraculous intervention. They say that Man can only become Worthy of Life, or the society can only be changed, if intervention comes. They urge that we disinvolve ourselves, that we leave society, that we give up any struggles to change the society from within. They urge that we sit down under the Bodhi Tree and wait for Enlightenment which will make us miraculously more fit; or that we sit down in church and wait for the coming of the Messiah who will miraculously heal all the illnesses of society and of Man; or that we look toward the Hereafter where Man will be re-created into a perfect state and social ills will not exist, and where social ills that hurt us now will be miraculously "made up to us" by our experiencing of the Joys of Heaven.

I'm not satisfied with this. It's not good enough. Some vague hope of "Paradise to come" is very little comfort to those who have to live and die in a miserable way. It ought to be possible for Man to have a better life the first time around: I feel that this life is the one that we should be concerned with. I think Man is going to have to do something to change the existing order; I don't want to wait for Miraculous Intervention to bring it to pass.

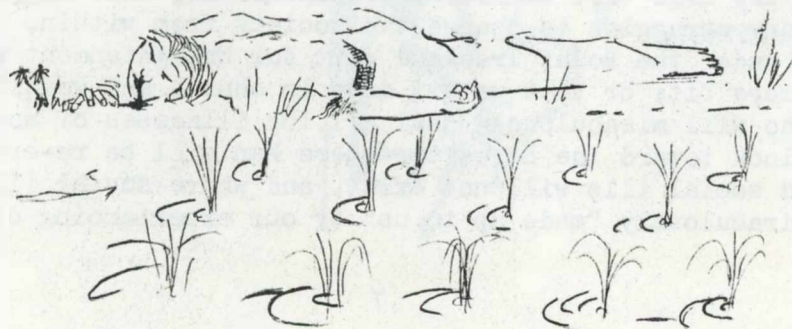
If there were a "Paradise to come", a "Hereafter", or an "Enlightenment" in the future for Man, it would not negate the fact that there is a here and now, and that it is here and now that we have to live. A hope of future glory is not a sufficient excuse for one to quit trying to improve the here and now, and it certainly should not suffice for an excuse to "give up". Negating the value of the here and now is a method and argument used to justify social ills — the promise is extended to the down-trodden that "it will be made up to you by-and-by."

And, there seems to be equally little reason for expecting that Society will change because Man will become "Enlightened". History does not reveal that Man has a very good record of changing his society because of "Truth" or "Right" — Man seems to change his society only when it becomes expedient for him to do so.

Right now, Man has a very expedient reason to change. At present, "Patriotism", "Nationalism" — all the other "Ism's" — are recognized and followed as rallying cries for the divided tribes of Mankind. But the expedient necessity for changing has finally come: it's too possible that the scattered tribes of Man can all be destroyed. And so, perhaps Man and his society will change. But, not because of the Moralness of it, or the Rightness of it: if the change comes, it will only come because of Expediency. And, it can only come if those who can see what might happen will involve themselves with the society, and shout to society that it is expedient for Man to change.

But, too many New Wave Writers propose that Man return to the forest and allow the trees to crystalize him. They do not believe that there is any reason to struggle against doom; they do not believe that there is anything in the here-and-now that is worth struggling for; and they do not believe that Man is capable of changing to make life worthwhile. They appear to urge that we actively seek out the death for which they believe we are destined; that we eagerly accept the nothingness that they believe is our due, and that we sit ourselves beneath the branches which are oozing out the paralyzing fluids that will ossify us.

I much prefer the protest that shouts to Man, as Man dozes in the shade, "Wake Up — And Live," not, "Lie Down — And Die."



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ST. LOUIS '69

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St. Louis is the city of hospitality, one of the most important, exciting, and fascinating cities in the Midwest. It is centrally located, thus convenient to fans of both coasts. It sports all the attractions of a large metropolitan area, such as a world-renowned zoo and art museum; a planetarium; a large and diverse shopping area catering to every taste and pocket-book; numerous breweries (featuring plentiful samples of all of their product you can drink); fast, economical transportation systems; and one of the largest and most active fanclubs in the Midwest.

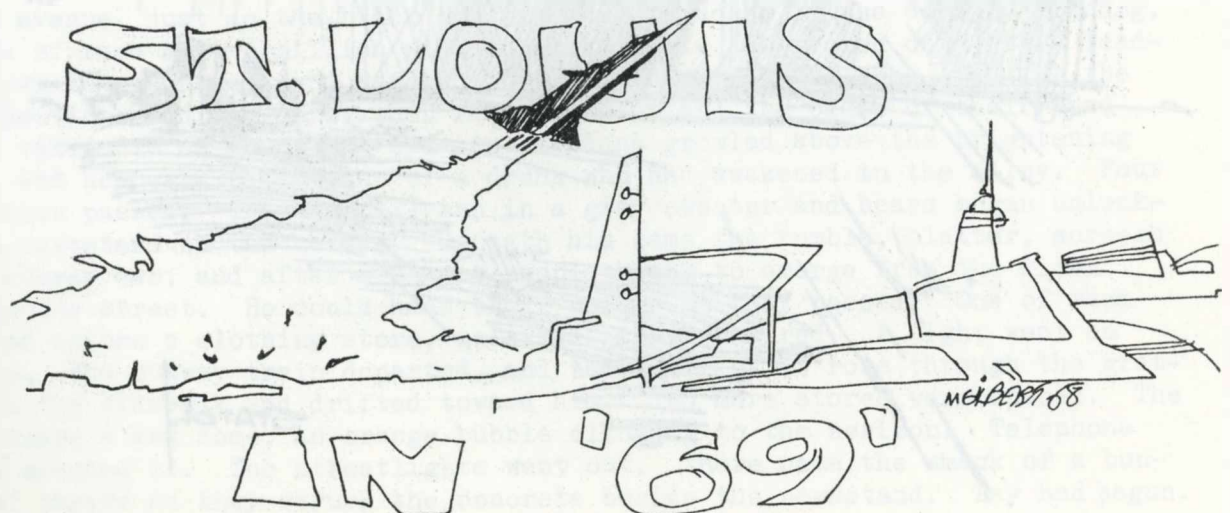
The Ozark Science Fiction Association has around 50 members in the St. Louis area. OSFA has hosted two regional cons and will host the third (Ozarkon III) this July 26, 27, & 28. It produces the monthly newsletter THE OSFAN and quarterly gazette SIRRUIISH, and has several outstanding fanzines appearing from various members of the club, plus a vast host of apazines for SAPS, SFPA, N'APA, APA-45, and CAPA-ALPHA. St. Louis fans look forward to doing the work necessary for a successful convention in 1969, and are unified in their desire to host the 27th World Science Fiction Convention.

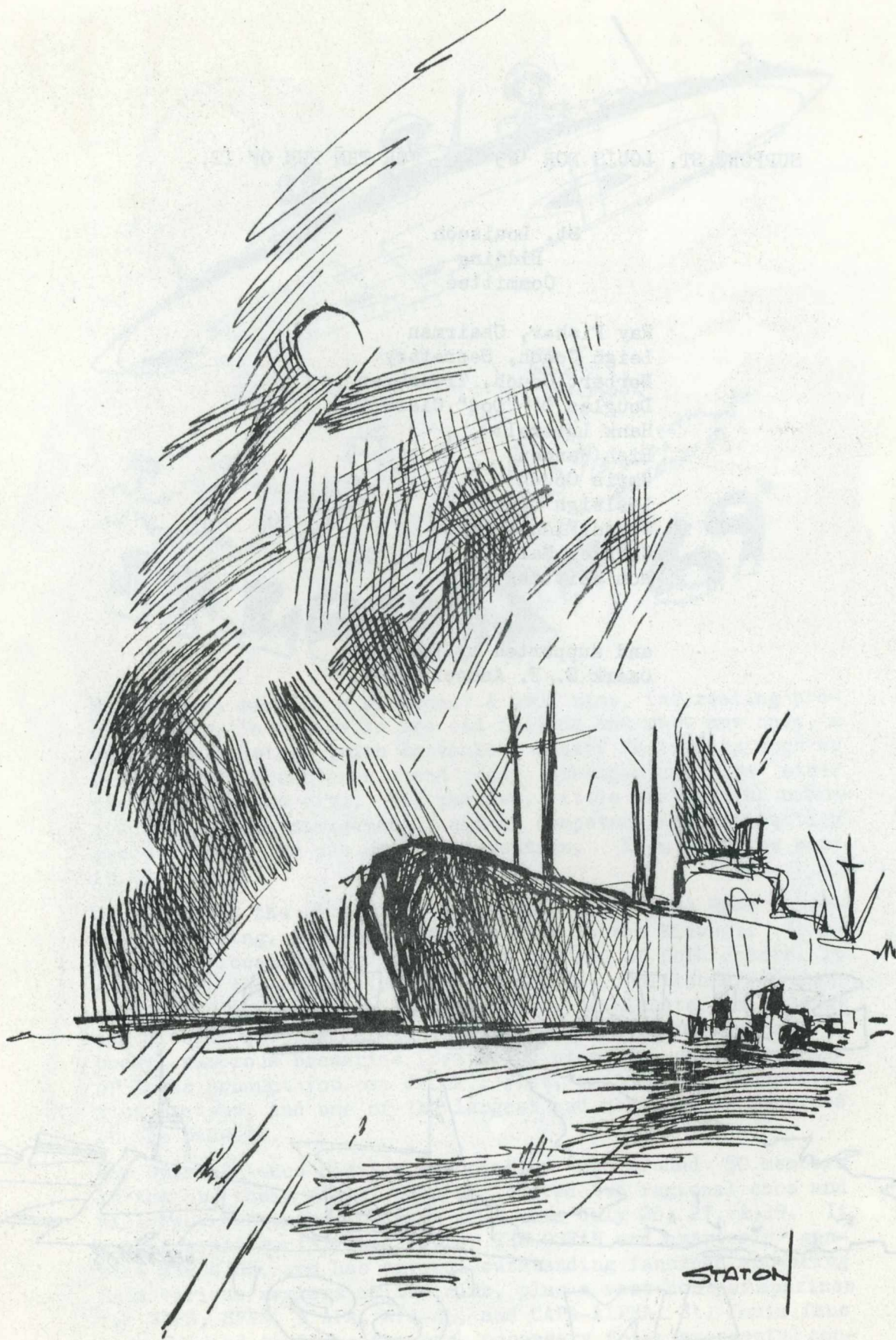
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stowaway

by Roger
Zelazny

He disembarked in New York harbor in the dead of night. A light rain was falling, but it didn't disturb him especially. Not after all those weeks in the stifling cargo hold of the vessel. It had been rainy in Algeria, also.

He'd slipped from the rail and fallen into the water. Since he could not re-board the vessel, he swam to the wharf and climbed a piling.

He shook himself and moved toward a warehouse. He wasn't feeling well.

After perhaps ten minutes, he found entrance. Five more, and he'd located a meal.

They had broken into a storage bin and torn open a sack. He pushed his way through the throng. He was very hungry.

They pushed back, and he slashed at them and their blood fell upon the floor. He ate.

He spent the next three days in the warehouse, and was awakened by a cry at approximately 5:30 p.m. as the watchman fell upon one of his companions with a club and was slashed in the course of the foray. When it was all over, the watchman washed his hand, daubed it with iodine, covered the wound with a band-aid and continued his rounds.

He left the warehouse, the same way he had entered, and made his way up a narrow street lined with brick buildings, all of their windows dark.

The alley up which he turned was filled with bottles, broken and unbroken, and various items of rubbish which had been thrown from the upstairs apartments.

At one point, a dog barked at him, but the only other sounds within the chill morning were an occasional squeal of tires and the distant wail of a siren.

Moving further and further into the city, he turned a corner and looked upon a broad avenue, just as the black egg night was touched in the east by morning, cracks of rose and vermillion widening within it. He rested on a stair leading down to a basement and watched the city come to life. The light at the intersection held two cars, then released them and the beams of their headlights raked him as they went by. An airplane growled above the brightening smog, and he heard the curses of a drunk who had awakened in the alley. Four more cars passed. Then a small man in a gray sweater and beard began unlocking a newsstand on the corner. Beneath him came the rumble, clatter, screech of a subway car, and after a moment people began to emerge from the kiosk across the street. He could hear their voices as they passed. One of them stopped before a clothing store, unlocked it and entered. A light went on within. The subway train departed, and the smell of it rose through the grating in the sidewalk and drifted toward him. Two more stores were opened. The sun became a red dome, an orange bubble clinging to the horizon. Telephone lines slashed it. The streetlights went out. There came the smack of a bundle of papers as they struck the concrete beside the newsstand. Day had begun.

He descended the stairs and entered a deserted basement. After a time, he found a dark and quiet place and he slept once more, for he was feeling worse.

When the watchman left the warehouse, he had breakfast at a nearby diner, orange juice, toast, scrambled eggs, two cups of coffee. Then he went home and kissed his wife, who was on her way out the door, Wednesday being the day she cleaned house for the Simpsons. He drank a glass of water, undressed and went directly to bed, for day had begun.

Of course it moved like lightning. Think about the drippy season for a moment, and you'll see why.

Take twelve million people, confine them to five boroughs, require that they move around every day in order to earn their livelihoods, shaking hands, eating and drinking together, sitting in rooms full of desks or toilets, laughing, sneezing, coughing in each others' faces and, "Kiss you? I shouldn't even be doing this!" to each other, and let one man with a cold decide against staying home that day and you've got a drippy season.

All right, take it from there...

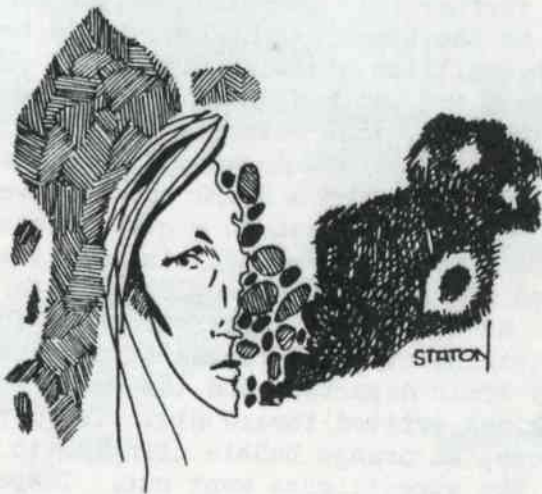
When he crawled out of the basement, on Saturday, there was no traffic for a long while, and then a black car passed. The stores were closed, and the newsstand. He heard a bell ringing, over and over. He drank from a mud puddle, but it did not slake his thirst.

He lay on his side, panting, and after a time he closed his eyes. He gasped and lay still.

It comes in three varieties: bubonic, systemic, pneumonic. Depending on this, it may take two days or a couple weeks. There is an anti-serum, but try getting enough to vaccinate twelve million people in a hurry.

The newspapers in the unopened bundle beside the stand warned of sick rats and rats found dead out in the open.

Later that year, the two million inhabitants of the five boroughs experienced another drippy season.



From

NEWSNET

The newspaper of the year 2000

MD's Seize Body Bandits

Special to Newsnet. New New York. February 12, 2000.

By LEO P. KELLEY

Captain Brady Culhane of the Sixth Brigade of Medetectives (MD's) was seriously wounded by a hand-held laser-lunch earlier today as he led a raid against a ring of Body Bandits operating in the Greenwich Village section of New New York.

An anonymous tip received at the Headquarters of the Sixth Brigade alerted Medetectives to the smuggling ring that has been suspected of black marketing body parts in this part of the world for some time.

The Body Bandits, report the Medetectives, have been supplying surgeons with artificially grown internal organs. Livers, hearts and kidneys were among the parts the ring supplied. These body parts were then transplanted into ailing or aging patients who might otherwise have died. Surgeons, say the Medetectives, were unaware of the black market source of the body parts since each bore the approved stamp of the United States Life Survey which distributes needed body parts to centenarians and others on the basis of need-demonstrated/wealth-possessed quotients.

Captain Culhane, when interviewed in the Empire State Medcenter anchored in the Hudson River, said, "This investigation may reach into some pretty high places before it's over. There is a question in our minds concerning how the Life Survey tattoo was duplicated on the illegal parts. We also want to know the precise mixture of the nutrient solution in which the body parts were cultivated because they appeared especially healthy. We're looking into the genetic programming involved also."

played by I cegenation to un they go right along. Where Mr. Sherrill has not scanted the record is in showing how economic and

Captain Culhane's interest in the genetic programming used by the Body Bandits is understandable because the confiscated body parts, according to Meditech 4th class, Rip Sands, "are a substantial improvement over those available in the legitimate market. If the Body Bandits have managed to perfect the genetic programming and thereby grow more durable body parts, then we want to know about it."

A check through the sixteen boroughs of New New York, ranging from New Bost in the north to New Bnlt in the south, reveals that the death rate has increased by an alarming 3.51 per cent in the single day since the apprehension of the Bandits. When consulted on the possible reasons for this, Carter Bering, Chief Meditech, admitted that bureaucratic red tape has slowed the flow of legitimate body parts into hospitals. He disclaimed any knowledge concerning the black marketing by the Body Bandits, pointing out that he had never knowingly used an illegal part. Neither had any other professional, in his opinion.

The alleged leader of the Body Bandit cell, Detroy Smint, denied all charges made against him when he was arraigned at Central Computer Court. It is reliably reported, however, that initial binary feedback suggests a potentially incriminating guilt/innocence ratio.

While Central Computer continues its investigative analysis, relatives of patients awaiting organ transplants have been alerted and teams of robotized Bury-Boys are standing by awaiting activation should their use become necessary during the present emergency.

While juries are not as inclined to let offenders off scot free. Nevertheless judging by this book utopia is still a long way off.

End Papers

NOT SO RICH AS YOU THINK: Garbage, Smog, Junk, and Sewage—The Hidden Price We Are Paying for Our Affluent Society. By George R. Stewart. Illustrated by Robert O. born. 248 pages. Roughton Muffin. \$8.

The title of this book, which must have taken some poor second guessing, makes it sound like a treatise on business and finance, or perhaps another well-aimed crack at our tax people. However, it is of these. It concerns another, even worse, crisis—pollution, sea and air. The author may unless someone starts listen ul Reverses on conservatism against the quick-by chance for sur may not be. Another men "A sub"

Hot day, a path in a store. But between the spokes of the only one fly two reports of for sts for all offenses by since Saturday taled 4,887. Mayor Backs Decision The decision to allow "grass-ots" Negroes from the slum neighborhoods hardest hit by slings and fire to four the nets tonight was approved Mayor Thomas D'Alesandro last night. The idea was brought to the Mayor's attention by State Senator Clarence Mitchell Jr., a Negro who is the son of Lawrence Mitchell Jr., the Washington legislative representative of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. But when Senator Mitchell, about 180 slum residents in Lafayette Square P.M. today for a "pe" designed to "sax" that roving patrol pros would be on sets tonight to help Army officers who had not been authorized for aptly ordered the ersed. he confrontation Tim Conway, of a Baltimore mization called on Group, beas crowd, urging effort to limit night, Col. Eady mounted a park spoke over a bull. He is command Artillery Battalion Airborne Corps from Fort Br President of I order th he said n speaker author No's mo' 18



From Lin Carter's
"The Star Magicians"

OLD'S PEOPLE

"THE ILLUSTRATED MAN CAN'T GO HOME AGAIN..."

Jack Gaughan

I always feel cheated when I read these funny bios of people I'm really interested in so I'll try to play it straight (as straight as that wee drop of Tullamore's Dew which is floating around in my blood will allow) and stick to those things pertaining to drawing and/or science fiction. Though, I must admit now that I can see forty coming around the bend I'm tempted to do a first novel-type thing about my love life. It would be fiction of course.

I was born under the sign of Libra, on Sept. 24, 1930 (according to Hannes Bok who made up elaborate horoscopic charts and calculations I was born somewhere around one in the morning...this differed from the birth certificate but Hannes never put much faith in the accuracy of nurses and doctors) in a hospital in the town of Springfield, Ohio (population at that time about seventy-five thou.) Soon after I was born the hospital was torn down. I don't know whether the two facts are related. My father (who died last year at this time of year - April -) was employed by the Crowell Collier Publishing Corp. and made bread for us all by helping print Collier's, The American, and The Woman's Home Companion. Only us wizened old cats will remember those magazines. I remember them fondly. My mother was a Democrat (now a Republican.)

I grew. It was, like all childhood, a mixture of sheer Hell and pleasant fantasy. In truth (not through the distorting lens of nostalgia,) it was a Ray Bradbury life of sneakers and hot dusty summers and dogs and cops-and-robbers and comic books read while prone on the stomach with the late afternoon sun slanting through the lace curtains and warming that primevally cold place: the human backside. We had few books in the house. I can recall most of them: a complete set of O'Henry; Do and Dare; The Rose and The Ring; Collier's Encyclopedia; a book about a cigar-shaped airship (balloon) and a trip over the north pole; a Roy Blakely book, and that was about it for fifteen years with the exception of Captain Marvel and that crowd. My father drew trains (choo-choos, if you must know) for me as a kid.....I drew nothing.

I was shy and withdrawn and remained so all the way through high school. During the trip through that parochial purgatory I was set upon the road not so much of art as illustration. In a class for advanced (or troublesome, as the case may be) boys in which I was No. 12 of 12, an otherwise harmless nun made us sit with our heads in our arms, on the desk top (we didn't SIT on the desk top but you know what I'm getting at!) with our eyes closed and she'd read passages from books to us. But before she'd read she'd tell us to listen with our minds and elaborate or extrapolate, if you will, from the mere words she was reading. "He got out of the skiff and crossed the dock to walk up the gravel path in the moonlight" we

learned to see in terms of the water slapping against the pilings and the hollow chunk of the oars being laid up; the bootsteps across the planks and the sound of heels and the give of the boards; the crunch of the gravel in the quiet night and the shadows of trees stretched across the path and the play of them across the moving figure.

As you can see I had no choice but to become an illustrator. It was the only thing I could do.

I exhibited no particular talent in high school except at being antisocial (for which I was once chewed out by the school principal in front of the whole student body,...I'd been writing pretentious editorials for the school paper instead of attending a tea dance.) Once as punishment I was required to copy, line for line, several of Gustave Dore's illustrations for The Inferno. I shouldn't have to tell you I enjoyed the "Hell" out of the task. I've never really gotten over old Gus. Another time, and again as punishment, (only this time I think it was a put-on by a very liberal nun,) I was given a book to read and report on as extra labor. It was "Out Of The Silent Planet". That did it! I read all the SF in the school library (two books, big deal!) and found things like Famous Fantastic Mysteries and Astounding (which puzzled me at first) and Weird Tales and like that on the newstands. So here I was, graduating from high school with no talent, an addiction to visualizing things and a craving for SF and Fantasy. So, in order to avoid getting a job, I went to art school in Dayton, Ohio.

I studied. Then I worked...then I slaved, then it was a consuming passion. To this day I don't think I have any particular talent but (for what it's worth) learning how to work has paid off.

In art school I became obsessed with the idea I was an ARTIST rather than an illustrator (a fancy I entertain to this day every once in a while) and I did indeed exhibit things hither and yon about the U.S. of A. but the draft dampened the fires a bit and (still shy and withdrawn -- THAT I was good at) I had to learn how to just plain survive in the sweaty masses. It wasn't a particularly difficult thing to learn and I don't regret having learned it but I have not retained any fond feelings towards the army. When I got out of the army at the age of twenty-four I ran away from home. Better late than never. I lived above filthy bars in Philly for a while as I illustrated a history book. The bums and bar flies and bartenders and maids all took parental care of me. No sick jazz: just the feeling of one lost soul for another of his kind, I guess. I know I never paid the going rate for anything from beer to rent in those days because the unshaven alcoholics and overly-made-up barmaids were looking over me. And don't sneer at me for the tired idea of the good-hearted-prostitute. Truth be stranger than fiction, my children.

Eventually I went on a short visit to NYC from which I never returned..... there I lived with Hannes Bok for a time; then I was janitor for room and board in Brooklyn for a time; then through some mix-up with the GI unemployment people I was forced to get a job and go legit. I worked in small studios doing work for, among other people, Will Eisner. I mucked about a bit, became art director for a small ad agency, studio manager for (of all things) a studio, then spent the rest of my time (about ten yrs) as A. D. for several film producers (training films, commercial films, promotional stuff.) I had a staff of eight when a depression hit. And then there were none. Including me. So (since by that time I was married) my good wife told me to stop grumbling and snivelling and just do-what-I-wanted-to-do.

The idea had never occurred to me. I thought all men were cursed with having to do things other than what they wanted to do. I decided my wife was a radical but I gave it a whack. From tight black suits and narrow ties and the 'up the flagpole' world of advertising, to a basement studio and a year without work while I tried to teach myself how to paint again was not an easy change. We lived for a time sheerly on the generosity of a local (N.J.) grocer. Then Don Wollheim bought a cover painting. Then Don Bensen bought a cover painting. Then I rediscovered fandom..(I had kicked about a bit in fandom minny minny years ago but I made no particular waves and it made no real impression) and here, for what it's worth, I am.

I like what I'm doing and I'm still, at my age, learning things some kids know at the tender age of seven, but like I say, I'm enjoying it and the bills somehow manage to get paid.

I hope to continue.



The Science Fiction Package

by **Ted White**



A PROBLEM: HOW TO LAND IN THIS MESS — BY JACK GUGHNAI
SOLUTION: LIKE THIS! — BY KELLY PREAS

Sitting on my desk in front of me as I type this are the first two issues of the "new" NEW WORLDS, the July and August, 1967, issues.

"What did you think of them?" Mike Moorcock asked me, as the two of us sat facing each other in a narrow hall somewhere in the upper storeys of the Statler-Hilton, on September 3rd.

"Well," I said cautiously, "I've only had time to thumb through each one; I haven't had the time to read much in them as yet..."

"Their appearance...?"

"Very classy," I said, "but, ..well...it's not a science fiction package. I mean, the title even: New Worlds Speculative Fiction. You don't even say science fiction. Neither does the cover. This can be a disadvantage or an advantage, depending on what you're aiming for. I don't suppose the British audience for science fiction is all that great, so perhaps this is the best way to broaden your circulation. For this country, I dunno..."

"We've been doing very well with these new issues," Moorcock said. "Our first reports indicate they're selling very well."

At that point someone came along and changed the subject, as happens in corridor party-extensions, and nothing more was said. But I have those two issues sitting here in front of me, and they bother me. They bother me because they seem to sum up, in their very package, the schism that is now rocking the sf world.

The so-called New Wave is a packaging phenomenon.

Let me amplify that. Among those authors whose output has been identified wholly or in part as "new wave", I have had a chance to speak to three -- the three Americans most strongly identified as "new wave" writers and -- not coincidentally -- most sought after by NEW WORLDS: Samuel R. Delany, Roger Zelazny, and Thomas M. Disch. Each of these writers has emphatically rejected the label "new wave writer". Each seems to feel that he would be writing as he is if no "new wave" had ever arisen. There seems to be ample proof for this statement. Delany established his reputation as a writer for Ace Books. Both Zelazny and Disch were first published in AMAZING and FANTASY. Both markets were, if anything, old-guard in their insistence upon story-value. Neither had actively pursued the avant-garde or "new wave".

If there is a "new wave" (a point strongly contended on both sides), it was fashioned by two people: Judy Merrill and Mike Moorcock. An anthologist and reviewer, and an editor.

Miss Merrill has been looking for a "new wave" for ten years. It was only a decade ago that, in her editorial comments in her annual anthology, she called for the end of sf's ghetto existence and its reabsorption into the "mainstream".

At that time, I suspect, PLAYBOY represented "the mainstream" to Miss Merrill.

Explicit in this plaintive call was the wish that the sf magazine, qua sf magazine, be killed. Dead. Done. Buried. The sf magazine is a symbol of sf's ghettoization as a "category fiction" like the western and the mystery, as well as the horse novel, the sports story, the air war story, and other dying or dead category forms. This kind of ghettoizing had occurred largely as a result of the phenomenon of pulp publishing, and of strings of specialized fiction magazines (unlike the increasingly rarer non-specialized pulp like ARGOSY, SHORT STORIES, etc.) which would usually include one or two sf pulps along with a raft of mystery, love, western and sports pulps.

For Miss Merrill, and for Moorcock, this very pulp heritage (although it is largely ersatz; the sf pulps were never very much like the other pulps however much they sometimes resembled them) is a taint on the field. Such solid pulp values as story content, and the de-emphasis on "literary" values prized by the mainstream, have been shackles for sf to cast off as it rejoins the mainstream.

Like a voice in the wilderness, Miss Merrill has cried out for ten years for the death of science fiction as a genre so that it may once more assimilate and integrate itself with the mainstream and, maybe, the world of best-sellers.

No one ever paid much attention to her until Moorcock came along.

"Judy, you've been a prophet in search of a god," Lester del Rey said to her at the 1967 Lunacon.

"And now I've found Him," Judy said. It was unclear as to whether she intended Him to be J. G. Ballard, or Michael Moorcock, or both, but certainly Moorcock's own stated inclinations dovetailed with hers. Because Moorcock too was promoting something new in science fiction: the New Wave.

If you were editing a science fiction magazine, and you wanted to kill science fiction magazines but nonetheless preserve your magazine, what would you do?

You might make it a flat-sized magazine of the same general size and shape of TIME, MOTOR TREND and DOWN BEAT. You might strike the words "science fiction" from the title and substitute "speculative fiction". You might run as covers reproductions of lithographs by M. C. Escher, a Dutch surrealist, or a collage of random photographs and designs, accenting a pin-up girl in a low-cut bra, in a layout derived without inspiration from Mondrian. (Mondrian revolutionized U.S. magazine layout in the 1920's; apparently he's just hit Great Britain.) You might lay out the magazine so much as possible to minimize the appearance of its fiction content and maximize its non-fiction content, so that it resembles any modern magazine for the "intelligensia". You might even attempt to put a little Bauhaus typography into its typically British (and dull) type styles.

In other words, you might change the package.

The single most important factor in producing a science fiction magazine today is to make it look like a science fiction magazine. If you do not do this, you will, in all likelihood, end up with a dodo.

By way of example: In 1964, Mercury Publications, the publisher of F&SF, decided to launch a magazine devoted to nostalgia. The projected title was LEGACY. It was to feature articles on old radio shows, old movies, old comic books -- everything, in short, which was soon to burst upon us as "camp" and "trivia" in epic fad proportions.

The distributor didn't like "LEGACY" as a title. Too staid. In a rash of overnight brainstorming, the publishers came up with "P.S." -- a perfect non-sequiteur.

To this was added a cover photograph of nostalgic items, including an old, 1930's-style, radio. The photo was rich with blacks and browns and looked like the cover for a furniture magazine.

The magazine was sent out. The local distributors looked at it and saw a cover that told them nothing and a title that said even less. The retailers stuck it with MEN'S SWEAT, or MAD, or HIGH FIDELITY. Usually only the top three inches showed. All you saw was P.S. on a white background. You

might think it was another girlymag, a political commentary magazine, or a cartoon collection. Even if you pulled it out to see what it was, it didn't give you much help.

There were two more issues. All of them lost money heavily.

P. S. was a dodo.

In 1960, METRONOME, America's oldest music magazine and one of two jazz magazines (the other was DOWN BEAT), found a new publisher and a good art director. The magazine began regaining lost circulation and was building up well when a new editor managed, by dint of something resembling blackmail, to take over. Recently a minor flunky on ESQUIRE, he had big ideas. It was then the era of the Beat Generation. He wanted an avant-garde magazine. He began changing the magazine from a jazz magazine to a Beat Generation magazine. Somewhere along the line he managed to confuse and lose most of his advertisers and readers, who couldn't follow METRONOME's identity crisis. In 1961 the magazine folded for good. The editor in question hasn't done much since but put together a book on drugs.

Another dodo.

In one case it was the package. In the midst of a major fad, P.S. was so mis- (or un-) labelled that it never reached its huge potential audience. In the other case it was content. Still packaged as a jazz magazine, METRONOME



became something that was neither fish nor fowl, and lost those with appetites for either.

In this country, a science fiction magazine has three obstacles to hurdle. The first is the national distributor and his local dealers. The second is the retailer -- the man who allots display space on his stand. And the third is the reader, who must be sufficiently interested or intrigued to buy the issue (and, hopefully, to like it enough that he'll look for and buy the next issue as well.)

Each obstacle requires the proper package. As I've mentioned, distributors can put thumbs down on magazine titles if they wish. More recently a distributor killed an entire paperback line because it was too new for acceptance, nine months after it was launched, despite the fact that it had been launched at the distributor's request!

The matter of content cannot harm a magazine's sale -- it can only affect the sale of the next issue. If you buy a magazine, it stays bought. But if you find you don't like its stories, you will likely not buy another issue the following month. A really bad issue of a magazine will definitely hurt the sales of its next issue. I've seen it happen.

So you need a package acceptable to the distributor and retailer, and inviting to the reader. And on at least one of these levels, your package must positively identify the magazine for what it is. If it's sf, it must look sf. Otherwise, it won't get displayed with the sf magazines; it'll be missed by the browsing reader hunting new sf magazines, and will be ignored by those browsing whatever section it was inadvertently placed in.

That's in the U., S., and A. I cannot speak for England. But the NEW WORLDS experiment seems to me an extension of this entire packaging concept, for Moorcock has gone a step further. He has also repackaged his contents.

At this stage of the game, the "new wave" is a genre of fiction seeking an audience. It is clearly not science fiction as readers have come to want it. Nor does it wish to be. If these two copies of NEW WORLDS are any indication, Moorcock's "new wave" is a literary wave born of William S. Burroughs and the literary avant-garde outside sf. The attempt to identify the magazine with art which is (or once was) "new wave"ish in its own field strikes me as a strong indication of the audience Moorcock is seeking. He is looking for those who are turned on to Stockhausen, Op Art, Tom Wolfe, the Beatles (perhaps), and RAMPARTS. He is looking for the readers of the New Left. (It is no coincidence that at least one of his principle authors advocates arming ghetto rioters in the streets to fight back against and kill 'The Establishment' -- a typical white New Left masochistic attitude.)

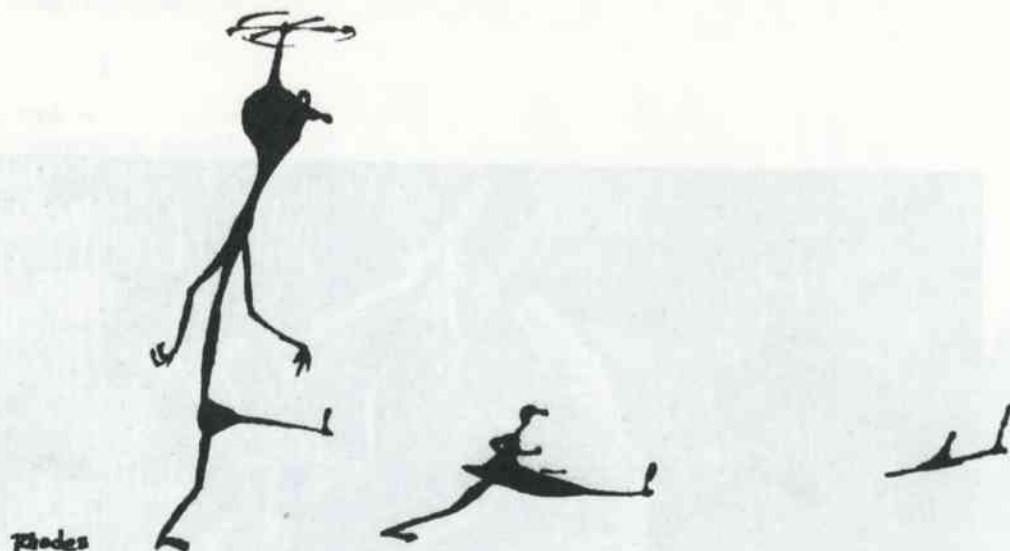
These people have an awareness of sf, but it is largely confined to a narrow spectrum of the field. If they discover NEW WORLDS (ominously prophetic title, eh?), it will please their sense of enjoying "newness", or raw experimentation and avant-garde qua avant-garde.

But Moorcock has said, "I'm really solid for science fiction. What we're looking for is new ideas."

Is he? Is the NEW WORLDS package a "new idea"?

For our narrow field, yes, inasmuch as it is a departure. The magazine is no where nearly as attractive, from a graphics point of view, as was the recent large-size ANALOG (another experiment in packaging that was lovely, but failed). The art in the package is old-hat in the art field, and not very good illustration.

And the "new ideas" themselves?



There don't seem to be new ideas in the "new wave" -- simply a recasting of old ideas, dull ideas, or no ideas, into a new form. That is, the writing is different -- not the content. The writing is now less timeless, more the product of present-day fads in the mainstream. Ballard's currently chaotic style no more masks his terrible misuse of words than his previous chaotic style did -- and one wonders about writers as obsessed with the superficialities of style as he.

Going deeper, just what is the "new wave"?

As I said, it is a packaging phenomena. It is the casting of a variety of materials into a new package, labelled "New Wave", which accents the superficial similarities and tends to play down those attributes which might make the stories more appealing to people not fond of the "new wave".

I'm not surprised most of the authors reject the label. It is limiting. It cuts them off from their audience, rather than adding to it.

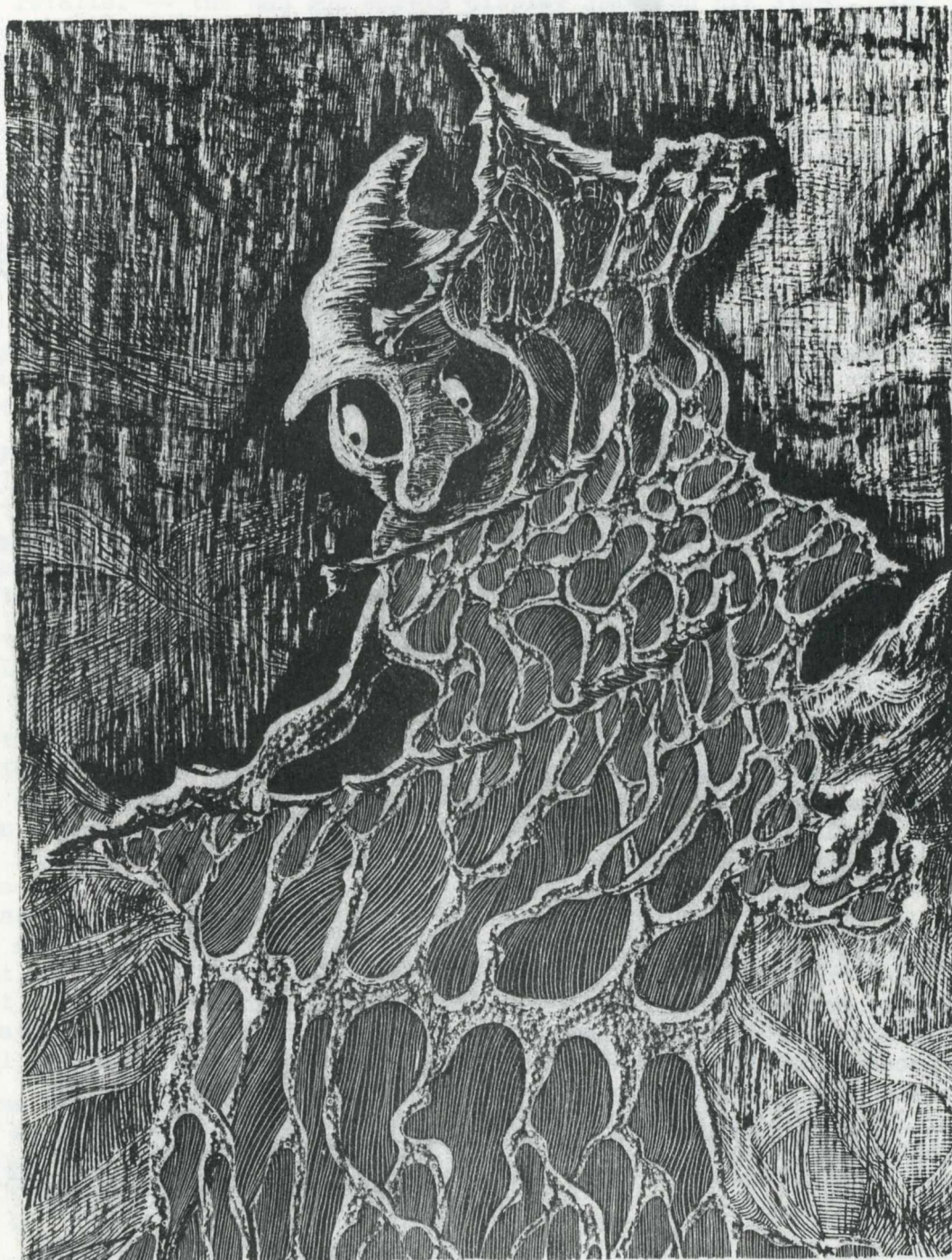
The market for science fiction is not nearly as limited by the label "science fiction" as it is by the label "new wave". While sf in general is found accessible only by those of greater than average intelligence and those who have a willingness to accomodate broader mental horizons (if you will: those who can remain mentally flexible), the "new wave" is found accessible largely by the minority within this large group who are intrigued with newness for the sake of newness, and with the externalization of form over content.

Perhaps some people really believe that "the medium is the message", or, to restate it, "the package is the contents", but believing won't make it so.

Just as fads are now sweeping the pretentious among those involved in the arts -- the contentless fads that have made promoter-heroes out of Warhole and Cage -- so the fad of the "new wave" seems to be moving among the pretentious among the sf packagers and promoters.

One rather hopes it will leave them all high and dry with its passing.

-- Ted White



THE VAMPIRE

I

It's bad -
This 'casting about'
In one's mind
To think of which
Innocent
Should be the next victim.

God! What's wrong with me?
I didn't ask to be this way.
I don't like it -
I don't even approve.
But, I cannot stop
This hunger.

II

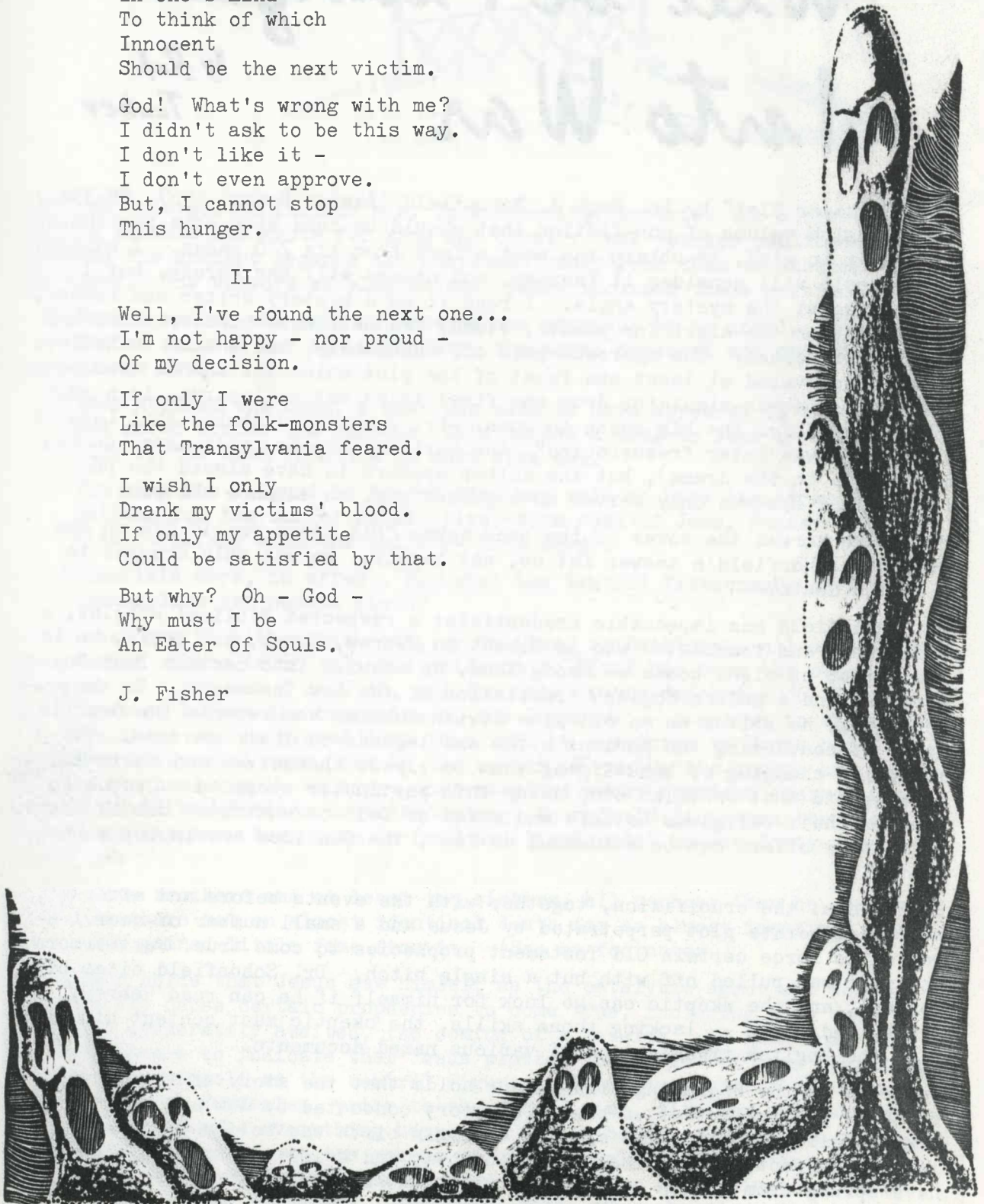
Well, I've found the next one...
I'm not happy - nor proud -
Of my decision.

If only I were
Like the folk-monsters
That Transylvania feared.

I wish I only
Drank my victims' blood.
If only my appetite
Could be satisfied by that.

But why? Oh - God -
Why must I be
An Eater of Souls.

J. Fisher



All Christianity Will be Plunged Into War

by Bob
Tucker

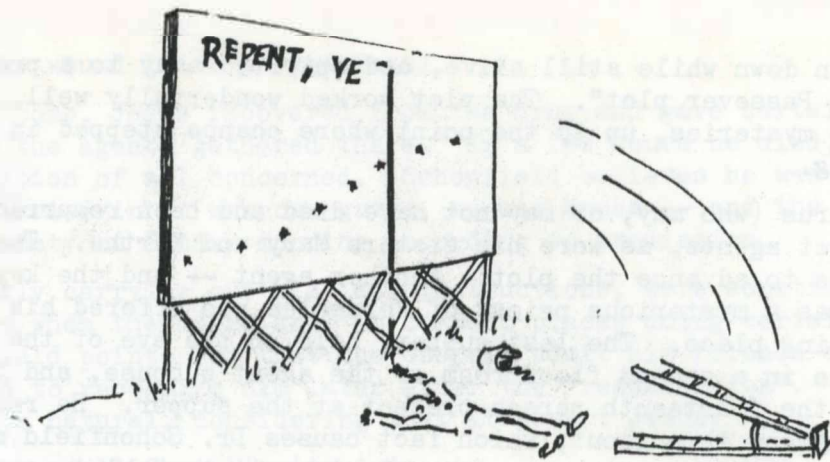
"The Passover Plot" by Dr. Hugh J. Schonfield (Bantam Books, 1967, #N-3341) is a longish volume of non-fiction that should be read with some particular viewpoint in mind, to obtain the best effect from its 270 pages. I suppose some people will consider it fantasy, and others will say heresy, but I would suggest the mystery angle. I read it as a mystery writer and reader, constantly on the alert for plants, clues, red herrings, misdirections and missing witnesses. The approach paid off handsomely, and I like to believe I have discovered at least one facet of the plot which the author overlooked: I suspect a death-simulator drug was first tried out on Lazarus, in a sort of rehearsal for the big scene to come. Dr. Schonfield doubts that Lazarus "died" and was later "resurrected" (the various Gospels can't agree on that man's role in the drama), but the author appears to have missed the possibility that Lazarus only served as a guinea pig, to advance the plot.

The blurb across the cover of the book asks: "Did Jesus really die on the cross?" Schonfield's answer is: no, not hardly. He was only drugged to simulate death.

Dr. Schonfield has impeccable credentials: a respected Biblical scholar, a researcher and translator who is fluent in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, he is the author of eight books -- among them, an inquiry into certain Dead Sea scrolls, and a modern English translation of the New Testament. In the present book, he writes as an old-line Jewish scholar who resents the Gentile habit of converting the ancient myths and legends to their own use, the meanwhile changing or beautifying them to please themselves and ~~their kings~~; he suggests that Gentiles stop using this particular story as a crutch to bolster their religious beliefs and stand or fall on what fact can be found. If what he offers can be evidenced as fact, the Gentiles are in for a hard pratfall.

His thesis: the crucifixion, together with the events before and after it, was a deliberate plot perpetrated by Jesus and a small number of secret agents, to force certain Old Testament prophecies to come true. Furthermore, the plot was pulled off with but a single hitch. Dr. Schonfield cites his sources, and the skeptic can go look for himself if he can read Hebrew, Greek, and Latin -- lacking those skills, the skeptic must content himself with the English translations of various named documents.

To begin at the beginning, the author holds that the story of the virgin birth is precisely that, a beautiful story concocted by Jew and Gentile alike to gild the lily. The myth of a virgin birth was boldly borrowed from legends current at the time: Noah, Abraham, and Moses were all supposed to have sprung from virgin births, and within a century of Christ's death the



myth was enlarged to include him. In succeeding centuries the story-tellers and the scribes who wrote for king and country (and perhaps publication) reworked the ancient legends and borrowed freely from them to enhance their new story. The webwork of plagiaristic fancy included these points:

- a) Noah's mother was said to have become pregnant by an angel. When his father accused her of infidelity, the angel appeared and smoothed things over.
- b) When Abraham was born, a star was said to have appeared in the east and moved across the heavens. This caused a king to seek an explanation of the omen from one or more wise men.
- c) The king who reigned in Moses' time was said to have issued an order calling for the murder of all first-born sons of Jews. Moses' father fled to safety with the child -- into Egypt.

Dr. Schonfield says, in effect, see what the Gentile fictioneers have done to a commonplace yet honest birth?

Jesus was born in either Nazareth, or Galilee, or Bethlehem, all small Judean towns; there is no reliable evidence to favor one over the other. The date of birth was 6 or 7 AD, and the date of his death was 36 AD, on the afternoon before the beginning of the Passover -- sometime in early April. The dates can be pinned down that well by referring to Roman history, to Jewish ceremonial days, and by the custom of taking the census and collecting the head tax -- an event that occurred every fourteen years. Certain Biblical suggestions notwithstanding, Schonfield dismisses the idea that Jesus may have been born in 6 BC and lived until he was forty-some years old.

He had five brothers and at least two sisters, all younger than he, and one of his brothers met an almost identical death for an almost identical reason -- but gained little fame from it. (See my footnotes.)

The author holds that Jesus saw himself as the catalytic agent who would deliberately cause certain prophecies to come true, including that one everybody desperately awaited, the coming of a Messiah. To that end, he offers evidence to indicate that Jesus plotted the whole bit from beginning to end, with himself as the central figure. He believes that Jesus spent three months in Jerusalem, prior to the crucifixion, plotting with secret agents there to make everything happen as it did happen -- with one notable mischance. He worked out the scheme to have himself arrested, tried before a court of high priests, be placed before Pilate for sentencing, be convicted, and then be crucified. Following that, the scheme was to have him

taken down while still alive, and spirited away to a prepared tomb. Thus, "the Passover plot". The plot worked wonderfully well, as they do in the best mysteries, up to the point where chance stepped in and wrecked everything.

Lazarus (who may, or may not have died and been resurrected) was one of the secret agents, as were his sisters Mary and Martha. They played certain roles to advance the plot. Another agent -- and the key figure in the case -- was a mysterious priest of Jerusalem who offered his house as a secret meeting place. The last supper, held on the eve of the Passover, took place in a second floor room of the agent's house, and the agent himself was the fourteenth person present at the supper. He remains resolutely anonymous throughout, which fact causes Dr. Schonfield no end of annoyance: a man playing so important a role in religious history should not be a stranger. The fourth Gospel admits to the stranger's presence at the supper even while trying to conceal him, and to his presence on a few other scenes as well -- but he is never identified. (Schonfield hints at jealousy and denied egoboo.)

Still another agent, and an important one if he really existed, was a rich man who had access to the governor's ear and who was in a position to ask favors of the governor, and who just happened to have an empty tomb in his garden. The rich man is named "Joseph of Arimathea" in the Gospel, but Schonfield cites reasons for viewing the name with suspicion, and for questioning his existence there. (See footnotes.)

After the groundwork is laid, the plot unfolds:

- a) Judas was deliberately baited and sent on his errand of betrayal, "knowing" he was obeying his master's wishes.
- b) Jesus retired to Gethsemane for the night to await his arrest, making it easy for the authorities to find him. Prior to that night, he took care not to be within arresting distance after dark.
- c) The council of high priests (the Sanhedrin) had been deliberately baited and angered, and maneuvered into a position where they had to eliminate him to save their own skins. They didn't dare arrest him for his religious activities (the real reason for their anger) because the natives were restless and ready for another rebellion, so they framed him on a "federal" crime (treason against Caesar) and delivered him to Pontius Pilate.
- d) Pilate was a sly old rascal and quickly smelled a rat. He tried desperately to evade the issue, tried to throw the matter back to the priests and to a local lieutenant, but they didn't want to be caught in a hot spot, and threw it right back to him. Jesus helped by baiting Pilate. In the end, Pilate acknowledged the "federal" charge and passed sentence.
- e) On the cross, Jesus was given a drug which simulated death. He was there only about three hours altogether, much too soon for natural death to occur -- death by crucifixion usually took days, so the drug was administered by the secret agent who had offered his house as a hideaway.
- f) Quickly then, the rich man sought permission from the governor to remove the body, and carried it to the waiting tomb. The fatal incursion of chance came just before the body was taken down: perhaps by chance, perhaps by order, a soldier ran his spear (or sword) into

Jesus' side. The wound later proved fatal.

- g) In the darkened tomb, Jesus recovered from the drug and gave certain instructions to the agents gathered there. In a few hours he died, to the consternation of all concerned. Schonfield believes he was taken away and buried in an unknown grave, as was Moses -- and the tomb was found empty on Sunday morning according to prediction.
- h) His agents, busily carrying out his last instructions, were sometimes mistaken for him when they were seen in certain places doing certain things. Schonfield points out that the Gospels admit his friends and disciples failed to recognize him later after the "resurrection". He thinks that quite natural, considering that it wasn't Jesus.

His book may well plunge all Christianity into war.

Fascinating footnotes:

"The Passover Plot" provides all manner of information into strange and new (to me) fields of research. Consider for example one of the brothers of Jesus, called both James and Jacob. After Jesus' death, James carried on his work as a leader of a religious sect (the Nazoreans) and ran afoul the high priests for the very same reason. James was arrested, run through an amazingly similar kangaroo court, was sentenced, and stoned to death.

There were different kinds of punishments for different kinds of crimes. Crucifixion was limited to four "federal" crimes: mutiny, high treason, rebellion, and highway robbery. By trickery, James was tried on a religious count, and stoned; by a reverse trickery, Jesus was tried on a "federal" charge because his judges were afraid he could beat the lesser rap. Jesus also had another brother names Judas. No, not the same Judas Who...

And finally, it was James who said, as he died, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." A century or so later, the myth-makers put those words into the mouth of Jesus.

Dr. Schonfield also believes, and cites evidence to underscore his belief, that someone close to the council of high priests, the Sanhedrin, was leaking information to Jesus. (It may even have been a member of that council.) Someone had access to the temple where they met and went in and out at will; someone attended their meetings or knew everything that transpired as soon as they ended. Pertinent information was passed on to Jesus, and he shaped his own plans accordingly. Schonfield thinks it may have been the young priest who loaned his house to Jesus, the secret agent the Fourth Gospel refuses to name. When



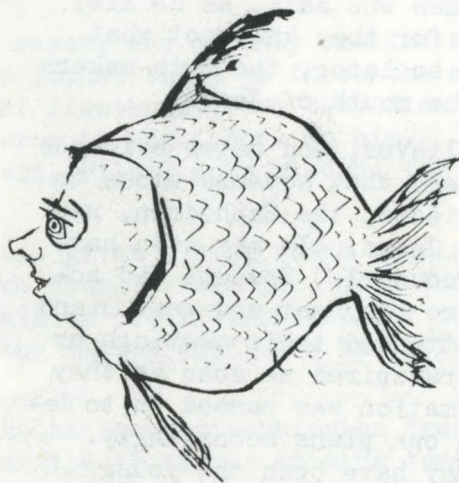
Jesus was arrested and taken before the Sanhedrin, the unknown stranger followed him right into the temple (perhaps even the council chambers) but Peter, the number one disciple, had to wait outside. (And, if you are in a charitable mood, you may dismiss that story of Peter denying his friendship with Jesus three times before the cock crowed. Peter may have had reason to make one denial, but cockcrow had nothing to do with it. Some Greek writer or translator got carried away, and mistook a figurative meaning for a literal one.)

The rich man who claimed the body, "Joseph of Arimathea", is considered suspicious because of the translation of his name, and because of certain old history texts which some Gospel authors had knowledge of. Schonfield flatly states those authors owe a huge debt to the history books; the Gospel authors reveal their use of certain texts for information, and for incidents which they handily worked into the myths.

A Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus, wrote histories that were autobiographical in nature: when he was there, he put himself into the scene. In one of his books dealing with a rebellion in Palestine, he tells of visiting a battlefield and finding three men strung up on crosses; closer examination showed that he knew them all as friends or acquaintances. Two of the men were described as brigands, or outlaws, while the third may have been crucified simply for taking part in the rebellion. Josephus hurried off to a friendly authority, begged to have the men taken down, and was granted his wish. The two outlaws were dead (or soon died) but the third man was in a better state, and revived. Elsewhere in that book, Josephus describes his own ancestry and uses the phrase, "Joseph begot Matthias". In the Greek translation, used by the Gospel writers, "Joseph begot Matthias" reads "Joseph of Arimathea". (Josephus Matthias and Joseph apo Arimatias.)

Dr. Schonfield points his fingers at the author of Luke and Mark and says, in effect: aw, come on, fellas.

I wish I could read Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.



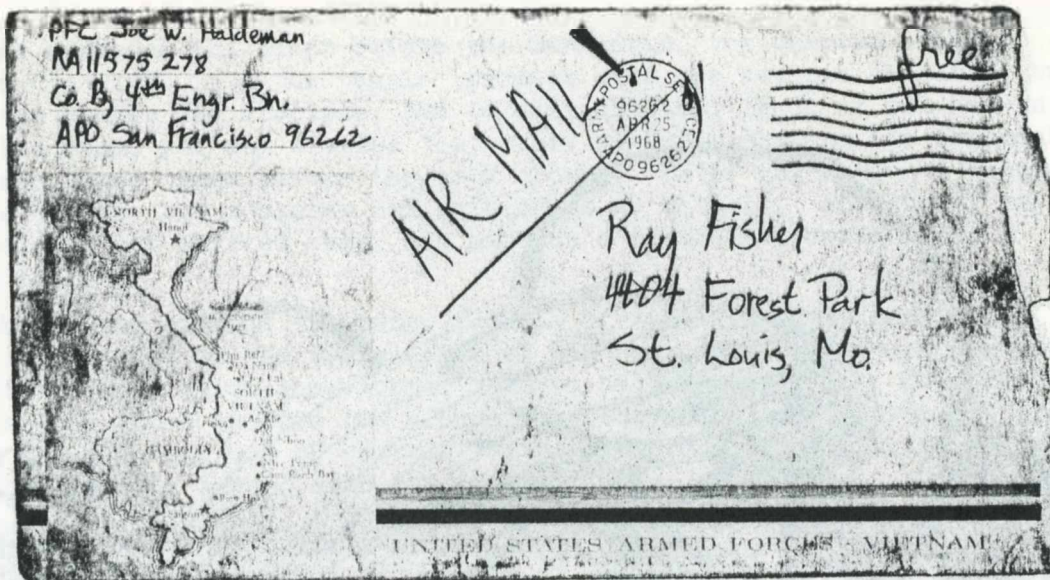
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TALES FROM THE JOLLY GREEN JUNGLE

March, 1968

Came to Viet Nam by way of Seattle and Tokyo. Slept from Tokyo almost to Cam Ranh Bay, my point of disembarkation, troubled by dreams of running down the landing ramp, M-16 in hand, bombs bursting, bullets flying... turns out the dreaming was fairly accurate, but about a week early -- was in Pleiku when the Cam Ranh airfield was attacked.

Woke up in the dark airplane about a half hour from Cam Ranh, looking out the port at a totally unfamiliar sky. To an astronomer, this is rather dislocating, like waking up in a strange bedroom, squared.

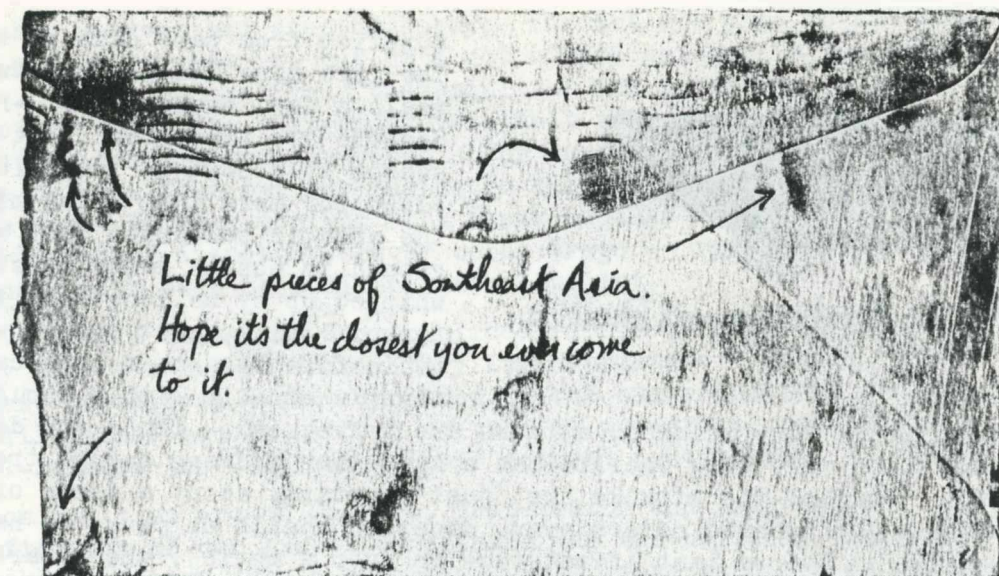
Was still trying to sort out my surroundings--found a Magellanic Cloud, Crux, and what I think was Alpha Centauri--when my night vision was destroyed by a bright flare. As cabin pressure was increasing, I assumed the flare was to guide the aircraft to the landing field. I assumed wrongly -- the field was lit up like any stateside airport.

Cam Ranh used to be one of the safest places in Viet Nam -- never been attacked. But that first night in Cam Ranh, I found out what the flare was for -- the horizon from south to west glowed with napalm and tracer fire. Charlie was out there. And the flares made night into day for the door gunners of American 'Huey' helicopters.

After a couple of days at Cam Ranh, filling sandbags for bunkers, I was called out of a formation as one of a group scheduled for Pleiku. My comrades offered me condolences in the form of shrinking from me as if I were a leper. Not the most desirable of assignments.

Left Cam Ranh with a hundred or so others, stuffed into the cargo hold of a freight-carrying airplace (C-122 or something.) We were to report to the 4th AG Administration Battalion, outside of Pleiku. Driving through Pleiku on the way to 4th AG, noticed that about a third of the buildings were in a poor state of repair -- blasted to splinters, as a matter of fact. Found out that Charlie owned most of the town three weeks ago -- we bought it back for 48 Americans, and the incredible total of 3,000 North Vietnamese regulars. That same three weeks ago, Charlie

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attacked this base -- Camp Enari -- for the first time. He didn't succeed.

We received a pep-talk from the company commander -- this is the safest place in the central highlands; Charlie better not try to attack again or we'll kick the shit out of him again; sleep well, my lovelies...

And our sleep was broken by the manic wail of a siren and we spent four hours trembling in a two-foot trench as Chinese rockets and mortars shook the ground and sent shrapnel skittering over our heads...

This is the safest place in the central highlands. And I'm headed out. Wish me luck.

April, 1968

As background, let me fill you in on the organizational structure of the war, the heirarchy of relative discomfort and danger.

At the top are the huge bases, like Cam Ranh Bay and Saigon--oases of comfort and safety; three hot meals a day; big PX's; game rooms; WACs; usually near some large metropolitan area; seldom (until recently, never) attacked. Most GI's see these bases only when they come in-country, when they go on R & R, and when they check out to go "back to the world". Permanent duty at these stations is hard to come by, jobs going to people with seniority and people who extend their tour beyond twelve months.

Next down the list is the base camp; a large permanent post in a secure area. Base camp has a hospital, clubs for enlisted men, NCO's and officers, showers, hot meals, and lots of artillery, banging out support for the surrounding areas. It serves as a supply depot and a place where soldiers can get a few days rest every couple of months. Base camps are attacked very infrequently, by mortars and rockets rather than ground troops. It would take thousands of troops for a successful ground attack, and the enemy doesn't try it. Because of the relative lack of danger, we rough-and-ready combat troops sneer at the 'base camp commandos', people on permanent duty there, and passionately wish we could trade places with them.

Next to the bottom of the list is the fire base. This is a kind of portable camp that rarely stays in one place more than a week or two. It exists mainly to provide artillery for the troops in the field, and to relay

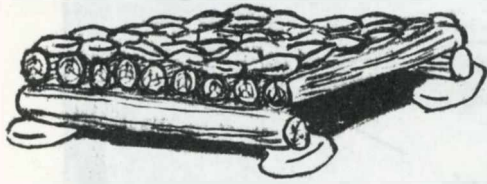


Fig. 1: Bunker, sweet Bunker

supplies from base camp to the field. The fire base usually has two hot meals a day, one meal of C-rations. Showers are improvised, but in the dry season it's next to impossible to keep clean for more than a few minutes -- the area is bulldozed flat and so the ground is mostly dust, constantly whipped up by helicopters, trucks, and tanks. Still, most people would rather be in fire base than base camp -- there's usually little enough work,

discipline is very relaxed, attacks are infrequent. Since you don't stay in one place very long Charlie has a hard time massing enough troops for an attack. Most of the attacks are 'just' mortars, about a dozen of the enemy sitting a few hundred meters away, dropping shells on you. We had one such attack night before last (first time in over a month), when Charlie 'walked' seventy rounds in a more-or-less straight line across the camp. We moved the next day.

At the bottom of the heap, where I usually reside, is the field, or 'humping'. In the field, you hump (verb meaning to try to walk with an incredibly heavy pack on your back) for six or seven hours a day, and then stop to dig a bunker for the night. This means digging a waist-deep hole the size of a large grave, hacking down a dozen or so 8-to-12 inch trees to put on top, and filling about fifty sandbags to put on top of the logs. This little mausoleum-in-the-rough gives you a position to fight from and protection from shrapnel. Figure 1 shows a typical bunker, rendered with a government-issue 19¢ ball-point pen (blue). Look at the dark blotch under the logs--this is the hole, and it's usually filled with ants, termites, spiders, centipedes -- legitimate citizens of the rain forest. I guess you should sleep in it -- the first round could hit anywhere -- but nobody wants to put up with the arthropodic tenants for the small margin of safety. We construct crude tents around the bunker, called 'hooches' and sleep in relative comfort.

My MOS (Military Occupational Specialty) is 'combat engineer', meaning infantryman with a pick and shovel. Of course, we consider ourselves to be an elite, head and shoulders above the grunts (or 'crunchies', ie, anyone not smart enough or quick enough or lucky enough to get out of the army's least popular MOS: bullet-stopper), but our day-to-day activities are just about identical. We wander through the jungle in three roughly parallel lines (engineers in the middle, surrounded by crunchies, thank the great green Ghu!) schizophrenically looking for Charlie and hoping he doesn't find us.

If we find Charlie, he'll usually fire a few shots and try to disappear into the brush (the brush is usually thick enough so you can disappear by taking a few steps in any direction.) We generally travel in company strength or greater (over a hundred men) and, logically enough, Charlie doesn't want to stand and fight unless he is as strong or stronger.

Charlie, incidentally, is a generic term for the enemy. (After you've been in-country for a while, you can call him Chuck.) Here in the central highlands, he is usually a NVA, (North Vietnamese regular) a crunchie just like me and thee. Occasionally we run into Viet Cong, the popular forces (who seem to grow less popular as the war wears on.) Typically, the Viet

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Cong soldiers as a weekend and evening hobby; the NVA are glad to use him for dirty work and to harrass us, but he's not a good soldier in the conventional sense. He's comparatively undisciplined and untrained, a poor marksman who would rather run than fight (wouldn't you?) -- but he's an effective psychological and social weapon. For one thing, it doesn't help the GI's morale to know that the guy taking in his laundry or gouging him for soft drinks might be back tonight with black pajamas and bullets. And the horror stories about hideously clever booby traps -- rare in this area -- make the jungle seem even more alien and malevolent.

Actually, the VC aren't quite the undisciplined rabble we often represent them as -- they have a complex paramilitary infrastructure -- squads, platoons, companies, battalions -- but included in the classification 'VC' are people disillusioned enough with us to take an occasional pot-shot and free-lance hell-raisers just following their natural instincts.

There's a mythos built up around Charlie, half-truths and legitimate observations, figments of our guilty conscience and ego-building exaggerations -- we make the enemy into a superman: what great soldiers we must be to kill four or five of them for each man we lose! They say Charlie is all but unkillable ("head blown clean off and My God he kept coming.."); he cares nothing for his own life and laughs at pain because he's doped to the gills on pot and betel nut and mescaline; his weapons are better than ours and he never runs out of ammunition...

It goes on and on, a grain of truth in every tall tale, a little padding in what passes for the truth. What makes Charlie run? I have a pretty garbled picture of him myself. It's hard to reconcile the gentle, smiling Vietnamese I've met with the Superkiller image. But, not admitting that both can exist is foolish. It's not as if Charlie was made by mass production, every individual interchangeable with every other. Charlie can be the gentle Buddhist or the leering sadist. It's tempting and dangerous to try to pigeonhole these people because they present a more-or-less uniform face or mask to us behind barriers of language and culture. Racial

Fig. 2: Hooch, Sweet Hooch



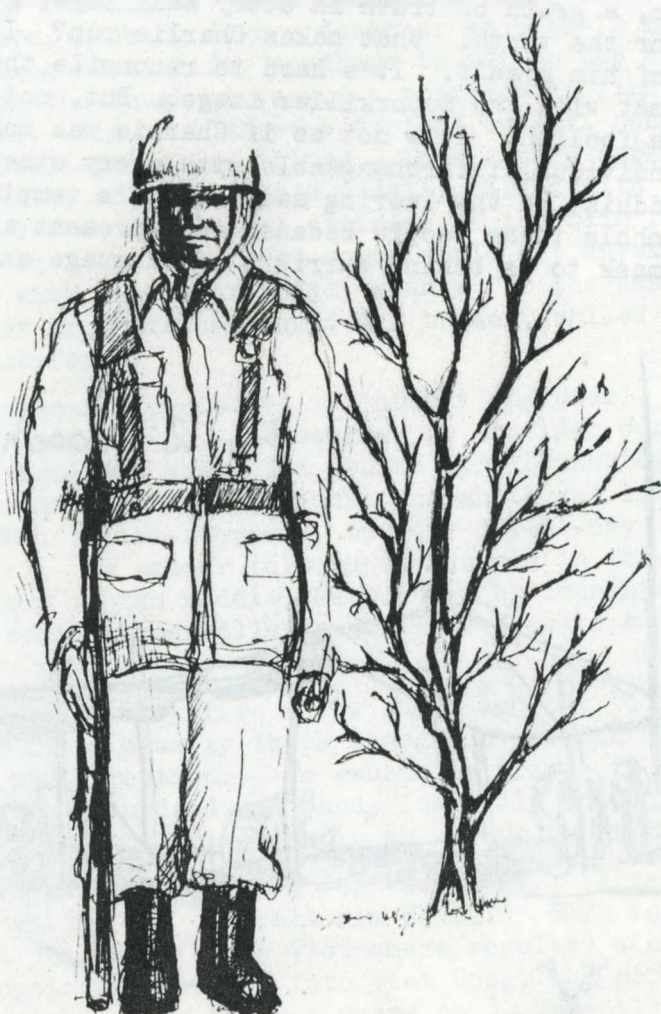
typing might always be risky in a philosophical sense, but here you can get very seriously killed by it.

It's Easter Sunday here at the fire base outside of Ban Me Thout. This morning I walked around trying to scrounge materials for a shower and ran across a group of people receiving Mass -- twenty people on the side of a bulldozed hill, oblivious to the clamor of choppers and earthmovers and the big guns, a priest in fatigues droning familiar words at them. The ceremony was just ending; I was out of earshot, but it seems to me they close with a benediction like "Arise and go in peace and the peace of God go with you."

"Boom!" remarks the howitzer.

Business as usual, here in the jolly green jungle.

PFC Joe W. Haldeman
RA 11575278
Co. B, 4th Engr. Bn.
APO San Francisco 96262





DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING

SENATOR ROBERT F. KENNEDY

I CRY FOR LOVE WITHIN ME, WITHOUT ME.... I CRY FOR SILENT
MOONBENNS FALLING, NEVER AGAIN TO RISE....



... MY TRIP ...

Some weak-end ago my friend (who is not even my father) and I went for a trip. We left real late saturday nite and I did not even get to see Flipper. We drove on the highway a long time. We stopped and drank coffee at a resturant where the waitress has sore feet. A man came in who had been deer hunting. He said "I got so cold I ran out on the state road and jumped up and down." He also said "I got my wife a new chop-pin ax and she called me yesterday and said she was out of wood."

After we left there we played songs on a harmonica and the dashboard. When we got to my friends house we blew on a sea shell. It did not sound like the sea. It sounded more like a diesel engine giving birth to a hedge hog.

We went into my friends house. He has a wife. Her name is little honey. He has a little girl. Her name is little girl. He has a dog. His name is ol pisser. We thought my friend might be married to a tape recorder but after we met ol pisser we found out he wasn't. We were going to listen to a record. Little honey said she was trying to sleep. Sam said she must not be trying very hard. She did not say anything. We drank some beer.

Later we went to the Brass Garbage Pail (really the Golden Kettle) and got some chili and Hump the Hostess tried to gaff us out of a dollar because she knew we had Shellshock and Insanity. The chili was bad but we did see a fat girl with a miniskirt on. It was very horrible. We went back to Sams and there we heard a leather prune and went to sleep.

Ol pisser woke us up. We ate some coffee and drove to town so little honey could get a sunday paper. When we came back we blew the sea shell and the cows came up to the back fence. Sam said mooooo. The cows said mooooo. My other friend fell on the ground laughing. He knocked down little girl. Little honey said "What? What?"

We blew the sea shell and looked for strange herbs in the woods behind my friends house. We couldn't find any but later little honey cooked us a salad. We saw the Waco Kid (the test tube outlaw) but he said bad words and wasn't very nice to ol pisser. (Ol pisser really isn't his name but he is a pup like Hector and can't tell us his real name.....maybe it's Hector.)

We left later sunday afternoon. On the way home we saw a dead deer on the back of a car. I got home in time to see Walt Disney. I bet my trip was more fun than the deers.

by Random Trolls

From Wagner, With Love

by HARRY WARNER, JR.

Occasionally, when you're amid Tolkien fans or leafing through Tolkien fanzines, you'll see or hear a passing reference to the other trilogy, the other Ring creator. The lack of attention to Wagner's music dramas in Tolkien fandom has several causes, apparently. There is the assumption that the Ring operas are so famous that fans can't add anything to their bibliography or understanding; then there's the general impression that Wagner is a composer who has become outdated by the 20th century's musical events and disgraced by what Hitler did; and even the unspoken, unwritten confidence that Tolkien outdid Wagner in telling the same general story.

There's a grain or two of truth amid all that chaff of unconsidered assuming and non-thinking. But I believe that it's possible for both Wagner and Tolkien to survive without conflict in today's world, and my faith is so boundless that I even feel it's possible for lots of fans to enjoy in equal degree the Tolkien books and the Wagner scores. After all, masterpieces don't eat one another up: if both Wagner and Tolkien grazed in related mythological and legendary fields, their common interests did not necessitate a locked battle for the right to have exclusive use of the feeding grounds.

First of all, it might be useful to point out some of the important differences between the Wagner and the Tolkien ring creations. I won't waste anyone's time by rehashing the obvious differences that we instantly sense, such as the language problem, the difficulty of comparing a musical work with a words-only work, and the entirely different plots developed by the two men from their common concern with power-conferring rings. Let's look instead at some differences that might not occur to the Tolkien fan who has only a casual and perhaps uncomfortable acquaintance with Wagner's Ring operas. I don't intend to cite these differences as reflecting on the comparative merits of the two enormous creations; instead, I want to list them to show how dangerous it would be to make the less superficial comparisons between Wagner and Tolkien.

(1) Wagner's four music dramas cover a much greater time span and deal with far fewer characters than Tolkien's four books. It is impossible to find from internal evidence how many years elapse between the opening of the curtain for *Das Rheingold* and the kindling of the pyre in *Götterdämmerung*. But it must be many times the duration of the actual course of events in Tolkien; both men, of course, refer to many things which occurred before the start of the action they depict. It seems likely that a year or two, at least, elapses during *Das Rheingold*, even though it is played in one continuous act, between the theft of the gold and the completion of Valhalla. Between *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre*, Erda has given birth to nine daughters by Wotan, and since she is the goddess of wisdom, we may assume that she spaced the births prudently. All the girls have time to grow up and to make a good start toward stocking up Valhalla with heroes, and Wotan has adopted his disguise as Walse to sire Siegmund and Sieglinde. Let's say 25 years, at

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least. Then add 20 years, plus or minus four years, between the end of Die Walkure and the start of Siegfried, to give that hero a chance to grow up. It's impossible to be sure if there is any big interval between the end of Siegfried and the start of Gotterdammerung, but we know Siegfried's fame has had time to spread down the Rhine in an era when a shortage of dependable sources of current made television newscasts impossible. Those 50 years, more or less, give the Wagner operas a greater dimension in time. Meanwhile, Wagner uses a mere handful of characters, compared with the cast that has made Tolkien glossaries such an exciting task to compile.

(2) The Tolkien books are almost completely western in philosophy and general attitudes. They obviously derive from north Europe's mythology and they show evidence of the author's great love for his fellow countrymen. I'm not aware that anyone has traced in them any influences that are geographically further east than Nazareth. Wagner, on the other hand, was saturated to the brink of being waterlogged by the philosophies and religions of the more distant east. He got immersed in them first from the sources, through early readings, then received another dowsing in second-hand manner through his later admiration for the work of Schopenhauer, which was greatly influenced by Buddhist thought. Wagner once planned to write an opera based on Indian mythology and religion, Die Sieger; his interest in these matters permeates Tristan and gets in the way of the Christian elements in Parsifal, and it's constantly lurking just out of sight behind the words and thoughts in the four Ring operas. Wagner even intended to end Gotterdammerung by causing Brunnhilde to proclaim that she had finally won freedom from the chain of existences, until his wife talked him out of it.

(3) Good and evil are not the infinitely separate and distinct things in Wagner that they are in Tolkien. Every character in the Wagner operas displays a mixture of both good and evil, in a way that is unthinkable when you read about an orc or Tom Bombadil. Alberich is the main villain of the Wagner operas, but we see him first as a not-too-bad fellow who is teased with the sex appeal of the Rhinemaidens and their hints about what someone could do with all that gold. The night before he died, Wagner was still thinking about Alberich and his race. He said: "I am fond of them, of the inferior beings of the abyss, of those who are full of longing." The vulgar and stupid giant softens in the midst of his lust for gold, when he sees a woman's hair glinting through a pile of the treasure. Hagen becomes an object of pity for a moment as he broods on the fact that he is what he is because he is a half-breed. Siegfried is cruel to those who try to be kind to him; Brunnhilde acts shockingly when she is tricked, as if she had been waiting for a good excuse to be a bitch; and poor Sieglinde, who is usually cited as the most pathetic heroine in the Ring operas, commits adultery, uses narcotics without the consent of the person she uses them on, abandons her home and husband without even closing the door behind her, and engages enthusiastically in incest.

(4) We know an enormous amount about the life and thoughts of Wagner. Tolkien is an almost complete stranger to us, except for the morsels of biographical information that have been uncovered and the statements about him given by a few literary friends and interviewers. Wagner, on the other hand, stood in third place in the ranking of historical figures as book subjects, the last time I looked. Christ and Napoleon were the only ones who had had more books written about them. Wagner wrote a great deal of prose; a huge mass of his personal papers and sketches were piously preserved, and most of his circle of friends wrote voluminously about him. It's quite easy to learn more about Wagner's thoughts and actions than about a member of your immediate family or the folks next door. All this means that it's much easier to

confuse the creator with his works in the case of the Wagner operas than in the instance of the Tolkien books.

(5) Love and sex are compelling factors in the Wagner operas. They are almost totally absent from the Tolkien books. The Nibelungen Ring events are touched off by Alberich's willingness to renounce love, and the attraction of male and female conditions the course of events from then on, usually mixed in some manner with the lust for power that served as the motivation for the Tolkien plot.

I'm tempted to add a sixth item to that list: Tolkien used his vocation to help him to create his work, while Wagner was a musician who turned to legend and myth as a source of plots for his works. However, Wagner seems to have done his homework with remarkable thoroughness, and we must remember that he did not have quite so formidable a body of knowledge to digest, because the past century has produced an enormous growth in the amount of knowledge of mythology, studies in them, and even their exploration for the light they can shed on such sciences as psychology and philology. Nearly 800 handwritten pages have been preserved as evidence of how hard Wagner worked to create suitable opera texts from his three main sources: the Volsunga Saga, Thidrek Saga, and Nibelungenlied. Those pages contain every sort of early versions of the texts, summaries of the action, preliminary sketches in prose, and there's no knowing how much additional scribbling Wagner may have done in the form of note-taking which he didn't preserve. Wagner took an episode here and a character there from these three sources, added some ideas of his own, altered the entire philosophical scheme of his great work when the text was partially completed, and then proceeded to write the texts for the operas backwards. That is, he first wrote the text that we now know as *Gotterdammerung*, then created a second drama when it became obvious that he should show what had gone before, calling it *Siegfried*, next added *Die Walkure*, and finally *Das Rheingold*. A few inconsistencies managed to survive the revisions that he made in the texts after all four were complete, just as the more sharpeyed Tolkien fans have occasionally spotted a phrase in this novel that doesn't quite jibe with a remark on the same general subject in another.

This peculiar reverse order of literary creation also caused some duplication of exposition, in the sense that, for instance, Wotan in *Die Walkure* tells Brunnhilde about certain happenings which we have seen occurring in *Das Rheingold*, and *Siegfried* summarizes in *Gotterdammerung* most of the action of the previous opera, just before his death. These semi-redundancies have had the most extraordinary effect on many intelligent people, inhibiting them from any possibility of enjoying the operas. I mention them here because long-windedness seems to be the charge most frequently laid against the Nibelungen Ring, and perhaps unthinking acceptance of the aspersions is preventing many people from learning to enjoy the Wagner operas. These repetitions take up no greater part of the whole, proportionately, than the summary of previous events that the detective usually makes just before he reveals the identity of the murderer, in the final pages of a mystery novel. They occupy a much smaller part of the whole than the recapitulation section of a symphonic movement in sonata form, and they serve just about the same function as the recapitulation: to give the spectator a fresh look at what has gone before, frequently permitting him to see those past events in a new light.

Outside of that, events really happen quite fast in the Wagner music dramas. The four operas require about 14 hours of actual performance time, and I doubt that many of us are fast enough to read through the four Tolkien books

in the same time span. Consider the opening of Die Walkure, for instance: It starts with a tremendous storm that approaches, bursts in full fury, and dies away within about three minutes. Siegmund staggers into the hut, Sieglinde finds him, decides to try to revive him, and succeeds in getting him to drink some water in another three minutes. One minute later, the two have fallen in love; it takes another three minutes for the pair to exchange the most important facts about themselves, and in less than four more minutes, Siegmund has started to rush away, decided to stay, and gotten introduced to Sieglinde's husband. One of the daytime television serial dramas would use up three or four weeks getting this far, and even the prime-time dramas in the evening generally move much slower.

Wagner composed the four musical works in the proper order, starting with Das Rheingold. He got as far as the end of the second act of Siegfried when various events caused him to lay the work aside, write two unrelated operas, and finally return to finish it and the last opera. From the first sketches of the text to the completion of the full scores, 26 years elapsed. This might console some Tolkien fans who think Tolkien is mean when he spends so much time working on his new creation. The Tolkien breakthrough came about because an American publisher discovered the books hadn't been copyrighted in the United States; in lieu of Ace Books, Wagner had a Bavarian king and his own self-confidence to get the Nibelungen Ring before the public. It was performed in full for the first time in 1876 at Bayreuth in a theater that was Wagner's own brainchild. Even if you don't like Wagner's operas, you should give him credit for the achievement of that theater. Without it, you might not be able to find today theaters in which all seats face the stage through a semi-circular arrangement, audiences remaining quiet while the work is in progress, dimming of the majority of the interior lighting when an act begins, and close attention to good acoustics.

The first thing that occurred in newly born Tolkien fandom was a half-serious discussion of how the books could be turned into movies. Ever since we've periodically read this or that fan speculate on what actors would be best for the various roles, or argue about the possibility of making the books convincing on the screen through animation. There is something analogous among Wagner enthusiasts, their constant hope that a producer will somehow repeal the laws of economics governing the movie industry long enough to put the Nibelungen Ring on film. It hasn't happened yet--curiously, the only good film version of the life of Siegfried was made in Europe in the silent movie era. So, unless you live in one of the half-dozen American cities where you may see Wagner in the opera house, you'll probably depend on recordings for your acquaintance with him. (In the immediately preceding geologic era, when I was a boy, lots of homes still had pianos in them and people knew how to play thoses pianos well enough to learn to love Wagner by playing piano versions of his music. The odds are too small to mention that any readers are occupants of the few American homes where these blessed conditions still prevail.) Every note of the four Ring operas has been recorded, although it is still impossible to buy a set of recordings in which the same singers assume the same roles consistently. London is the only label which offers all four operas, but its Das Rheingold cast differs sharply from the way the same gods and goddesses are cast later in the course of events. The only complete recording of a Ring opera which I am willing to recommend without reservation is, fortunately, an inexpensive one: the Seraphim version of Die Walkure, not quite modern in recording techniques but incomparably conducted and very well sung. Most of the other complete sets of individual operas in the Ring impress me as badly rushed except during Memorable Moments when suddenly everything slows down in ludicrous manner. Of course, there

are many individual records with orchestral excerpts or various vocal scenes that provide a good introduction to Wagner's music but never satisfy the person who has learned to love the operas as wholes.

No matter how you hear Wagner's music---in your mind, if you know how to read a score silently; by the loudspeaker, if you buy records; as a result of your fingers, if you happen to have the ability to play the piano; or as a complete work of art as intended by the composer, if you manage to attend an actual performance---you experience a magical sort of tonal web and woof which hasn't lost its fascination for me, after many years of listening, despite all the distractions of bad vocalists, anti-19th century propaganda, and my own personal, peculiar inability to hold up under the impact of too much Wagner at one time. I greatly prefer him an act at a time, with the acts separated by intervals of hours or days. Brahms felt the same way, and Wagner may have had similar propensities, because the acts at Bayreuth have always been separated by extraordinarily long intermissions during which the entire audience is expected to file out of the building and wander around the grounds. When you hear the Ring operas, you are engulfed by a world of giants, dwarves, men, and gods; a world where a dragon's blood enables a man to understand the meaning of a bird's song and a tarnhelm permits him to change his form or travel like lightning; a curse that causes the ring of power to bring disaster to everyone who yields to the temptation to possess it; a sword that first is shattered by an angry god but later destroys the same god's power-symbol, his spear; a boy who grows up knowing neither a woman nor fear; a man who rejects a chance to enjoy the eternal delights of valhalla, in favor of the foolish girl he has just eloped with; sixteen kinds of treachery and seventeen kinds of heroism; and a final denouement that ends not with a whimper nor with a "Well, I'm back," but with a bang of stupendous proportions.

If you're interested in learning more about Wagner through the printed word, you won't know where to start in the vast array of books on this topic which are piled up in even modest-sized libraries. The best place to start, for a description of what happens in the four Nibelungen Ring music dramas, is "The Wagner Operas" by Ernest Newman. It contains many musical examples, which can be ignored if you can't read music, and it includes an extensive description of the manner in which Wagner's operas evolved through the years from his first simple sketches. For a non-technical discussion of the esthetic impression created by the operas, I recommend the chapters on the Nibelungen music dramas in Lawrence Gilman's "Wagner's Operas." The four-volume biography of Wagner by Newman is the finest and most detailed account of the composer himself. Of course, it is possible to buy the texts to these operas in the form of librettos, or in the volumes that contain the complete Wagner opera texts. But I must warn urgently this important point: there is no good English translation of the texts that fulfills all the qualifications of the good translation, faithfulness to the meaning of the original, retention of its metrical and alliterative pattern, and value as poetry in itself. The best of the translations rely on rare or archaic English words entirely too much, and cause the sense of the words to clash with the musical accompaniment in too many places. Wagner created insuperable problems for translators by mirroring almost every phrase in the music to which it is set. The best of a bad bargain are the translations which make no effort to be singing texts, do not match the original in number of syllables and places where accents fall, but do permit the listener to follow the meaning of the original and use a straightforward style. Better yet, learn the German language. But don't put off enjoying Wagner's music dramas until you've acquired the ability to understand the words in the original tongue.

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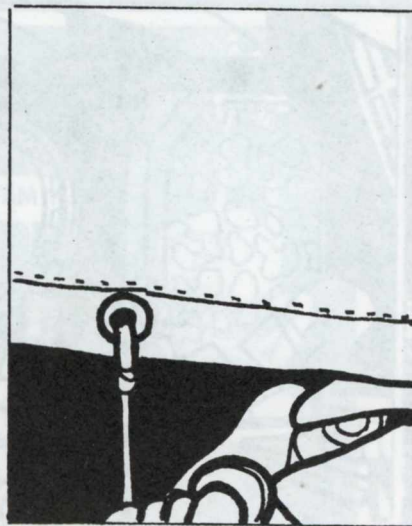
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AN EXPLANATION FOR "GLINE"

I published the Gline series in the Syracuse University paper in December, 1967. The students didn't like it. They rejected it as a trivial work, insignificant, a waste of effort, a put-on. I think if they knew the serious preparation and thought that went into Gline they would have given it a second look.

My original concept was to try to communicate with a new set of sounds that can be roughly interpreted by the content of the illustrations.

I felt above everything else, the Gline must remain alien in feeling. To list the English equivalents of those words used in Gline would have reduced this hard-sought atmosphere to the level of decoding secret messages. So, I keep the actual translations between me and the creatures of Gline. And, really, is it important to have an exact verbal translation or is it better to leave it to your fertile imaginations, open-ended to speculation?

I have specifically asked Ray Fisher if he will print it for you. I would value any comments you might send me. Sometimes I can't see the forest through the trees with my "brain-storms". Some of you may be able to enlighten me.

Terry Carr saw Gline. He wrote me, "The comical strips actually left me standing still with my mouth open. Gline seems to be an admirable attempt at a breakthrough which, for me, doesn't work. (That means I don't get it.)"

Dean Koontz saw Gline and he wrote me, "Well, I never thought I'd come across a comic strip that kept me up nights wondering about it. I think I'm getting it all down and digested now. 'Ooo Var dish?' means who are you. Right? That last one with the final frame of the guy peeking out under the blind is somehow funny - and damn sad at the same time. The combination of the two somehow makes it a frightening eight panels. I don't know how you do it with a comic character (essentially), but you manage to make the reader shiver and nearly weep at a picture that should be nothing but absurd. And what kind of damn pervert is this No. 5 fellow who jumps off of ledges with ropes tied to his ankles. I think I've known a few like that though. And that little adolescent snot nose in the dwarf suit who begs for money for some horrible personal disaster and spends it for Grog! Distasteful, but so true. And the flower woman that was froggy in appearance and those fascist things in the high collars!!! God. I'm not sure I've gotten everything out of these yet. Somehow, it seems the best thing you've done yet. But, I can see where it would not be a very commercial thing at all. You have to think too hard, and the general populace isn't willing to go that far. Also, before I get off "Gline" and onto other things, I like the generous use of black in the background of the panels. It somehow adds to the weird, unreal, and horrifying aspect of the story."

And, finally, Odd's editor saw Gline and wrote me: "The Gline Cartoons are Something Else. I showed them to several of the fans who came to visit over the weekend, and received a mixed bag of response. There were the furled brows... 'what's this..what does it mean..' and the ones who figured it out. The furled brows were angry about this: 'Stupid' they said. And the figurers-outers laughed, and the furled brows got more surly. Very, very clever, and I do like it."

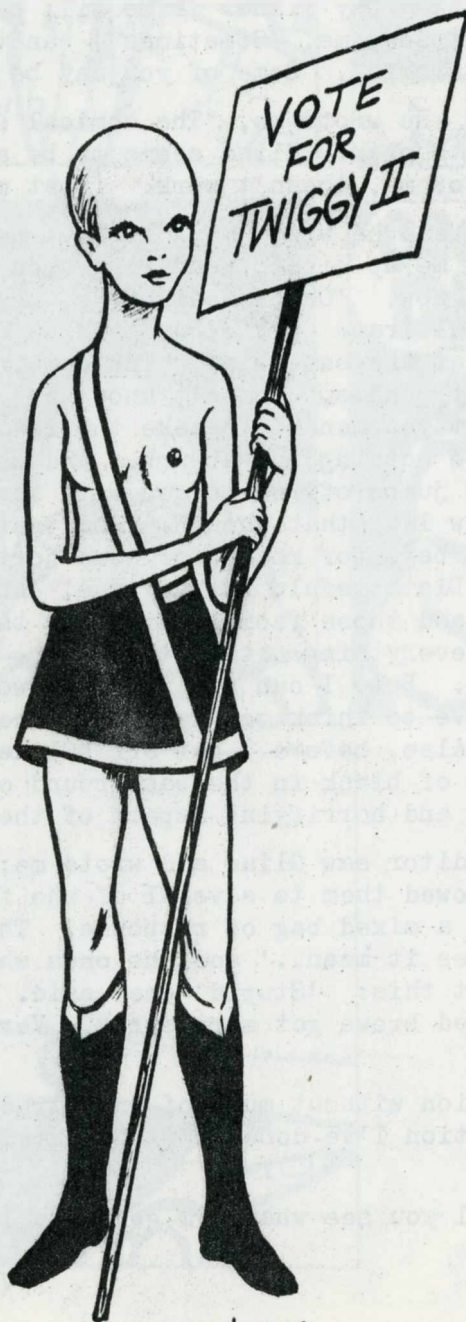
That's Gline's reception without much of an introduction, but now you have the most complete preparation I've done on it to date. Now you can pick it over and see what you think.

And, finally, wait til you see what I'm going to lay on you next issue...

Vaughn Bode

Britain

(ob)scene ^{A_{ND}} (ob)served



So, as you can't help noticing, Great Britain is in a mess. It is difficult to know who to blame for this deplorable state of affairs. It is perhaps 50% Chairman Harold, and 50% Historical Inevitability...also, the incredible state of labour relations in this country between workers, unions, and managements - ie., non-existent. Not to mention the complete credibility gap between the government and the rest of the nation. The £ devalued from \$2.80 to \$2.40 on November 18th, loans floated, armies withdrawn. Horrible Spenglerian atmosphere to the whole thing. WILL WESTERN CIVILIZATION DECLINE??? Let me take you to the year 1972, when Chairman Harold and his Merrie Bande of mind-blowing robbers are really getting going.....

(ANY REFERENCE TO POLITICIANS LIVING OR DEAD IS PURELY SCIENCE FICTIONAL BUT UNLIKELY TO REMAIN THAT WAY FOR MUCH LONGER UNFORTUNATELY.)

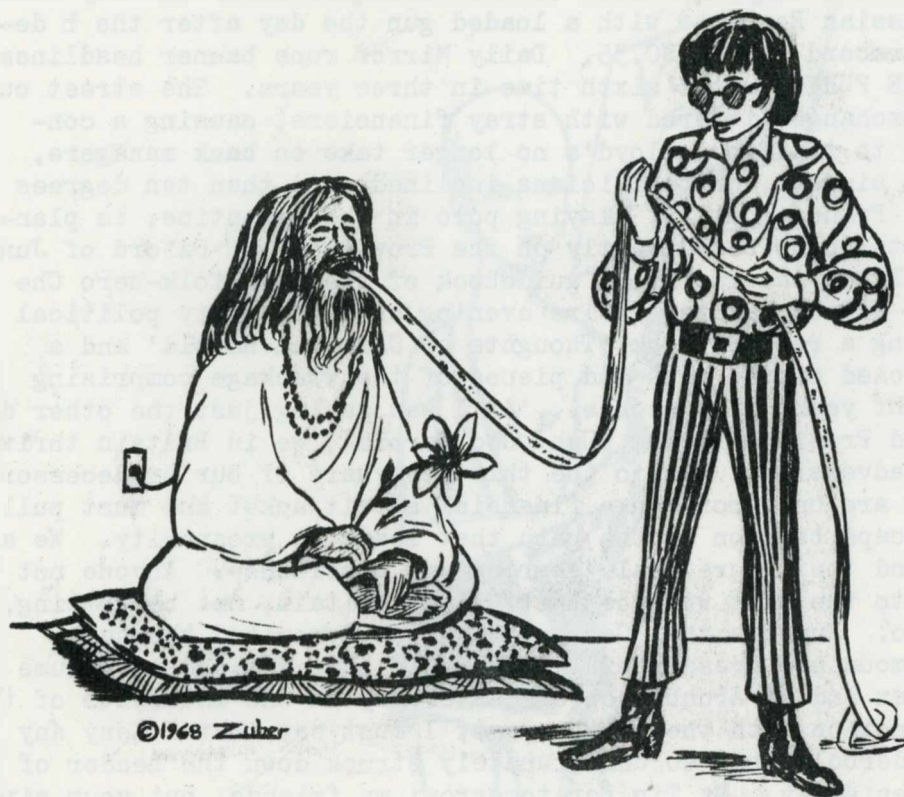
March 23rd 1972. The new Chancellor of the Exchequer unfortunately loses while playing Russian Roulette with a loaded gun the day after the £ devalues to a new record low of \$0.35. Daily Mirror runs banner headlines THE POUND AND THE FURY for the sixth time in three years. The street outside the Stock Exchange littered with stray financiers, causing a considerable hazard to traffic. Lloyd's no longer take on bank managers, footballers, pop singers, or politicians inclined more than ten degrees left of centre. Prince Phillip, playing polo in the Argentine, is planning a governmental coup based partly on the Provisions of Oxford of June 1265 and partially on the guerrilla guidebook of the dead folk-hero Che Guevara. Harold Wilson devotes entire evening on tv to party political broadcasts, giving a reading from 'Thoughts of Chairman Harold' and a puke speech composed of the bits and pieces of the wreckage comprising his previous eight years of speeches... 'As I was saying just the other day to my good friend President Nixon (Ugh! God forbid!) we in Britain thrive on hardship and adversity. Due to the thirteen years of our predecessor's misgovernment we are once more in a financial straitjacket and must pull our weight to escape back on to the path that leads to prosperity. We are a proud nation and the future shall bear out my confidence. Anyone not backing Britain to the hilt will be shot. Back Britain, not backbiting, must be our motto. Rumours that George Brown has dynamited the hq of Alcoholics Anonymous are grossly exaggerated. I have decided to assume the posts of Queen and of Archbishop of Canterbury in the interests of the nation. In connection with the latter post, I must say that I deny any hand in the thunderbolt that so unfortunately struck down the Leader of the Opposition yesterday. My Tip for tomorrow; my friends, put your sixpence on Saint Harold, running in the 2.30 at Ascot. We need the cash.'

And lots more similar rubbish. There aren't many people listening anyway; they've either emigrated, or gone all markowitzian and achieved the ultimate triumph of suicide. Now they're resting, God rest their souls, under plaques of Nationalised Steel, which are already beginning to rust.

There are riots in the 100% northern coal town of Ashington. Lord Robens, head of defunct coal industry, unfortunately buried by purely fortuitous pit fall. They are rioting and causing purely fortuitous pit falls because they are 100% out of work. This was forecast years before, in 1967, but of course nothing whatsoever was done about redeployment. The Chief Cop does not expectorate fowl play.

News in brief. London flooded by tidal wave over Enbankment; seventeen years have been spent discussing proposals to heighten walls after last flood. Of course, nothing was done. Several hundred deaths.

Prince Philip caught smoking marijuana in locker room of his polo club. Instantly legalised. Instant illegalisation of dangerous narcotic, coffee. Even more instant production of statistics supposedly proving all kinds of things about coffee. The British Medical Journal reveals that over 10,000 people have suffered severe barbiturate poisoning during the last year, resulting in many deaths. NEWS OF THE WORLD still screaming about drug parties. 150 pop singers arrested in Soho coffee bar before the new law is made public. Justice Block: 'We must protect society from thugs such as you. You have abnegated all your social responsibility.' Appears on tv, calls for return of death penalty for the offenders. Brian Jones of the Rolling Stones invited to Queen (Harold)'s tea party. Offends all present



by refusing a Peter Stuyvesant King Size Acapulco Gold with look of horror. 'No thanks man. I'm off that kick now.' Surreptitiously swallows several coffee grains and is shipped into prison along with other 150 pop singers. Mary Quant destroys the maxi-look with new 'See-Level' navel-height hemlines. Citizen's arrest of twelve models demonstrating new dress in Oxford Street by six patriotic Boy Scouts. The models are detained in Bow Street Courts 'for their own good' says flushed police spokesman.

Harold, in his capacity as Queen, with the Elizabethan title of Supreme Governor, brings back religious persecution. To show absolute Henrician impartiality he has Cardinal Heanan hanged for treason and Archbishop Ramsay burned at the stake for Lutheran heresy. These shows provide complete sell-out, both houses, at Wembley stadium. Preliminary spectacle is the England and Scotland football match in which the players are shod with boots equipped

with razor edges and spikes. The object of the game, rather than goals, is castration. An interesting variable is introduced by the presence of a time bomb in the ball, designed to explode at a random moment during the game. Final score is Scotland 6, casting rations to England's 5, and 27 spectators killed by explosion of ball when hacked high into a stand. The crowd loves it. The principle of bread and circuses reintroduced. For the next spectacle, the 150 pop singers are armed with guitar-shaped machine guns and told that the last ten alive will get a free pardon. The crowd loves it.

Elsewhere, at the Royal Command Variety Performance, the Queen stoned leaps from the royal box and does an impromptu strip routine stage, revealing that she is really Mick Jagger in drag. The crowd loves it. The NEWS OF THE WORLD features this entertainment on its centre spread, while asking of the England-Scotland football match: IS THIS SPORT? Meanwhile the Commons pass a motion to introduce gladiatorial combat in place of Sunday Night At The London Palladium. Unanimously carried. Chairman Harold gives George Brown charge of the new show as Master of Ceremonies. Fred Peart, Minister of Agriculture, gets the job of bestiarius, and trains wild left-wing jackals to rape Barbara Castle, unpopular Minister of Transport responsible for the banning of private vehicles altogether from British roads due to danger to life and limb.

Needless to say, the new show is a smash success. The crowd loves it. The Labour government is re-elected with a huge majority at the Elections.

The Beatles have brought out a new single. Due to its length it is manufactured to run at 16 rpm. It consists of the word 'love' repeated many times backwards, forwards and even sideways. It is a smash hit of course. Desmond Shawe-Taylor in the Sunday Times compares the overall effect to Berg's Violin Concerto, with the overall proviso that of course it is unfair to the Beatles to be compared with Alban Berg. The Sunday Mirror salutes Liverpool's home spun geniuses. They are all knighted. Paul McCartney says bashfully 'it doesn't mean anything actually', and is almost lynched by a group of Oxford intellectuals writing their MA theses to lengths of 600 pages and more discussing the philosophical implications of the record. Paul McCartney admits bashfully 'Yes, we have all drunk coffee actually, but thanks to the Mahirishi we don't need it any more.'

Chairman Harold blackmails God into premature retirement and takes up his post in the interests of the country. Mick Jagger, riddled with bullets at the Wembley stadium freak-out, rises on the third day, explaining that he is actually Big G and that the Queen was actually Harold Wilson dressed as Mick Jagger. Mass confusion all round. NEWS OF THE WORLD exposes Harold as having sold his soul to the Devil. Mick Jagger dispatches a thunderbolt but due to inexperience gets George Brown instead. Ace guitarist Eric Clapton produces note of sufficient intensity to cave in roof of Marquee Club, burying the remaining 100 groups in the country. 500 teeny-boppers jump into the Thames. Boy Scouts appointed guardians of the New Morality. Sinister effluvioms emanate from the most unlikely places; viz., Longleat stables, Balmoral drawing rooms, and Dorchester kitchens. Beatles run for Parliament. John Lennon announces 'We are more popular than God' and is struck down by a spectacular technicolour thunderbolt from Mick (Big G) Jagger, whose aim is much improved by practice on stray politicians and Andalusian peasants. Muttering develops among the clergy, who feel that things are going a bit far. John Lennon sanctified by the Vatican. Hordes of teenybop religious fiends tear each other to pieces, transmogrifying in hope of pie in the sky. Thomas Aquinas hits the top of the best sellers with 'Summa Theologica' and the no. 1 slot in the Hit Parade is taken over for twenty weeks by Salvation

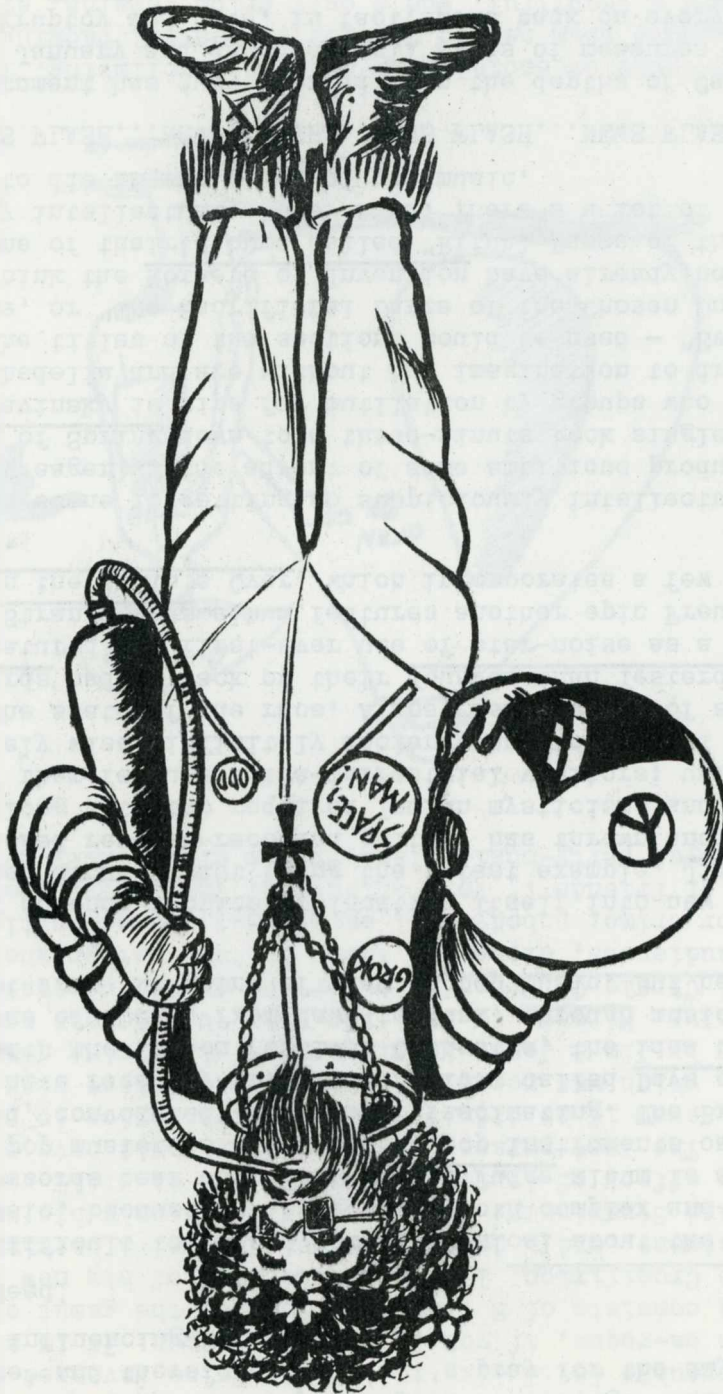
Army group, the Joystings, with rock version of 'Just A Closer Walk With Thee'. Mick Jagger strikes down entire group with psychedelic thunderbolt. Vatican sanctifies them. Paul McCartney says 'Confucius is gear'. The Beatles, including transcendentalised John Lennon, bum off to China to commune with the muses. Chaucer's "The Miller's Tale" as rewritten by Henry Miller, William Burroughs, and Hubert Selby, Jr., goes to the top of the bestsellers and stays there. Entire Australian cricket team massacred by exploding cricket balls at first Test Match at Trent Bridge. The crowd loves it. Boy Scouts roam country burning every mini-skirt they find. People roam around burning every Boy Scout they can find. The species is soon extinct.

Martians land in Hyde Park. They are green, covered in slime reminiscent of (ugh!) afterbirth (Burroughs touch) and have five tentacles apiece. Their eyes resemble poached eggs. They are definitely Not Nice, and are truly traditional monsters. They take one look at London, and make haste to leave never to return. Earth is thereafter under Galactic Interdict and subject to under-the-counter exposees written by intrepid galactic adventurers who don't mind making money the hard way. Twiggy exposes all for Penthouse and turns out to be Mick Jagger in drag...Mary Whitehouse, President of the TV League of Decency, drops dead of a heart attack sustained while watching the first installment of a new run of TILL DEATH US TO PART, co-authored by James Joyce and William Burroughs. Series gains unprecedented popularity as a result. Queen admitted to sanatorium for drug cure and turns out to be Twiggy in disguise. Mick Jagger ascends on high after forty days of rule, and blasts the whole world with neutronium thunderbolt. Finis.

Mind you, this isn't all as farfetched as it seems. The 'I'm backing Britain' movement referred to at the beginning has been crashing relentlessly on like an out-of-control juggernaut, with the usual farcical results. The Associated Electrical Union has fired three of its shop stewards for supporting the movement - fired them for wanting to do more work for nothing! People everywhere but in this country have been climbing onto the commercial bandwagon. Tee shirts covered with a Union Jack and "I'm backing Britain" are being imported from Portugal. "I'm backing Britain" alarm clocks are being imported from Germany, while Hong Kong is supplying us with genuine "I'm backing Britain" knickers manufactured, again, from Union Jacks - (the Union Jack, of course, being our proud, devalued, flag.) So much for the other big slogan of the moment - "Buy British". The gap between imports and exports is enormous. Last month the government decided it couldn't be so immoral as to sell arms to South Africa and make £200 million. So De Gaulle is being immoral and happily collecting the cash instead. We, on the other hand, have saved our souls, but we're broke. We have to depend on the Beatles and the Rolling Stones to make money for the country, and they, of course, are Unmentionable at the moment. The Beatles' "Magical Mystery Tour", which wasn't that good (but not that bad) was torn to shreds by slavering critics dribbling with sadistic glee at a chance to say "we knew they were no good really." No one's bothered by the fact that they're among the best dollar earners the country has - that film is being flogged to one of your tv companies for around a million dollars, and I hear the album of the film isn't doing so badly either. Along with, of course, the Stones new, post-psychedelic, totally freaked out, etc etc etc, album, "Their Satanic Majesties Request".

This is however distinguished, whatever its other manifold defects, by its science fiction tract, 2000 Light Years From Home, which is great when accompanied by a good light show. A writer in the London Observer has called it

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"impassioned, simple, mysterious, nightmarish", and of this song along with the Beatles' "I am the Walrus" he says "Together these two songs are perhaps the most significant songs of the decade..." and so on. Two paragraphs later he's round to comparing them - not to Berg, but to Stockhausen. I was a bit off there. He writes: "Stockhausen is an influence, the Beatles say; presumably because he creates an 'extraordinary sonic barrage' which is a 'sledgehammer experience' and therefore Art. (Let's pray for the day when it is the Beatles who are influencing Stockhausen)..."

Let us pray, indeed!

Actually, it's difficult to remain totally cynical about the cultural value of modern pop music, because it is becoming both complex and sophisticated, as many recent records bear out. The Vanilla Fudge album is an extraordinary example of what pop musicians using simply pop instruments can do. Their music is involved, convoluted, withdrawn, fascinating. The British group the Moody Blues have recently produced an album called Days of Future Passed in conjunction with the London Festival Orchestra, the idea being to illustrate the progress of a day, from dawn to dusk, through music. Nothing new, of course, except from the point of view of pop music. But heartening, nevertheless.

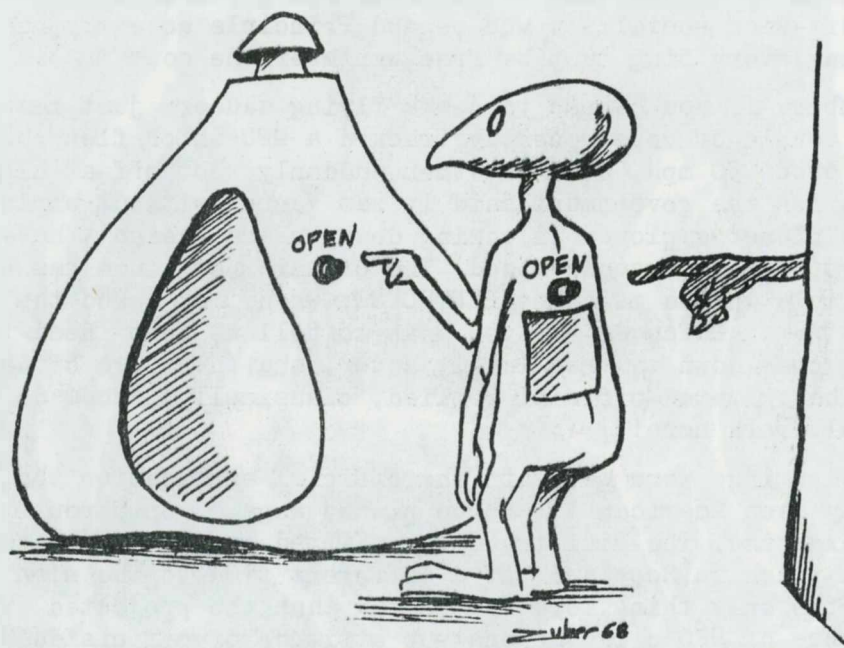
There's a lot of science fiction insinuating itself into new records as well, the aforementioned Stones tract being the latest example. Jimi Hendrix, he of the multi-tracked reverse-recorded guitar, has thrown another two into his latest lp, along with the required Indian mysticisms and Dylanesque imagery. Both of them feature extra-terrestrial visitors; unfortunately, one of them, infinitely wise, infinitely ancient, has to find it within himself to moralise on the state of the race. Almost reminds one of some sf. Apart from him, the Byrds had a track on their Younger than Yesterday album called CTA102, which featured the first-ever use of star-noise as a backing instrument. The Doors Strange Days album features another epic Freudian-rock number entitled When the Music's Over, which incorporates a few more murders and rapes and things.

In fact the whole scene is getting so suspiciously intellectual that one now awaits, if hardly eagerly, the advent of some ambitious producer who decides to cut The Rites of Spring down to a three-minute rock single. I can't help feeling that Stravinsky is ripe for mutilation by groups who specialise in second-rate psychedelia and are without the imagination to dream up their own material. Even the titles of the sections could be used - "Evocation of the Ancestors", maybe, or "The Sacrificial Dance of the Chosen One". Come to think of it, I think the Mothers of Invention have already borrowed from that - a track from one of their albums called "Ritual Dance of the Pumpkin", or something equally intellectual. Never mind. There's a lot of other modern composers ready to die in the cause of pop music.

NEWS FLASH...NEWS FLASH...NEWS FLASH...NEWS FLASH...NEWS FLASH...NEWS FLASH

Our beloved government has just emerged from the depths of Cabinet recession this 16th day of January and announced all kinds of measures designed to save us from bankruptcy and have, in fact, gone back on every promise they got into power on! The British army is withdrawing from the East by 1971, so you people can have the lot to yourself and welcome! We've cancelled our order for 50 F-111 jets from you, saving us 400 million pounds, and costing you the same; ended free medicine (2/6d - 30¢ - prescription charges back); and now even the school kiddies won't get their free milk anymore. And there are all kinds of other wonderful cuts made in the economy which one can confidently forecast will have not the slightest effect as we slide downhill!

To get off such depressing subjects as Spenglerian ruin - one which is likely to depress us a good deal more during the coming months when new taxes get heaped upon us - here's a plug for a new lp by Phil Ochs, his first for quite a while, called Pleasures of the Harbor. I'm not sure whether to be pleased or not, for I only heard it for the first time today, and at least one track bears out my cynical observations about potted Stravinsky. Only trouble is, I like it. If Bob Dylan invented folk rock, then this album is ba-roque, if you'll excuse the pun. It is a good 52 minutes worth, and consists of 8 tracks, which run the gamut of orchestral inventiveness. The Crucifixion, lyrically the best of his new song/poems gets the full treatment, and a description of the weird backing would fairly be oscillator and Stravinsky. Nine minutes long, only his somewhat weak voice destroys the effect of lyric and music - but it still remains a pretty good track. The last phrases in particular could have come straight out of Stravinsky, even if he didn't have the electronics to play about with. Flower Lady, which was recorded to excellent effect with harpsichord backing a year ago by Jim & Jean, is given the full string quartet works, and is very effective. Miranda is full rag-time, boisterous and pleasing. Outside Of A Small Circle Of Friends is for the social protestors who used to make up Ochs' audiences, along the theme of "why bother when you witness an accident or crime; nobody will care about the casualties 'outside of a small circle of friends'." Very effective. The Party, opening with deliberately hackneyed party-music piano, is an efficiently cynical eight-



minute look at the world of socialising and social climbing. The title song is another eight-minute poem set to flowing orchestral backing; very - to use a hackneyed word - beautiful. One's only gripe remains, as always with Ochs, with the poverty of his voice, which is only partially remedied by deep bass. One could also complain, I suppose, at the derivativeness of the backing of I've Had Her, which sounds like a hangover from Tchaikovsky's B-Flat Piano Concerto. But it's okay here. Without the lyrics and the mood they possess, they would be corny and even, God forbid, Laurence Welkish. However there's a place for everything; this, I think, is the right place,

and this, I think, is a very fine album, with or without the potted Stravinsky. So the era of ba-roque begins...

While in the nostalgic half-world of former folkies, I'll mention seeing Peter, Paul & Mary in concert last night, at great danger to my trendy soul. The audience was packed; they put on a good performance; they sang a new, resurrected, Bob Dylan song, and four old Bob Dylan songs. Glad to say, Blowing In The Wind still retains its magic after five years of being murdered. Which would, perhaps, be a pleasant way to end were it not for the fact that I'm determined to get at you lot having been so cynical at the expense of my own (!) country. I'm afraid that's not difficult, since there have been some rather choice items in the news recently. I especially liked the US army's plan to parachute elephants into the Vietnamese jungle to assist in the struggle against oppression. Indoctrinated, capitalist, elephants maybe. One is tempted to think that maybe the High Command has been watching too many reruns of Dumbo in its leisure hours. At any rate, it'll be interesting to see if the elephants do better than the marines...

Then there's the item the other day about the American lawsuit which was dismissed by the Judge as being an Act of God, and therefore not liable for damages. So he promptly files a \$30,000,000 suit against God, naming 21 churches as witnesses.....

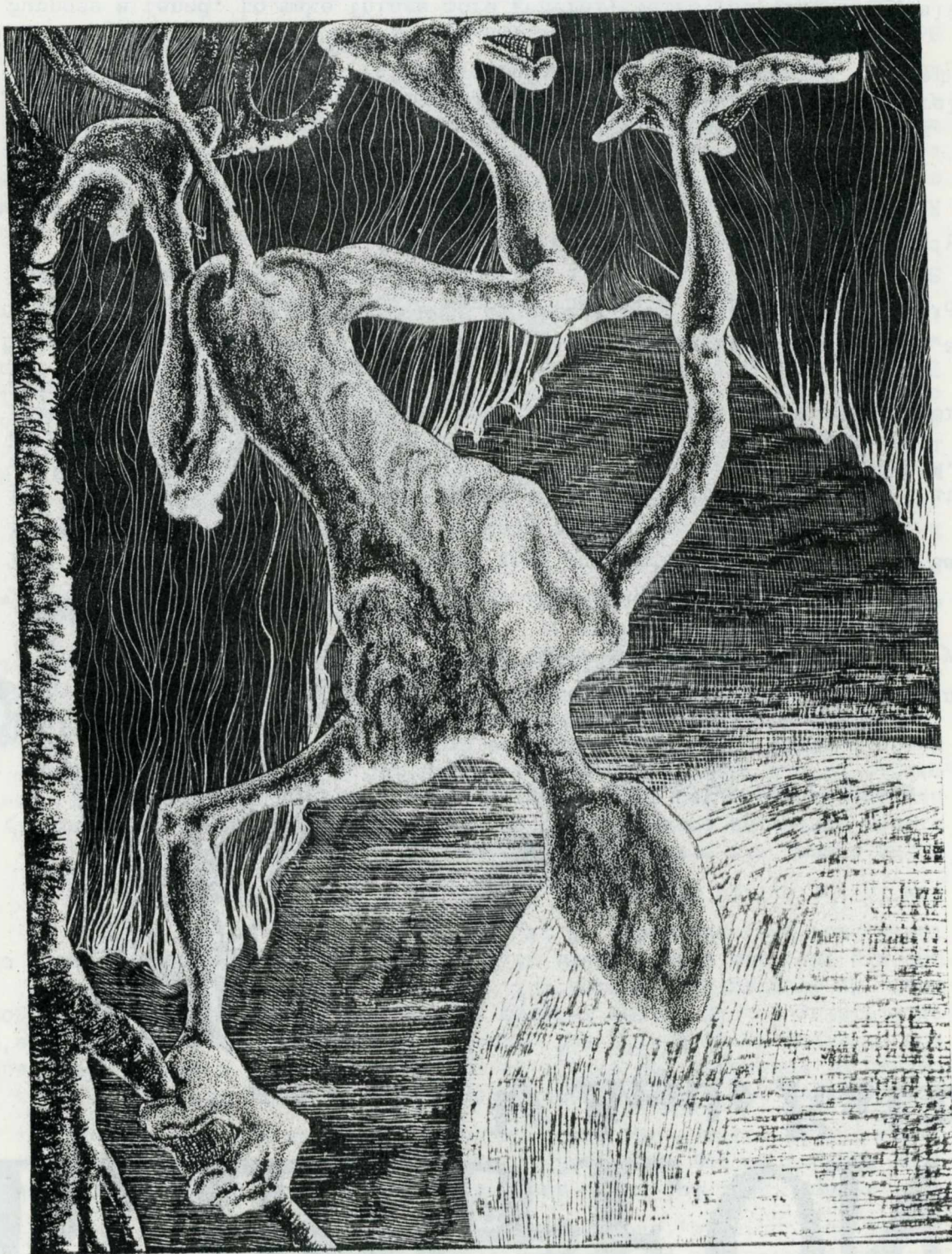
Talking of figures, you misquoted me last time, or maybe I misquoted myself. The cost of free prescriptions in this country was about \$150 million, not thousand - and the same goes for the cost of free milk for school kids. But these things have been axed by our splendid government, to the discomfiture of the left-wing socialists who regard Principle as everything - (the principle being everything must be free whatever the cost in tax...)

And remember, if you happen to see a flying saucer, just remember it's only Venus. A couple of cops recently tracked a UFO which flew for a few hundred yards at about 50 mph, hovered, then suddenly shot off at high speed. A spokesman for the government said it was Venus, without explaining the technique the planet employed in coming down to tree height, hovering, then shooting off at supersonic speed. The official attitude has been immortalised in an article in the magazine PENTHOUSE; when they asked the Press Officer of the Ministry of Defence, "Do you mean to tell us that these two constables saw Venus come down to tree level, hover, and then take off at supersonic speed?" The agitated official replied, classically: "What do you want from me? I only work here!"

Further sightings were met with the official explanation that the observers had merely seen American Air Force planes engaged on a routine mid-air refueling exercise. The Ministry quite omitted to mention that the exercises had taken place in Scotland, at a different time to the sightings altogether. In fact, the only thing more mystifying than the projected existence or lack of existence of UFO's is the shat-up attitude of officialdom, telling pathetic lies even when caught with pants down. Nothing new in that, of course. With a bit of luck we can contact ET's and get them to take away our leaders. -- And that is a sufficiently optimistic note to end on!

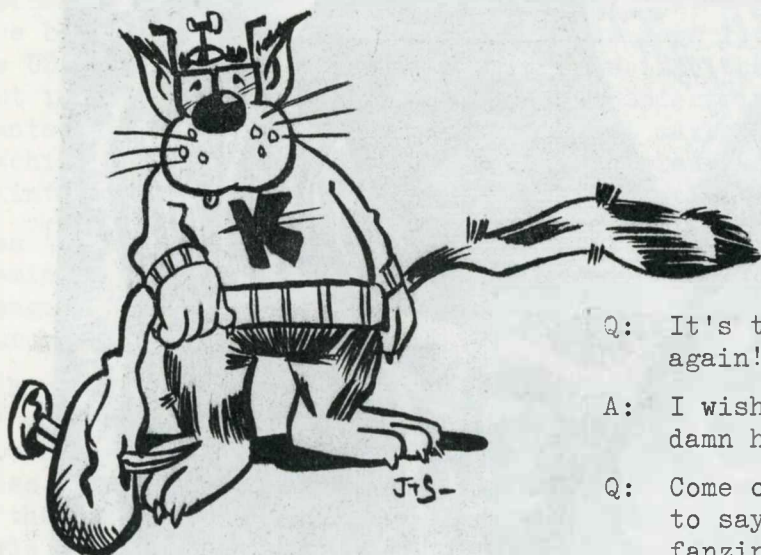
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* We've had several requests for back issues. But we're out of all, ex- *
* cept for a limited number of #18. If anyone has copies of #'s 1 thru *
* 17 of ODD that they'd care to send in, we'll extend their subscription *
* one issue for every one received in reasonable shape. -RDF- *
* *****



BLUDGEON

by Arnie Katz



Q: It's time to review fanzines again!

A: I wish you wouldn't sound so damn happy about the whole thing.

Q: Come on! Ray and Joyce expect you to say brilliant things about fanzines.

A: That would be a lot easier if there were more brilliant fanzines to say things about.

Q: I'm glad you mentioned quality. Quality doesn't matter! At least that's what Bob Vardeman's been saying in the last couple issues of SANDWORM. He said that critics shouldn't set up quality standards, because publishing fanzines is a hobby. Fanzines are published because the editor enjoys doing so.

A: Then maybe I shouldn't bother doing a column of fanzine criticism at all.

Q: I don't think the Fishers would approve that line of reasoning. You'd better get on with it.

A: Oh, all right. Fanzines are, indeed, a hobby, and they are produced because the editor enjoys doing so.

Q: Then you agree with Vardeman?

A: Hardly. I think the statement that fanzines are a hobby is somewhat superficial. It seems logical to me that the enjoyment is not in merely publishing a fanzine, but rather in publishing a good fanzine -- the best one is capable of publishing.

Q: Suppose a faned, to make things more general, tells you that the quality of the product does not affect his enjoyment of its production.

A: I would say that he's very easily satisfied. But I would also point out to this faned that he is confusing his enjoyment with ours.

Q: I don't understand. The editor enjoys publishing, what more can there be?

A: The editor gets his enjoyment out of publishing his fanzine. The fans to

whom it is sent don't participate in the production, so their enjoyment of it must come from other aspects. Obviously, these "other aspects" are the written and pictorial material contained in the fanzine. The better the contents, the greater the readers' enjoyment.

Q: I'll accept that, but where does the fanzine critic come in? Why should Greg Benford or any other critic try to establish fanzine quality standards in his column? The faned is having fun with his hobby, and.....

A: You'd better pay closer attention or you'll be doing the rest of this column by yourself. The critic is nothing other than a perceptive reader who attempts to objectify and communicate his opinions on whatever he's criticising to his fellow readers to aid them in maximizing their enjoyment. By sending his fanzine out, I would say that the faned tacitly accepts the idea that readers will evaluate his fanzine on the basis of their, not his, enjoyment of it.

Q: How is the critic objective? I mean, he's just a reader.

A: Being human, the critic comes equipped with the usual assortment of biases just like everyone, but he does try to concretize and objectify his opinions, to get past "I-liked-this, I-hated-that". One aid to the critic in his task of meaningful evaluation is to have a set of standards against which to measure the objects of his criticism. One would expect a good fanzine critic to have extensive knowledge of the fanzine field past and present, and that he will take as his standard of excellence those fanzines, writings, and illustrations which he considers the best fandom has produced.

Q: Then why don't all critics have the same standards, if they are really objective?

A: Because there is a subjective element to any criticism in that no two critics are going to have exactly the same taste. Obviously, critics with different sets of standards, different notions of what is best, will rate fanzines differently. For example, Harry Warner is far less interested in layout than Ted White, and will give less stress to this aspect of fanzines -- assuming a minimum competence is present -- than Ted will. The critic expects his readers to take his standards into consideration when reading a critique. That standards will differ from critic to critic is no reason to say that standards shouldn't exist.

Q: So readers have to use their heads when reading a good fanzine critic and be aware of the standards that critic uses.

A: Right. And all conscientious critics have the same aim; to use the highest standards possible in their reviews in order to foster the highest possible standards on the part of both fanzine publishers and his fellow readers. The conscientious critic does not accept every crudzine sent him with a big smile because it has been produced by a fun-loving amateur. Readers have rights, too, you know.

Q: So get on with the reviewing, already!

A: grumble-grumble

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CØSIGN #14, edited by Rod Goman, 160 Chittenden Ave., Columbus, Ohio 43201. Trade, printed LoC, contrib, or 35¢. Bi-monthly. mimeographed 34pp.

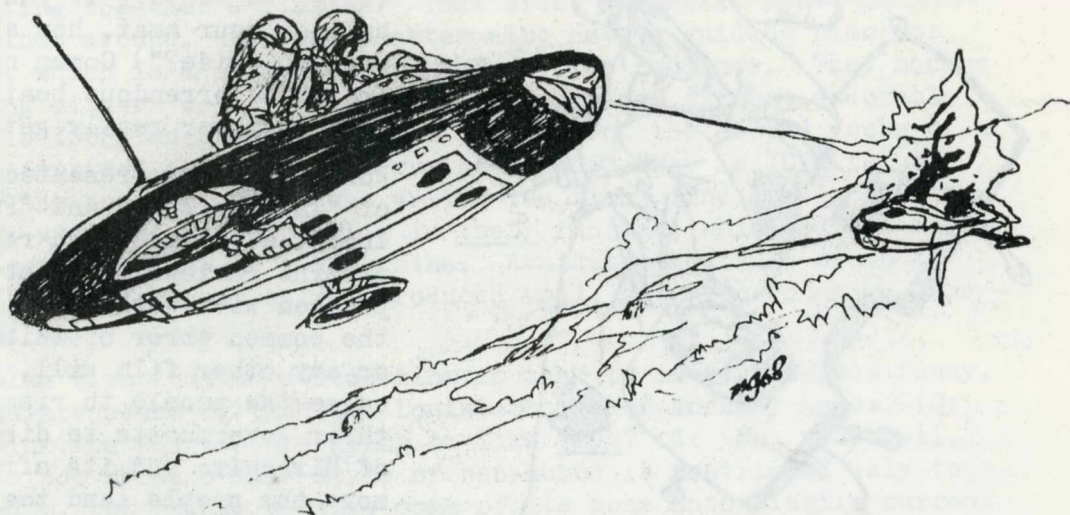
The story which I shall call "The Neofaned's Progress" is one of the commonplaces of fandom. Joe Phan publishes his first fanzine; it stinks like month-old fish. Joe publishes his second fanzine and -- lo and behold! -- he's Learned Things; it only stinks like week-old fish! In succeeding issues, the editor becomes more proficient, the crud quotient decreases, and "The Neofan's Gazette" takes its place as a solid fanzine, an ornament to the field.

Early issues of CØSIGN exhibited a fair issue-to-issue improvement, but the fanzine derailed somewhere and has been essentially static for about the last half-dozen issues. There have been a number of changes in the editorship, but I don't consider that a satisfactory explanation for CØSIGN's bewildering failure to develop. The editors have all been drawn from the group which has been producing CØSIGN right along, so it is not as if each new editor had to start from scratch. Perhaps, if there is yet another editorial change, the new man should come from outside the production crew and start fresh. This might mitigate the two factors which have, in my opinion, stymied the zine. For one thing, the fans so actively producing CØSIGN have not participated much in fanzine fandom outside their own zine, and as a result have not had much acquaintance with the more experienced and talented fans. Partly because of this isolation, the editors of CØSIGN, being human, have been lulled by the cheap egoboo delivered in such abundance by CØSIGN's enthusiastic but neofannish adherents.

I wouldn't want to give the impression that situation is totally the fault of Columbus fandom. CØSFS had the misfortune to spring up in a fannish wasteland. There were no experienced fanzine fans in Columbus to help the horde of neofans integrate into fandom. If there had been pre-existing fanzine fans in Columbus, as there were in the Midwest's other burgeoning fan center, St. Louis, things would probably have developed quite differently. Now that most of them have been around a year or two and perhaps gotten a trifle set in their ways, it seems to me that only the most strenuous effort to meet the rest of fanzine fandom will enable the CØSIGN people to get their fanzine moving again.

As Johnny Berry noted in this CØSIGN's letter column, CØSIGN has very definitely improved visually. The mimeography is neat and clean, the art is intrinsically improved and is now electro-stenciled, and the layout, if a few additional lettering guides would help a little, is nevertheless functional and quite adequate in its unpretentiousness. In fact, the only problem I can see in this area is that the large black areas which abound in the art cannot be reproduced faithfully on their cloth drum machine. The unfortunate result is that the art looks somewhat spotty and faded. Presumably CØSIGN's artists will take this limitation into account when doing art in the future, and the problem will correct itself.

Rod Goman seems to be no better at writing editorials than his predecessors. This one is too short, too unfocused, and much too undeveloped to be interesting. Rod opens by informing us that he is against Banality, but he neither explains the term or cites examples. In practically the next sentence, he says he's looking for someone to write CØSIGN's "Star Trek" column on a regular basis, which strikes me as a contradiction. The number of portals on each deck of the starship Enterprise is the ultimate in banal trivia.

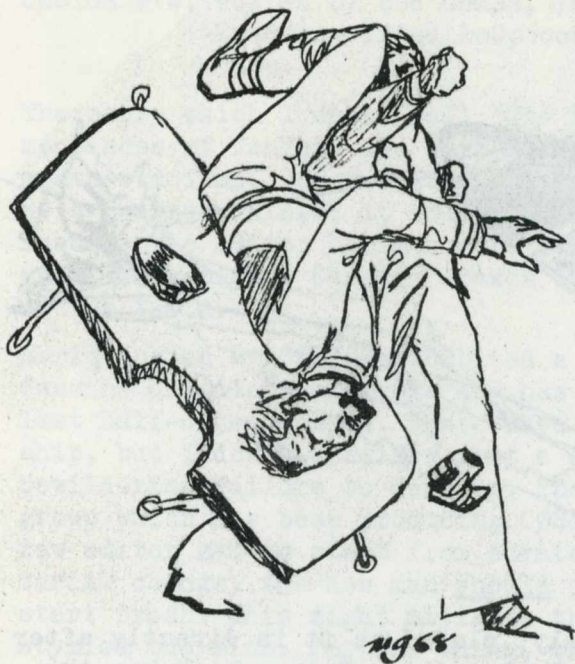


The editorial can hardly be taken seriously, placed as it is directly after "The Spider-Man Phenomenon", a long article by editor Goman which has the featured spot in this CØSIGN. An article about Spiderman is not per se banal; I contemplated an article on the subject myself at one time. This treatment is worthlessly superficial and therefore banal. The opening paragraph:

"What is a Spider-Man? 1. A Spider-man is a person engaged in some activity or line of endeavor having to do with spiders -- such activities as studying them, collecting them, stepping on them, etc. 2. Disregard the first definition because the type I refer to is not the generic sort but refers specifically to the fiction character appearing monthly in Marvel Comics, whom we all know and love. His world is a world of supervillains and two-fisted action, yet at the same time one of self-analysis and introspection, as we shall see. (I include this snappy intro for those readers who have been napping for the past couple of years.)"

The definitions gambit is unsuccessful principally because of its extreme absurdity. The technique is so clumsy that it repells instead of intrigues the reader, which is, of course, exactly the opposite effect the opening paragraph should achieve. Both in this paragraph and in the remainder of the article, Goman seems to lack a firm conception of the nature of his audience. Are they Spiderman fans or comic book haters of Werthamian fanaticism? Goman never resolves this question in his own mind, and the slant shifts annoyingly.

After a couple of paragraphs in which Goman describes the rebirth of his interest in comic books and defines terms like "phenomenon" uniquely, he sets up his Straw Man. The Straw Man is a mythical CØSIGN reader who feels that comics should neither be taken seriously nor discussed in an sf fanzine, because of the low quality of art and story. It is a sad thing indeed to see an author beaten to death by his own Straw Man. Goman makes such an abysmally poor case for comics that the reader cannot help but be convinced that they have nothing to recommend them as reading, no less discussion, matter. Goman's defense against Straw Man's charge that a comics article is inappropriate for a Science Fiction Fanzine is even more feeble. He says that he



is not asking the readership to accept comic books but rather adult illustrated fantasy. ("If you don't want salt on your meat, how about some sodium chloride?") Goman never recovers from his horrendous beating, and the article never really gets anywhere.

Ron Smith is represented by a review of "The War Game" and "Fuggheadedness, Inc.", a column which replaces Smith's prozine reviews. Ron, obviously impressed with Watkins' film, falls into the common error of thinking that this or any other film will, by itself, cause the people to rise up and force their governments to disarm. If films of Hiroshima and its aftermath didn't move the people (and they didn't) no fictionalized documentary, no matter how "realistic" is going to turn the trick. All films like "The War Game"

and "How I Won The War" do is give people who already believe in The Message a good feeling, the feeling that only they Understand It All.

Were it not for a remark which prefaces "Fuggheadedness, Inc." I would let its mediocrity pass without comment.

"By the way, I might mention that if this seems rather hurried it's because it is. I originally had this typed up last week and ready to send, then it got misplaced, and I waited hoping it would turn up. It didn't, so here I am burning the midnight oil on this. Well, on to other things, and I hope Rod doesn't have to edit out or censor much."

This is the sort of remark that drives me up the wall. Any article for which the author feels he must apologise in advance is usually better left unprinted. Since fanwriters are not "writing to eat", there's no justification for last-minute scribblings. In this particular case, if "Fuggheadedness, Inc." had to be started in this issue, the film review would have made an acceptable column.

CØSIGN is rounded out by book and fanzine reviews, a piece of alleged humor, and a letter column that needs some editing..

Material: 3 (The Spiderman article cost nearly a point in the rating.)
 Appearance: 5.5 (The front cover is good and the bacover is workmanlike, if stock. Had the art been sharper inside, I'd have given it a "6".)
 Comment: If this fanzine is to escape its current low state, editor Goman will have to get his writers -- including himself -- to take greater pains with their material.

ARGH Vol.1 Number 1, edited by Chester Malon, 2326A Sullivan, St. Louis, Mo. 63107 and Ron Whittington, 308 Park Drive, Festus, Mo. 63028. Trade, LoC, contrib, or unspecified money. Quarterly. Mimeographed. 23pp..

Despite ARGH's glaring flaws, upon which I shall discourse at length, I want to say right out in front that it is considerably better than the vast

majority of First Fanzines I've received. Both editors have obviously read at least a few other fanzines, and they've picked up a few of the basics of putting together a fanzine. That alone places it above at least half the neozines around. Ron and Chester also have a guiding plan for their fanzine, which is a definite rarity for First Fanzines. They manage to avoid saying either "we'll print anything you send" or that execrable cliché "this is YOUR fanzine!" I always half-expect the second issue of a "this is YOUR fanzine" fanzine to carry the legend, "Why is YOUR fanzine so bad?", but the sort of editor who writes the first line hardly has the wit to come up with the second. This is their fanzine, which editor Whittington explicitly defines as a humorzine. Avoiding the fault of most first issues, ARGH #1 is not only reproduced well, but also contains generous amounts of white space.

The main problem with ARGH as a humorzine is that it is very seldom funny. ARGH is the quintessence of the "St. Louis school" of unfunny humor. (Q: How do you think the Fishers are going to like that? A: Not very well.) I call it this not because this style of non-humor is restricted only to St. Louis fandom, but rather because some of its most enthusiastic current practitioners are St. Louis fans and close allies. This school of humor has three main ingredients: 1. Feghoots 2. Jokes 3. Puns

((Wowie, gang! Another serious essay on humor!))

The Feghoot is an essentially unrewarding form of humor. At best, they are only mildly amusing and mildly clever. At worst, Feghoots are far too long (the one in ARGH is a page and I have seen them go to two in extreme cases) and neither amusing nor clever. The essence of a relatively good Feghoot, it seems to me, is that the denouement -- the pun or spoonerism that comes at the end -- should be composed entirely of read words, not hinge on some nonsense word the author makes up, as is the case in ARGH and similar humor. Given the spoonerism "you have taken the lame of the Nord in vain" and the right to invent an animal called a "Nord" an idiot could put together the necessary paragraph (instead of the 500+ words it takes whoever wrote the one in ARGH). The following, which took me the better part of ten minutes to write, is the feghoot as it might have been done legitimately:

Joyce Fisher, galactic diplomat, was dispatched to the planet Nord to negotiate a trade treaty. Even planets ruled by Vile Usurpers cannot be ignored by a powerful mercantile planet, and Nord's Royal Arghonium Mine was the finest arghonium source in the known universe. So vital was the arghonium lode to Nord's economy that it had become the token of kingship. He who possessed the mine was King of Nord. Mere weeks before Joyce Fisher's visit, the beloved ruler of Nord, Edco, had been shanghai'd into a hearts game by the despicable Lo Natkins and had lost the Royal Arghonium Mine and with it the kingship it symbolized.

At her first audience with King



Natkins, Joyce Fisher decided that Lo Natkins had nothing of the kingly about him. A mere title could not conceal his utter baseness; a sham king. She resolved to aid the deposed Edco and right the situation. Enflamed by the blandishments of the seductive diplomat, Lo Natkins, ever ready to gamble, found himself playing poker against a deck as stacked as his opponent.

"Where did you get that medal?" Joyce Fisher's superior asked her upon her return to Earth.

"It was given to me by good King Edco and his grateful subjects for taking the vein of the Lord in name."

The preceding sample would have been even shorter and cleverer had I not limited myself to the "v"-"L"-"n" spoonerism of the original. (I wouldn't want you to think I was blind to the possibility of "...take the vein of the Lord in game.) I'm not trying to crow over any real or imagined superiority, just pointing out that the game has to be played fairly, and that even played fairly it isn't a very challenging game. To return to the main point, feghoots are unrewarding in several respects. A page-long build-up for a one-liner of dubious merit is not exactly economical humor. Furthermore, the feghoot is contentless humor. Even if one claims that feghoots are actually funny, it must nevertheless be admitted that the humor of a feghoot says nothing. While a certain amount of contentless humor is not objectionable, there are more creative and more humorous forms within this genre than the lowly feghoot.

The joke, as distinguished from the humorous anecdotal story, is primarily an oral form. The joke (of which one of the most common types is the "he said -- she said -- he said" joke) depends for its success, to a considerable degree, on the abilities of the comedian who tells it; his timing, his emotive power, etc. Printed jokes usually fail precisely because they lack these elements. To take the larger view, one of the main drawbacks to joke humor is that it is non-contextual. A joke is a "piece" unconnected to the other "pieces" around it, so that it really can't lead to anything else. In short, it is a static form. The monologue (ie Calvin Demmon's interview with God in FRAP) and its close relative the laugh-a-minute article (such as my own rather infamous "Leprosy Laughs" in Alan Shaw's SANGREAL RABLOON #1) escape the problem of contextuality which plagues the single, isolated joke. It has been some time, however, since I've seen either sort of extended joke humor in a fanzine, and the St. Louis School relies heavily on single jokes, such as:

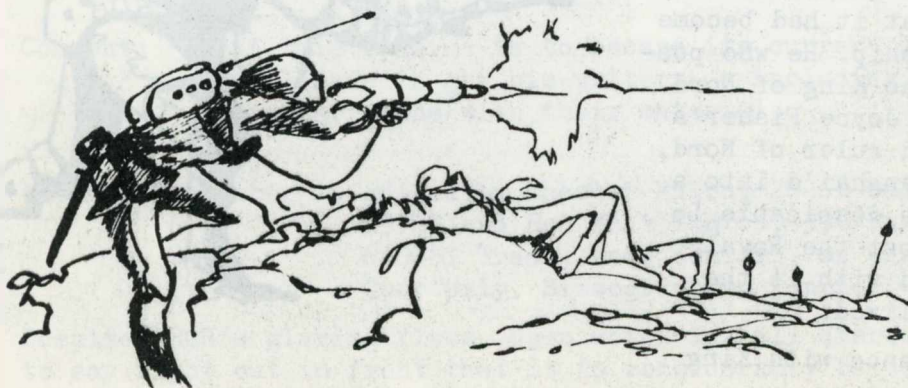
"Now Ron, I'm going to give you the word-association test. I'll say a word and you say the first thing that comes into your mind. Understand?"

'I think so, Chester.'

'Fine. Now, the first word: Fire Alarm.'

'That rings a bell.'

This joke brings up something much more noticeable to the casual reader than lack of contextuality; the jokes are old and



rarely refurbished. If the jokes were original, they could at least be tolerated. The one just quoted sounds like a lesser bit from ARCHIE'S JOKE BOOK, a comic book I thought mildly amusing when I was ten years old.

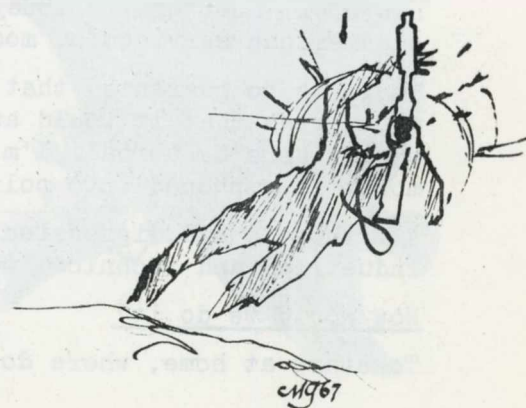
I am not one of those "puns-are-the-lowest-form-of-humor" people. To the contrary, I enjoy puns and make them quite often myself. Walt Willis, the greatest punster in fandom's history, once made the point that a pun should be organic to the conversation (and by extension to the written material) into which it is dropped, not dragged in by the heels. There are some "natural" puns in ARGH (and in the writings of other members of this school.) Whittington, discussing Malon's indecision regarding publishing ARGH says, "Chester evaded the issue...the first issue (this one)...for a long time." Though it could have been phrased more smoothly, the pun definitely works with the surrounding material and is quite good. Unfortunately, most of the rest of the puns are either grossly contrived or mechanical ready-mades. Even the one about it being all right to date nuns so long as you don't get into the habit shows up, quoted by Whittington and attributed to Malon. It's sad to say, but most of the members of the St. Louis school of humor who think they are such wonderful punsters sound like nothing so much as Lon Atkins doing a one-shot on a bad day. (Though Lon has considerable talent as a humorist, his one-shots are a low point in the history of pun humor in fandom.)

Ron and Chester (and the rest of the group about whom I've been talking) are going to have to throttle back on the feghoots and jokes, learn to deliver a pun in print so that it seems natural, and start working in the more sophisticated and complex forms of humor if they are to progress in this area. Again, I reiterate the fact that Ron and Chester are first-timers and will probably improve as they gain experience. The same holds for the rest of the school which they represent, for whom I also have great hopes. If I didn't, I assure you I would be gafiating in anticipation of an endless stream of corny jokes, badly sprung puns, and inept feghoots....

Material and Appearance: I'm not going to give ARGH #1 a rating, because the zine has very little meat, reading -- as Dick Lupoff pointed out to me -- more like a tossed off one-shot than a real genzine. The evidence is too scanty and tentative to make a real judgement.

Comment: A pair worth encouraging, even if ARGH is not yet quite a vehicle for scintillating prose. They ought to start identifying the writers' names on things other than editorials or they may never get their individual personalities across. The major item, a satire on the St. Louis-Columbus bidding fight, is better passed in silence. Material and trade-zines would probably be more helpful than LoCs at this point especially art.

[[Faneds wanting their zine reviewed should send a copy to ODD's editor, and a copy to Arnie Katz, 98 Patton Blvd., New Hyde Park, N. Y. 11043, with a note saying you'd like to be reviewed.]]



DOWN

THE

RABBIT

MOLE

— treacle for all...

TED WHITE

This is by far the most integrated of all your new issues in appearance. The lavish use of end-paper designs, double-page contents spread, art folios, etc., work well within the context of 120 pages, and the covers are excellent. Of course, when you drop back down to 50-60 pages, you're going to have to condense a little. But all in all, I think you've finally demonstrated your abilities as an editor this issue, and that's no small accomplishment.

It's funny, but in, umm, odd ways this issue reminds me more of the 'old' ODD than any of the earlier offset issues. Perhaps it's just the way it keys in memories of those lovely Nelson frontpieces, or earlier double-page contents pages... something. As you know, I have a nostalgic affection for the old ODD. It strikes me you're missing only one important aspect of that fanzine: the excellent fannish

columns of Elsberry. Arnie Katz' fanzine-review column is a stab in that direction (about the most fannish item in the issue), but too short and too limited in context.

Comments on the contents:

Voice of the Turtle: Yes, it is certainly true, as you say, that "For the first time in man's history, we have the physical power and the technical ability to feed, clothe, and shelter -- and then some -- every man, woman and child on this planet..." You're not the first to point this out. Among others, so has President Johnson... But let me put it to you cold: how could we do this?

A lot of people point to the money spent on space and suggest we could've spent it to better effect for hospitals, urban problems, etc. They are overlooking the fact that money spent on space was spent in this country, ultimately finding the pockets of employees in many expanding 'space' industries. Current fall-out from the space program includes micro-miniaturized circuitry, vast improvements in computers, and many other 'civilian' benefits which come to us all, and make us, collectively, that much richer.

Even the war in Vietnam, which spends thirty times more than the space effort, has spent most of its money within this country -- largely on hardware -- and on American servicemen, most of whom send it home.

There is no guarantee that if money was not being spent by our government in such areas that it would automatically be diverted to more altruistic outlets, either here or abroad. I'm a cynic, and I've noticed that whenever possible, money is siphoned into political pockets.

But this is all digression. Let's say we decided to use our vast monetary, industrial and technical power for the benefit of the whole world.

How would we do it?

To start at home, where does the money come from? Increased taxes? Would you

be willing to tithe half, two-thirds or three-quarters your personal income for some poor slob in India? Would you accept the fact that our country's production was no longer geared for you? New appliances no longer available? Rationing? Stamp books? WW2 all over again?

Administration: such a program would require an enormous number of administrators, especially on the clerical level. Not only would they absorb a lot of money in personal salaries, they would probably include a significant minority who found ways to Get Theirs. Remember the chiseling in WW2, Korea, Vietnam? The black market would be booming, especially under domestic rationing programs. Check England.

And the recipients: How about them? Some still have pride. Many wouldn't. Today, a significant minority of the world expects, as its due, a dole from the United States. What guarantee have we that these people would respond to our idealism with anything like a corresponding idealism? We've pumped billions in money, food and contraceptives into India. We've built fertilizer plants, developed better strains of wheat and rice. To what avail? The cows still walk the streets unmolested, the crops still fail, the babies still pour forth at rates which make Harlem look like sterility-ville. And always the outstretched hand: "Alms, Master!"

It's no easy problem. Today we are the most Have-ish nation in a world where two-thirds are still Have-Nots. Our computers are generations beyond even the other Have's. Our technology is widening the gap every year. We are, rightly, regarded as the greatest threat most other nations have to face. As we expand, we send out economic tentacles. Presently we own somewhere between one-third and one-half the major industry in France. We own around half Europe's auto-producing capability in foreign General Motors, Ford and Chrysler holdings. (Presently Opel and German Ford are outselling Volkswagon in Germany.)

There is no honor among nations. Only individuals. We forget this. We Americans are naive. France owes us billions in WW1 and WW2 debts. France is doing its best to bankrupt us. As we get bigger, others will join the bandwagon. Only their self-interest restrains them now: their reserves are in Dollars. Like the rich capitalist driving through the ghetto in his Cadillac, we wonder why the slum-dwellers are throwing stones. So we toss a few dollar bills out the window. Some will scramble for them; all will hate us for making them scramble or refuse to scramble.

The rich capitalist doesn't care. We care.

I seriously predict that within one hundred years mankind will be reduced to chaos, our cities - everywhere - will be rubble, and most will perish of famine, disease, or violence.

And that is about the most hope I can see for man.

A different tack:

Tests with rats show that overpopulation produces one of two results: either an in-





ward-turning apathy that leads to catalepsy, or an outward-turning violence. Both are psychoses.

India has known this a long time. Mankind can think, as rats can't: we're self-aware. Buddha saw this. Apathy has ruled India for eons, but violence is also not uncommon. The religious riots are one symptom. The religious differences are only a peg on which a psychosis is hung.

We're seeing it in this country too, in the densest population centers: the central-city slums. They're not just Negroes or Puerto-Ricans out there rioting. Many slum-dwelling whites rioted and looted in Detroit and Newark.

It's ineffectuous.

And it is this which will tear down civilization as we know it: not war, not The Bomb. Just insanity, large-scale insanity.

How to cope? Stay sane. Stop dropping pills for the pleasure of freaking out. Don't get involved with mobs -- of any kind. Stay cool. Make provisions. Learn useful skills and crafts. Try eating raw meat. You might have to. Study the ways of the Indian, the frontiersmen. Stay healthy. And relax. It'll take years yet.

Jennings' art in this issue is better than any other I've seen by him. Good stuff, most of it. Bowers' pseudo-Finlay surprised me. I am getting tired of Little Green Dinosaurs, especially ones without gags or punch-lines. It's too bad Chambers' sense of humor is outstripped by his ego. The Jack Gaughan on p.83 is lovely. He's the best artist in the issue, but that one really Makes It with me.

Richard Gordon's column earned a lot of checkmarks this time:

It must be a preoccupation of the young that a liking for one type of thing in one area of media will necessarily provide a parallel liking in another area. I remember proselatizing members of FAPA on jazz in my more tender years (my ghod; ten years ago already!), and here is Gordon blithely assuming that because Jimi Hendrix is an Asimov fan, Asimov fans (or even "the most diehard Heinlein-Smith-Williamson fan") will dig Hendrix. T'ain't necessarily so. I'd guess most Smith fans are middle-aged, at least. The bulk of them first encountered Doc Smith when they were young readers themselves. I can just see the Cincinnati Fantasy Group jiving to Jimi Hendrix. Sure...

But Gordon has confused his own personal reactions for common reactions. I see no parallel between Ballard and the Doors. I dislike Ballard, who strikes me as a cold-fish writer (all emotions codified into self-conscious deliberately-obscure intellectualizations; no attempt to enter the reality of his protagonists' emotions), and I like the Doors, who are overtly emotional, even more in their music than their lyrics. I've liked some of what Jimi Hendrix has done, but most of him strikes me as put-on, and phony. I like Heinlein, can't read early Smith, and dig Williamson moderately. Which bag am I in, Gordon? Not yours...

"Hunt Collins" of TOMORROW AND TOMORROW (originally "Malice in Wonderland" in IF) is actually Evan Hunter, who legally changed his name from Sal A. Lombino. He also writes as Richard Marsden, and Ed McBain, among others.

Gordon creebs about finding no mono copies of a record he wanted. Considering that a US stereo record is still cheaper (as he admits) than a British stereo or mono, it seems to me the complaint is unjustified. Further, there is no reason to buy a stereo pickup, player or whathaveyou, to play a stereo record, if all you want is mono. After sufficient plays, the record will be mono, but it will sound no different to you unless you get around to trying it on a stereo player. (As a matter of fact, I was once sent, for review, a stereo record by Savoy which no where on it said it was stereo. I had a mono system then, and played it often. Later, I got stereo -- Rec-O-Cut turntable, ESL arm, dustbug, Dyna amp and pre-amp, KLH 10 speakers -- and inadvertently left the selector on stereo when playing the record. To my amazement, it was stereo. It still sounded rich, with full separation. And that was after two years' playing on a mono system, with a heavy changer arm, old-fashioned GE cartridge and all. So don't sweat it, Gordon. All that business about playing stereo records only with stereo pickups was mostly bushwaw to sell stereo pickups. Now, with mono being phased out completely, most companies admit the chance for damage from mono equipment is slight.)



I might add that only a sucker pays \$5.79 for a record. That may be list price, but it's a rare record shop that charges list price these days. Most record stores are pleased about dumping mono, or at least cutting the duplication of mono/stereo in their stock. It forced higher inventories and made them tie up more investment where it wasn't moving. What annoys me is when companies feel forced to "electronically reprocess" old records for "enhanced stereo". I just bought one of Decca's reissues, EARLY ELLINGTON, Vol.1, 1926-28. It is available only in processed stereo. That is a fraud and a farce. I play it with the selector at 'mono' purely so that I won't hear all the highs on one channel and all the lows on the other. (The same thing was done with the PROCOL HARUM album, by the way: it's fake-stereo with highs on the right and lows on the left. It makes the sound ugly.)

I'll disagree with Gordon about the Mothers, too, as long as I'm at it. I don't dig 'freakout' records, which I suspect are more fun to make than to hear, but the first disk of the first album is quite good, and ample evidence of the Mothers' musical talent. The second album, "Absolutely Free", is more difficult but worth close listening. However, I will agree that the records don't really catch the effect of the live group.



But this silly-assed notion that Zappa is more indebted to Edgar Varese is pure foolishness. One has only to listen to a little Varese to disprove it. As a conductor and leader, Zappa is closer to Mingus than anyone else. He has the same way of using his whole body to conduct, leaping into the air to signal downbeats; moving among the band to clue them in on what will come next; the whole structuring of his sets as whole and emotional experiences.

He suffers as Mingus does by the inability of the record to capture this aspect of a performance. But when I dug the Mothers live at the Garrick, it was the most moving musical experience I've had since Mingus' halcyon days.

It's interesting that Gordon is hip to Charles Lloyd, John Handy

and Chico Hamilton -- none of whom have managed to avoid becoming prostitutes to themselves as the pop audience has swarmed over them. I knew John Handy years ago when we both lived in the Village and he was still playing with Mingus. I wrote the liner notes for one of his earlier records. I dug him a lot. And I find his recent Columbia albums bores. He has succumbed to 'making excitement' by repeated scalular runs and forgotten about making music. Chico Hamilton was at the forefront of jazz in the fifties. Now he's just a loud drummer. Jeesus, he used to be the most tasteful and melodic drummer of them all! I guess it's all part of the same bag that Buddy Rich comes from: make a lot of noise and they won't notice how lousy you are.

When the pop-rock crowd digs a jazz artist it's because of his extra-musical philosophy (Shepp, Atyer) or the amount of in-person, excitement-generating noise he makes. Giants, like Mingus, are ignored. Sonny Rollins was always better than John Coltrane in anything either of them did, but now, while Coltrane is being idolized in memorium, who notices Rollins, still alive?

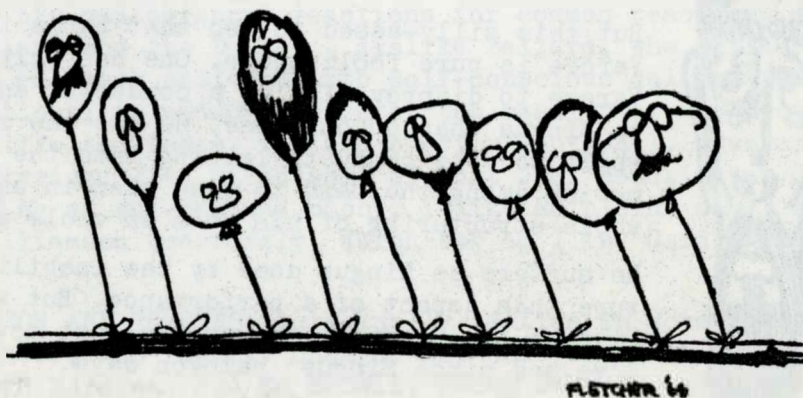
And all this frenzy about Hendrix and his ilk. James Brown is more honest at breaking it up. And the ugly predominates over the beautiful. The "Flower Children" are swinging bike chains and dropping speed, but it's all cool, baby, sure...

In rock, Gordon, Brian Wilson, Ron Elliot, Randy Newman and Van Dyke Parks are where it's really at.

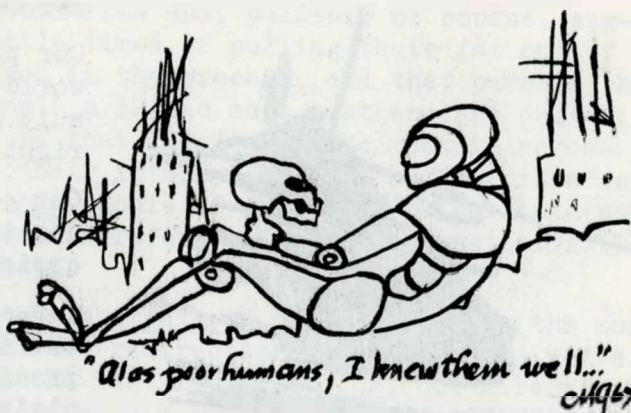
I don't see quite what Harry Warner is getting at. Is there supposed to be a link between mental illness and the 'paranoid story'? My article was written originally, to counter the idea that such stores did reflect mental illness in sf and should not be written, read, or published. And Harry is quite right that "Cinderella" predates "Slan!", but unless I'm mistaken "Cinderella" did not appear in an sf magazine, and had no where near the impact upon the sf audience that "Slan!" did. Certainly the paranoid theme runs right through the bulk of myth and fairy tales. That's why it's so evocative and effective in sf, and has a right to a place in the field.

339 - 49th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11220

ACADEMICS—



[[How we could use our monetary, industrial and technical power for the benefit of the whole world is a secondary (important, but still secondary) part of the answer as to how we could, perhaps, best use our monetary, industrial and technical power for the benefit of ourselves.



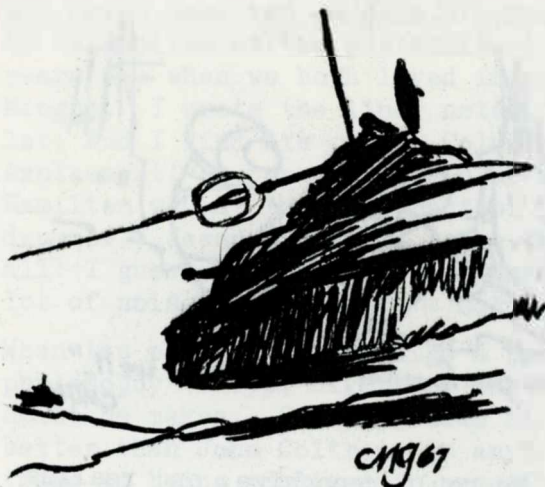
For an interim period we could put much more stress on education. We could phase out our overseas military reactions to the attempts of the people of other countries to change the status quo OF THEIR OWN COUNTRY. We could recognize, and realize that the majority of the peoples of the earth don't give a damn about politics; but, are vitally concerned with having enough to eat, and having a chance for a better future. And we could understand that the reason so many of these 'other' country's peoples are threatening to switch to Communism is that they have lost all hope of bettering themselves (or in many cases, even of having enough to eat) under their present governments.

We cannot feed, clothe, and support all the rest of the world by the efforts of the United States alone. Not at the present time at least. But we can, right here and now, help them to do it for themselves. Help them, for the nations of the earth have the physical power, and the technical ability, but we can't do it for them, and we can't force them to do it for themselves. Not by overt violence, anyway.

First, we could spend a few billion overhauling our educational system to where we could adequately educate our own citizenry. And have the teachers, and classroom systems, with which to do it — and have some capacity in reserve. This would give us a more enlightened electorate. Which would do wonders for America, all by itself.

Second, and along with the above, we could offer ...to the masses of the under- (and-un-) developed nations... a better alternative to their present lot than Communism...something we are not, at the present, doing...or at any rate, not getting the message across that we do.

Capitalism offers the best known way for achieving a high material standard of living to anyone with employable skills. But therein lies the rub, for most of the people of this earth do not have employable skills where a technical, highly mechanized society is concerned. Yet they want the goods and the services that only such a society can bring. It wasn't so urgent when the masses of the have-nots weren't so aware of the vast numbers of the haves, and weren't so aware of the vast difference of the quality of their miserable lives and the lives of their betters (I'm limiting this strictly to the material comforts involved, remember. Comforts like enough food, a longer and happier life through adequate medical facilities, indoor plumbing, TV, etc.). Even then they were inclined to say "You got, I want." But as long as they weren't aware of just how many people had just how much more than they had it was possible to fob off their requests with "But my good man, there just isn't enough to go around", or "My son, it is the will of God that these things be so ordained. But be Ye righteous [read: 'Don't rock the boat!'] and Ye shall share of God's good bounty, in God's own good time." It was possible to pacify the masses with I'm-Sorry-But-That's-The-Way-It-Is, or Pie-In-The-Sky-By-And-By once up on a time. But the times



are changing.

Our philosophy has proclaimed to the world that life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness is the inalienable right of man.

Our government has proclaimed that freedom is the natural state for man to aspire to.

Our society has proclaimed that force is the accepted international means by which freedom is imposed; and, our culture proclaims that a man is not truly free until he owns his own home and land, elects his own politicians, and is in hock up to his elbows for a car and a color TV. And

a man's own animal cunning tells him he should at least get a full belly out of life.

So the technologically unemployed of this planet are taking us at our word. They are no longer saying "You got, I want." Now they've got the message we've been broadcasting the last few decades, and now they're saying "You got, I need! And I INTEND TO HAVE IT!" And in a few more decades they'd better have it or at least a promise of obtaining it, or none of us will have anything. Which brings us back to the problem: how are they going to get it?

Well, we could stand back and let them choose the way they think will best obtain it for them. But that's not too politically feasible. [In too many countries today, the main obstacle to progress is that the population does not own more than a microscopic portion of the income producing properties of the land they live in; they have no marketable skills that would enable them to live in a mechanized society (and thus not have to depend on land ownership for their livelihood); nor have they any way to obtain these skills. The 5 to 10% of the people that own 70 to 80% of the wealth in these countries do not need an improvement in the citizenry to better their own lot; they are rich already. Nor do they wish to pay the taxes that would support the schools that would enable their countrymen to better themselves. They would much prefer to maintain a strict status quo. And usually do so.] It's not politically feasible for the US to let these peoples choose the way that they think will best obtain a high standard of living for themselves for they just might choose our old enemy, Communism. And the way things have been going in the world, lately, that's just what'd happen... given the freedom of choice, a goodly number of the people of the poorer nations of the world would choose communism because under their present governments, it represents the only chance for betterment they feel they have. So why not give them another choice?

The US is pretty good at passing out handouts, and at putting some not so subtle pressures on other nations in order to get them to come around to our way of thinking. Why not, for a change, offer a free education to several hundred thousand (or a million if we could afford it) students of these countries each year, in any field of technical endeavor they choose, and let them go back to their homes with the skills that would enable them to make a better life for themselves and their countrymen. (We're spending billions to educate them in their own countries, now. But now we're doing it with bombs and guns, instead of schools and books. And the only lessons they're learning now is how to stay alive on a battlefield, and how to hate, Hate, HATE Americans.) And why not use some of that good old Yankee know-how and lean ever so slightly

on the governments of some of those countries and, politely of course, suggest to them that we're getting a little tired of pulling their fat out of the fire and getting our fingers burned in the process, and that perhaps they might just consider helping their people a little more, rather than just helping themselves to their people. If that didn't get the message across we could always threaten to stay out of their internal affairs and let them settle their own differences with their own people if they didn't institute some slight semblance of political and economic reform. That should get a little action out of them if nothing else would.

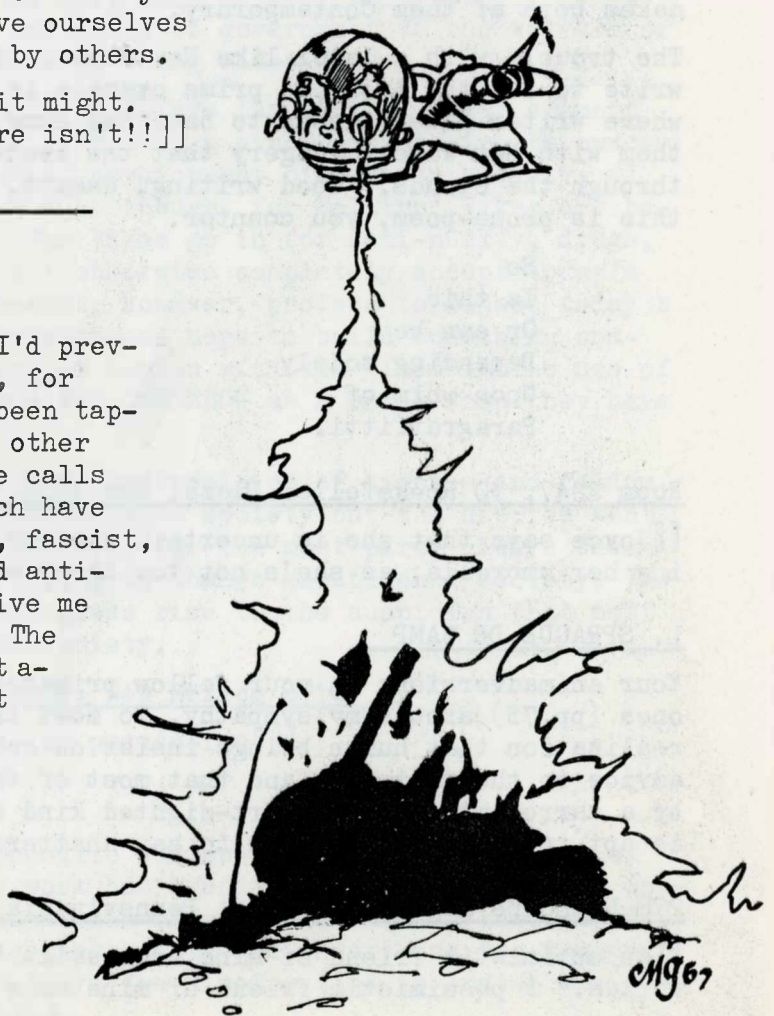
Where would we get the money and the administrators? We're spending the money already. This would only require a little redirection. For example, we've given Russia \$2,000,000,000 or more in the last few years (Oh, not directly perhaps. But we gave it to Egypt and Indonesia WITH NO STRINGS ATTACHED. And in that same period they purchased over a billion dollars worth of arms apiece from Russia.) If we'd spent those two billion on scholarships for students from those two countries, to be spent here in the US; Egypt, Indonesia and Uncle Sugar would have probably gotten a better return on the investment. I also understand that our military aid to South America and Spain amounts to a pretty penny, not to mention the physical fitness program we are carrying on in southeast Asia. Perhaps some of the administrators of those programs could be spared to direct a less violent form of anti-war demonstrations than the ones we are now directing against the villages of Viet Nam, if the American people would permit our politicians to do so. Then it might not be necessary to destroy the world in order to save it. Or it might not be necessary to tax and repress a future America into slavery in order to be able to afford to save ourselves from having our freedoms taken away by others.

I'm not saying it would work. But it might.
And the present way we're trying sure isn't!!!]

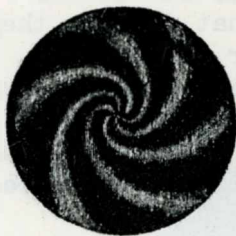
ROBERT LORY

1. ODD's good.
2. All SF fans aren't the dimwits I'd previously thought. Don't get defensive, for chrissakes. In the five years I've been tapping out occasional sf pieces among other things, I've received letters, phone calls and face-to-face confrontations which have (a) accused me of being a communist, fascist, black power advocate, technocrat and anti-scientist; (b) offered to sell or give me super-duper plots, most of which if The Hugo didn't write first, Asimov got around to; (c) suggested that I don't know enough about suffering to be a good writer (Hell, Guatama Buddha said all life is suffering and he knew, evidently -- but was he a good writer?).

But, sincere be my thanks, the people who at least write for (I can't speak about your readers) ODD don't seem to be in the same



dimwitty class. Except as noted below, the publication be-
speaks itself highly brightwitty:



1. Richard Gordon's New York with its umbrella-swinging old ladies is a pretty narrow view, and the usual one us peoples who live here have gotten rather used to reading. Because NYC has the reputation as being the Big Scene in the East, I guess we shouldn't blame the would-be Big-Sceners if, when they don't make out so hot, their words have the distinct taste of sour grapes.

Richard, baby, New York do in fact swing whether you do or not. And don't knock those little old gals with the umbrellas -- they sure take some of the boredom out of subway strap-hanging, and I'll back any one of them against a Doug Fairbanks sword during any given rush-hour you name.

2. Bob Rogers' IDES had a tremendous first verse -- so great that he either should have made it the last verse or the only verse. The remainder was overkill.
3. Tis more than obvious in several places that ODD considers itself pretty much New Wave. So OK, but sometimes I think the name New Wave should be dropped. The good stuff being written today, in my small-and-single-voice opinion, should be called Contemporary Wave, a name that applies equally as well to the Old Wave stuff when it was written. Good sf is good sf. True, today writers have different ideas (or should have) than writers in the 30's -- that's what makes both of them Contemporary.

The trouble with a label like New Wave is that often a writer will attempt to write to fit the lable. A prime example in ODD #18 is "Look Dreamward Beggar" where writer Bowers seems to have had some interesting ideas but so obscured them with New Wavery imagery that the reader has to work like hell to cut through the clouds. Good writing, dammit, except for Joyce, is clear! Ah, but this is prose-poem, you counter.

So
Is this
Or can be
Depending solely
Upon whim of
Paragraffitti.

Room 2247, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, New York 10020

[[Joyce says that she is uncertain whether to thank you, or to come out swinging her umbrella, as she's not too clear on your meaning.]]

L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP

Your animadversions on your fellow primates, especially politically oriented ones (pp.7f) arouse my sympathy. To most thinking men comes some time the realization that human beings insist on acting like human beings, despite good advice to the contrary; and that most of them are motivated most of the time by a narrow-minded and short-sighted kind of self-interest. This realization is apt to be traumatic, not to say shattering.

278 Hothorpe Lane, Villanova, Pennsylvania 19085

[[An optimistic friend of mine once said, "This is the best of all possible worlds." A pessimistic friend of mine once said, "He's right."]]

ROY TACKETT

No, not madmen. No more so than the rest of us, anyway. Corrupt, yes, probably. Stupid, undoubtedly. Men caught up in a mad rush of events which they seemingly cannot control but which they could if they set their minds to it. Not the leadership itself that is mad, but the society. An insane society, yes. It could be changed by leaders with foresight and courage but we, none of us, have them. The leaders are afraid to make the radical moves necessary to change the course of history. Instead they mouth nothings and let the mad course of events be carried along by their own inertia. Can you imagine the courage and determination it would take for the leadership of either side to say this idiocy has gone far enough? Try to imagine the guts it would take for the President, say, to stand up and pull the troops out of Viet Nam, cut back the military budget and start spending money on rebuilding the cities, on education, on a hundred projects that need to be done. Would the people permit it? This mad rush towards catastrophe is going to continue so long as the majority of the people are content, or apathetic, enough to let it go on. And the people have been so propagandized and fed so full of crap that they are scared to change.



Have you listened to any of the Presidential hopefuls? Not a new idea from any of them. Intellectually bankrupt--all of them. None, not one, will stand up and say that he is going to end the war, cold or hot, unilaterally if he has to, and devote the time, energy and money of government to the welfare of the people. He wouldn't stand a chance of being elected.

I have been wondering how long it would be before fandom's "hippie" element stumbled across TOMORROW AND TOMORROW. This is a minor classic in its own way and is certainly a picture of a possible development of today's society. I wouldn't like to see the kids go that way, though, for Collins' Vikes are basically no different from his Rees. The Vikes go in for semi-nudity, drugs, and what they call vicarious living but otherwise completely accept today's society with all its faults. The Freeman, however, profess to reject today's society because it is bankrupt and corrupt and hope to build something completely new. The only thing they have in common with the Vikes is the use of drugs. If the Freeman accept TOMORROW AND TOMORROW as a model then they have failed.

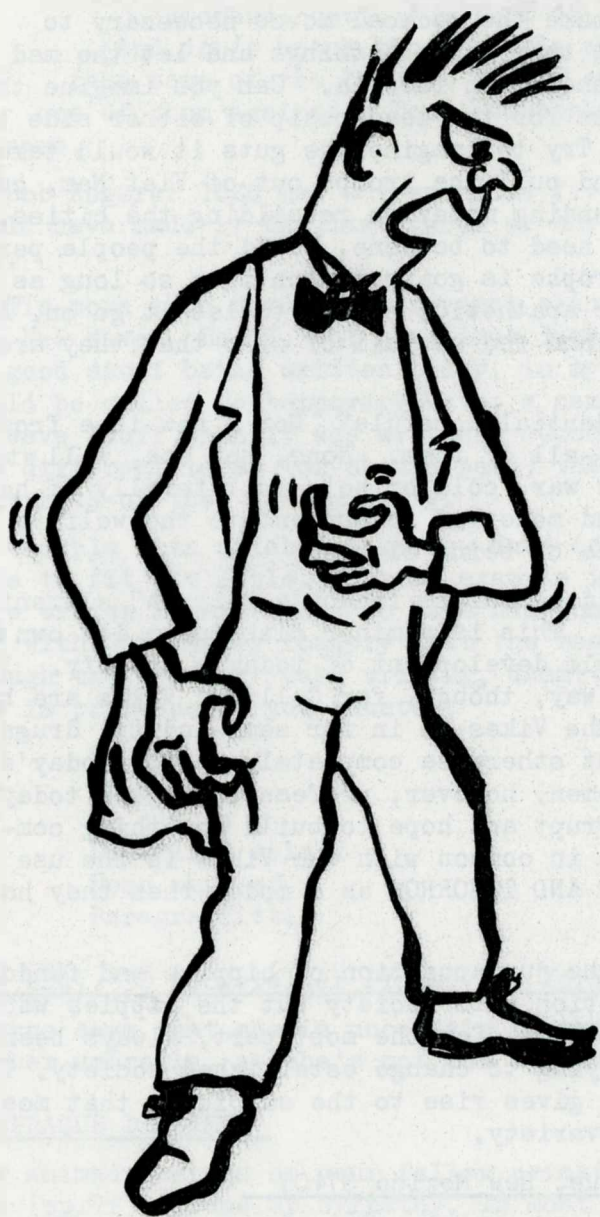
Actually, it is difficult to picture the juxtaposition of hippies and fandom. Both subcultures express a dissatisfaction with society but the hippies want to withdraw and are pass-ivists. Fans have, for the most part, always been activists, beating their brains out trying to change established society. The two just do not seem compatible. Which gives rise to the suspicion that most of fandom's hippies are of the pseudo-variety.

915 Green Valley Road N. W., Albuquerque, New Mexico 87107

[[Do you mean by that, pseudo-hippie, or pseudo-fan?]]

NORMAN SPINRAD

ODD seems to be attempting an sf-psychedlic fusion—groovy from my point of view, since this is the direction my work has been taking for some time. However, here there be tygers. There is a vein of paranoia running through sf and a vein of paranoia running through psychedlia and when these two trends are fused, one gets...Ray Nelson. He says "we hippies (and is anyone who says



Ray Nelson

I like you all right, cat, but I can't say the same about the company you keep!

"we hippies" a hippy? Hippy is a TIME-word and a perjorative. Would Moshe Dayan say "we mockies"? Would Rap Brown say "we n[redacted]"?)...have our reasons for dressing like famous victims." Indeed! To maybe invite persecution, Ray? What does a cop who beats up a passive flower-child really think? Maybe something like: "it's okay to beat this creep up because he's obviously a faggot. He's a faggot because he won't fight back." One thing that turns me off about "Hippies" is that they seem to concede their manhood for openers. Don't hit me, Massah, or I'll bleed all over you. Hippies act like white Uncle Toms. So while I am totally down on the anti-drug laws, narco-fuzz, etc. and am all in favor of the drug experience the drug culture seems to be creating its own little ghetto, inviting persecution. SF too has had its ghetto aspects, and I sure hope that we won't have a hippy ghetto within the sf ghetto.

Hippies talk about consciousness expansion--but then why do they close themselves off from the Big World Out There? Turn on, tune in, drop out is really turn on, tune in, cop out. The Ray Nelson kind of hippy is just a mirror-image of the Establishment he hates: he has the Answer, everyone else is Sick, and We Will Conquer the World. What William Burroughs calls a "control addict". Cops and hippy propagandists are the same basic personality type. In a way, hippies need cops to be hippies, and cops need hippies to be cops.

So what is the healthy reaction for those who use drugs and are persecuted to take? Basically, don't give ground. Don't crawl into your own little bag. That's exactly what the Establishment wants you to do, keep it all encapsulated in a ghetto, so society as a whole isn't effected. Society is the sum of its parts. The ground in dispute is whether someone who uses drugs is a valid member of society. Don't argue the point, assume the ground in question. Don't be passive. Victims are losers. Losers never win. Don't drop out of society. Say: "Fuck you, Charlie, I am a valid member of society because here I am, and there are millions of me. If you can't accept that, then you drop out. Because I won't. It's my country, not yours. America is not defined by God, The Flag, Motherhood and Apple Pie. It never was. That's a lie."

The difference between "Civil Rights" and "Black Power". The Civil Rights cat says "Please Massah, let me into your society." Black Power says: "It was never your society, baby, it's our society. We exist and we were here all along. You're going to have to cope with the reality of our existence or we are going to lean on you."

There's a whole Other America that has always existed outside the Concensus. Now the Concensus is dead and it's time for a new concensus that takes into account those who were locked out of the old concensus: Negroes, Hippies, etc. But if the outsiders content themselves with crawling into ghettos, the dead hand of the past will prevail.

For further details (plug) read BUG JACK BARRON in New Worlds. An example of what I'm talking about, a book that the US establishment seems to find too dangerous to publish. But I'm not crying about it; I'm leaning on them. I'm not slinking off into a pocket universe; I'm calling them out.

Paranoia is for losers.

8346 Kirkwood Drive, Los Angeles, California 90046

[[If the history of the anti-slavery movement of the 18th and 19th centuries; the anti-aristocracy movements of the 17th and 18th centuries, and history of the movements of almost any establishment-changing groups of

the past mean anything, it would seem that it takes at least three categories of people to bring about a successful change in any established way of doing things. First comes the idealists, the impractical dreamers, the visionaries — the "hippies", if you will — pointing out that the present way is wrong, or at least that it could (and should) be improved. They may seem to be impractical on the face of it, but they help bring the problem to the attention of the run-of-the-mill public, and usually get pushed into oblivion for doing so. But they make room for the second step, the increasingly militant social reformers.

The militant social reformer agitates with rapidly increasing vigor for a change...and for a change NOW! They usually co-exist with the dreamers all along. But they are stamped out without regret by society at first, for they are an unpleasant irritant. However, while they are being stamped out without regret, the dreamers are also getting it in the neck, but with a different result: for some reason, the shabby treatment of the dreamers seems to bother society's conscience a little, enough so that the society quits resisting quite so much to the militants. There are still large elements of the society that fight the militants with a ferocity equal to the militants' own. But there are at the same time increasing numbers who are tired of the squabble and sickened by society's harsh treatment of the dreamers. They all give way to the third group, the accommodaters, the group that finally gets something done.

After the dreamers and militants have sufficiently set the scenes, the third group comes on stage. The third group consists mostly of the smaller cogwheels of society; the wheels of the lower levels, but still wheels of business and society; the vital part of the machinery, without which the bigger wheels and the machine itself would not move. The third group is the one which says, in effect, "This crap has got to stop! Something has to be done, even if it means change!" Then, (and only then, if a change comes from within the society and is not forced upon it from the outside,) is something done or a society changed. (Maybe the big wheels still won't go along with it. But if they don't they are pulled down and someone who will is put in their places.) Only when the little wheels decide that the disruption and bother are worse than the change is change finally accomplished.

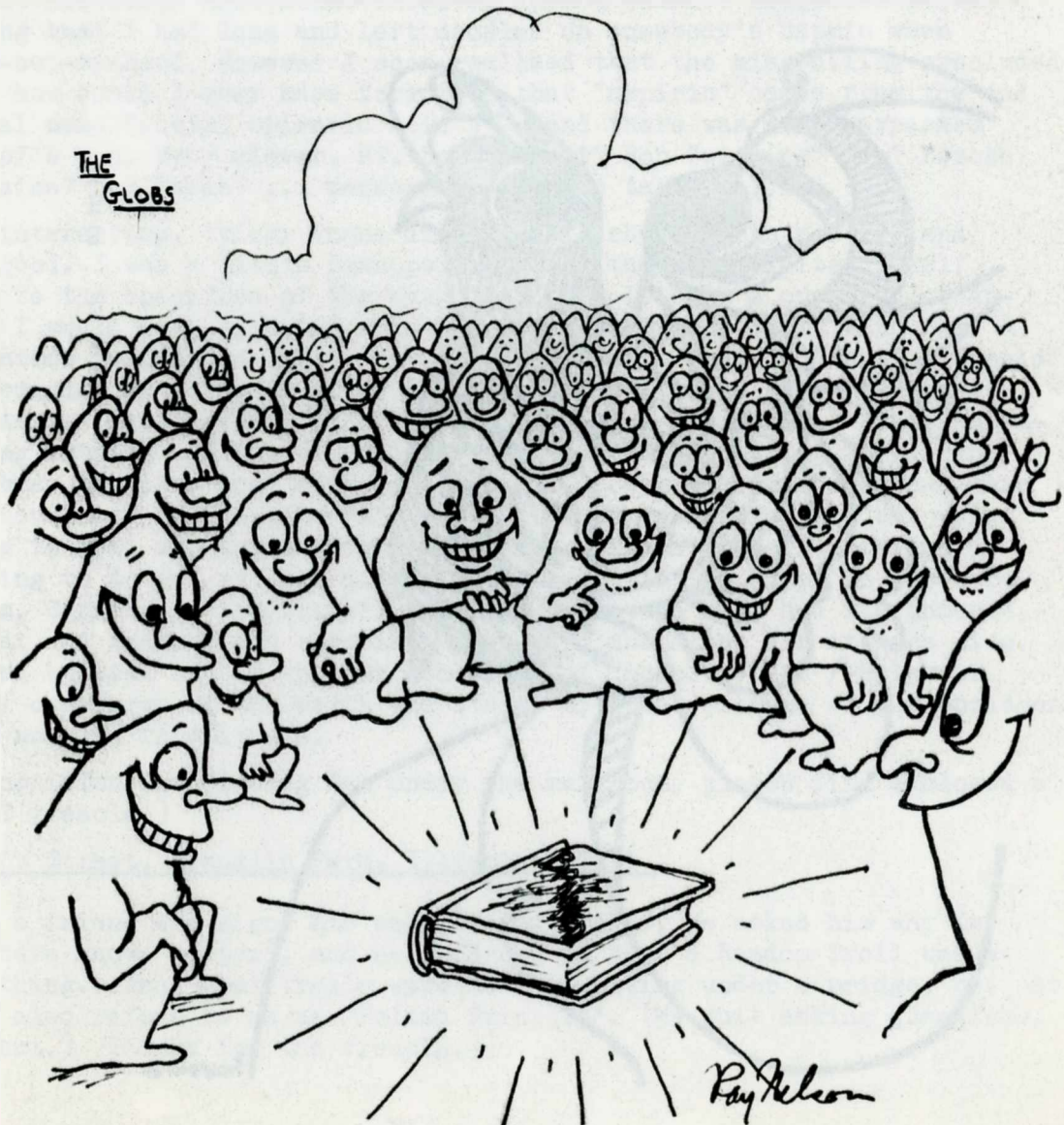
So don't knock the dreamer too hard. The militants may be the ones that compel society to change, but the wheels of the society are the ones who do the actual changing. And if it were not for the bad conscience that society develops from the way it has treated its visionaries, society would, until the militants got strong enough to return the favor, squash the society-changer like a bug.]]

RAY NELSON

There's a thing in Henry Miller's books somewhere where he tells how he and his friend have a habit of looking at each other and saying, "This time all is really lost" or "This time there's really no way out" or "This time we've really had it" and then busting out laughing. As I see it, if you once give up all hope, if you just give up, there comes on a feeling I call "Black Happiness". It's a sort of ecstasy. Except for drug things, it's the only complete and perfect happiness I've ever known, and it has come to me on such occasions as (1) while I was on a bus, riding toward a beach with the idea of drowning myself, (2) when I was hitch-hiking at night in the middle of nowhere and I thought I was going to freeze to death, (3) when I was sick and alone in a basement in Chicago and thought I might

starve to death. It's that Black Happiness that I hear in Blues and Gypsy music and Greek folk music and the music of seaports of all nations. It's Black Happiness that is, I think, what is really meant by the term "Soul". The logic behind Black Happiness is simple. If all is lost, then you have nothing to lose. And if you have nothing to lose, then you can risk anything. The cornerstone of freedom is despair!

No wonder we are on the brink of despair! We've been struggling for thousands of years to build a better world, and the vast majority of the human race is still living under conditions little better than those of the late stone age. Since the dawn of history we've been trying to find peace, and all we've succeeded in doing is extending the sphere of influence of war so that the whole world is involved in it, instead of only a portion of the world at a time. And our improved transportation and communication systems seem destined only to make it impossible to hide, to run away from war when it comes the way one could do in ancient times, while science has created weapons which force the involvement of civilian populations in a way that was impossible in former times.



Does this depress me?

Not at all!

It inspires me with Black Happiness!

It uplifts me with the ecstasy of despair!

Because it means that it doesn't matter if western civilization falls. Because it relieves me of all responsibility for minding the store. Because it frees me to do anything I please, liberated by the knowledge that no matter what I do, it won't hurt mankind any more than what the Christians have done with their sincere and determined efforts to bring goodness and peace. It won't do any more harm than the white man's "help" to the Indian or the Roman's "help" to the Jew. I could go out and slit a throat every morning before breakfast, and my crimes would still be reduced to nothing alongside the crimes of, say, LBJ, who I think is not a monster at all but just someone who really wants to do what's right. And Hitler, I think, really just wanted to help the German people. At least at first. And the Black Panthers really want to help the Black People.

Somebody said, "I can handle my enemies, but God save me from my friends."

333 Ramona Avenue, El Cerrito, California 94532



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LEE CARSON

Since my latest period of distracted-away-from-it-all began when I left you on the Penn Turnpike after the Nycon, it seems fitting that it was Odd 18 that emerged from the fmz piled up at home to electroshock me back into fanac. I went through all the classic symptoms. I wanted to call you up long-d; I wanted to contribute; guilt associations started to solidify: I realize I haven't been to StL for over a year — Christ, I've been to Columbus since then. All the Real Soon Nows... as they say in the flicks, "rargh! kreegah! bundolo dingo!" — the dingo being me; let Tom Disch live.

I am slightly puzzled as to what a "chacter" might be relative to voice. The chacte is a Mexican shrub which (allegedly) yields "useful wood" (we all know what that means.) I do not recognize any attempt to reproduce the sounds of a shrubbery in the editorial, however. Whatever, you managed to chacter very well. I join with you in hoping that man's other faculties gang up on his unique capacity for delusion and self-delusion and domesticate it. Delusional systems are fascinating, but (speaking for myself) really a drag to be subject to.

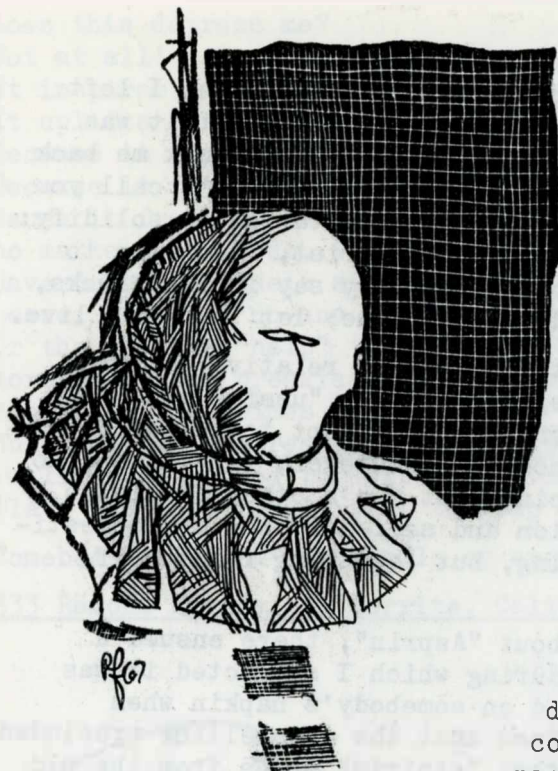
When I first looked at the Troll thing about "Asprin", there ensued a short but hideously ambivalent interval during which I suspected it was something that I had done and left doodled on somebody's napkin when smashed-out-of-head. However I soon realized that the misspelling precluded this — how could I ever have forgotten that "aspirin" comes from the old technical name "acetyl spiraeic acid"? — and there was no embarrassed memory of a pun. Very clever, RT. (Roy Tackett? Ron "witting" Ton? Roscoe Tamburlaine? Ray Table? ... perhaps we all are tables....)

"Eve": interesting, tricky (none dare call it cheating in poetry) and fairly good. I was a little disappointed that the poem limited itself largely to the specifics of the myth, but this is only a question of approach. I would have expected more tension (within the poem) with Here & Now. Content is undeniably present. Similarly with Joyce's "Turning Wheels" which reminded me (thematically) of parts of TS Eliot's Four Quartets, particularly "East Coker" (III: "They all go into the Dark".) Eliot is interesting both in content of statement and method of putting it on paper in the best way (ie, most effectively.) Bill Bower's long short (can this be why novelette starts with "N"?) struck me as unsatisfactory but very exciting to read and appreciate his thinking of the wonderful things he was trying to do and in fact did do in places. I'll be happy to see more from him. Canning's "Beastuary", though weak at the end, had its moments, too: gnat and scarab, and especially cat; and the illos for it were nice. I laughed by head off at the juxtaposition of "newer beings / brighter, darker / creatures of the earth and stars" with the picture of the Worldcon balloon and its inhabitants.

(As recognition for Zig-Zag Man under the mushroom, please find enclosed a piece of treacle.)

3412 Ruby Street, Franklin Park, Illinois 60131

[[RT is a friend who signs his work Random Trolls. We asked him why (we should have known better), and he informed us that a Random Troll was a seldom thing...that most Trolls were content living under a bridge, but not he. He also refers to us as 'Polish Printers'. (We quit asking questions. after that.) Thanks for the treacle.]]



HARRY WARNER, JR.

It's obviously impossible to say something about each of the fine pictures, but I was particularly bowled over by Philip Canning's *Beastuary*, which reminded me irresistably of the musical pictures that Maurice Ravel drew for a group of vaguely similar little poems about animals. I'm not sure if I wish harder that Ravel were alive to set these poems to music, or that Canning had included sketches for the Ravel texts. The R. Edwards Jennings portfolio is probably equal in quality, but it has the slight disadvantage in a personal sense of making me feel a trifle dizzy and in danger of slipping bodily into the distorted space-time continuum on which Jennings must have gazed as he drew. It is undoubtedly a damaging admission to make, but I am also completely enthralled with the Rhodes full

pager on page 81, not because I'm quite old enough to remember the days when these trips were made for slightly different propaganda purposes, but because the sketch captures so superbly the gingerbread of a decade that wasn't nearly as far in the past when I was small as it is now.

I wonder how many Odd readers will be both stupid enough and foolhardy enough to admit that they couldn't make heads or tails of *Look Dreamward, Beggar?* You have at least one such reader. I thought for a while that it was an effort to write in the same general vein as the Palmer Eldritch narrative, after abandoning an earlier theory that it was a fannish equivalent of *Silverlock*, and still later, I felt an impulse to dig out my copy of *The Demolished Man* and see how many parallels I could find. But after finishing it, I've come to the safer decision that it's simply beyond me. I feel vaguely impressed by it, in any event.

Your editorial contains nothing with which I could sharply disagree, except the implication that this may be a new situation for the world. It isn't. I've begun reading a fat biography of Queen Victoria, and there are amazing parallels between the mid-19th century and today, in the general moral and mental incapacity of the rulers of the world's important nations. I'm normally a peace-loving person who believes that almost all wars are wrong and unnecessary. But the worst part about today's situation is the possibility that a really necessary war will finally loom up for this nation in some year in the immediate future. Assuming that Vietnam ends in an inconclusive stalemate as Korea did, isn't it possible that Vietnam will cause such a revulsion against warmongering for decades to come that the cry will call attention vainly to a real wolf?

Richard Gordon's column made the strongest impression on me, out of all the prose contributions to this issue. I'm immensely tickled by the plea for tolerance toward use of drugs followed by the squawk of horror over the consumption of iced tea; only in fandom could it happen. Curiously, New York City has never impressed me as a particularly callous and nasty place. I've

gotten along quite well on several stays there, by keeping in mind the small number of personal conduct rules: don't do anything to slow down the people who are in a hurry; don't stare at anyone; and don't expect pedestrians to keep to the right on the sidewalk as they tend to do in many cities. But the signs are undoubtedly a nuisance. One enormous one pointing the way to a Greyhound terminal which moved years ago still has its lights flashing even in the daytime, I discovered as I was leaving the city after the Nycon.

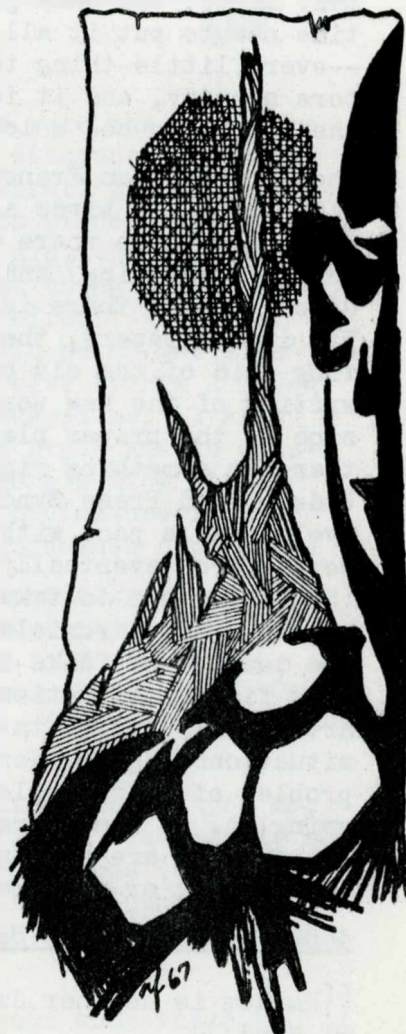
423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

[[I agree with you that mental incapacity on the part of Leaders is not new (nor is it confined only to the history of the Anglo-Saxon countires.) I feel that it has become critical that leaders of all nations wise up (or be replaced by leaders who are more capable of being rational) just so that there may be no more "necessary wars". The ante of the old war game was bad enough. I'm afraid the table stakes of the nuclear game of blind man's bluff are high enough to break both the dealer and the dealt-to. There aren't many more hands left to play in the deck: it's either change the game, or cash in our chips.]]

GREG SHAW

ODD, isn't it? To me it is. I mean, there is so much going on here that one hardly ever thinks about most other places, especially places like St. Louis, Mo. Images of Mardi-Gras, Bourbon St., Louis Armstrong, the Louisiana Purchase. I know there's fandom there, but ODD came nonetheless as quite a pleasant surprise. I still get fanzines from a few kindly folks, but the general impression is that fandom is taking much more time than it can afford to make contact with reality, now that there is a new reality that is a living science-fictional experience. Kids are still worried about whether fan fiction should be published, debating the virtues of the N3F, arguing about censorship, and so on. And that's why I've been so happy to see SIRRUIISH and ODD. I should very much like to visit St. Louis. I get the vibrations of a very healthy fan scene there. Your piece on the British music scene truly impressed me. I could find no fault with its accuracy, and the depth of its awareness of the scene was amazingly high for a fanzine audience. I suspect most of it will be lost on your readers (I wonder how many of them have heard, or even heard of, the Move?) but it is a good sign nonetheless.

Like I said, there's a lot going on here, in famous San Francisco (Bagdad-by-the-Bay), mecca of a worldwide nomadic tribe of young idealist pilgrims, bane of the organized status-quo, hideous den of sin, sedition, dope-crazed communist beatnik Vietnik rabble-rousing pill-pushing, speed-shooting, dirty drop out decadence of Huntley and Brinkley. There is a lot here, and there's more, just north, incredible Marin Co., (see Herbert Gold's loving tribute in recent POST) and if you think Gold's middle-aged





"No, I've got astigmatism——
it's justice that's blind..."

plotted will never be written; the other things, so many other things, so many ideas, can only jot them down somewhere because there really isn't time now to put it all in order, too much going down, this is the beginning --every little thing that I see happen will grow to the size of General Motors someday, and it is all starting now, here, and I am close enough to the center to see a lot more than most -- I am learning much.

When I leave San Francisco, it will all change. In the quiet hills of Marin with trees and birds all around, I will put my head in order I hope. If I can get a mimeo there are a lot of things I want to try (amateur publishing is still my thing) and I know I have the potential to write some pretty strong stuff. There is so unbelievably much, you only see the surface on TV, in the papers, the mass mags. There's a whole world forming in the rotting void of the old one, and it's a fascinating spectacle. When I think of writing of the new world, the new reality, I somehow feel that only a fanzine is the proper place to discuss these matters. Just a feeling, but there is something right about fandom, something that makes it, the way the Underground Press Syndicate never will. Idle thought; if it grows and evolves at a pace with everything else, fandom could easily become a strong world force eventually. Maybe the new version of the literary underground. (Something has to take over when Evergreen Review sells 100,000; the Barb outsells the Chronicle, and Cheetah takes the place of Playboy.) Young people today, the folks in the "underground", are learning to cope with science fiction situations in the everyday world. It seems to me that sf fans are ideally suited to arrive smoothly in the new world and take control in situations where understanding of what's going on is so vital. That's the problem of most people in this country today -- they have no idea what's going on. It almost requires science fiction background to recognize the things that are happening everywhere now for what they are, or what they're similar to, or what relationships they have with each other.

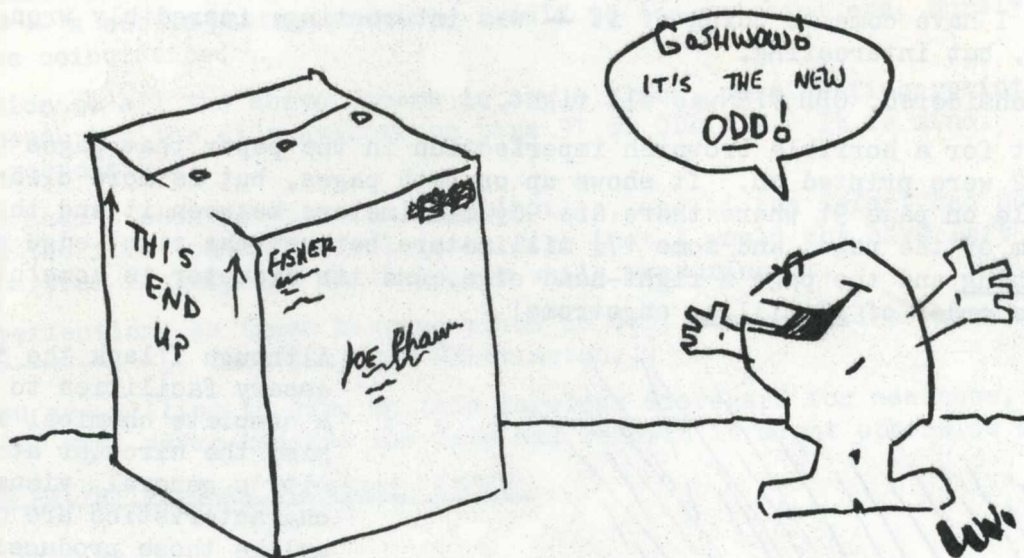
4652 1/2 18th Street, San Francisco, California 94114

[[Fandom is neither Just A God Damned Hobby, nor A Way Of Life. It's a State Of Mind.]]

swingers are going too far in Marin, doctors going to work stoned on grass, et al, you should see what the kids are doing there. So much to do, see, understand, experience, so many things to be, each day is a living science fiction book, each new truth so startlingly unbelievable in terms of all we've been taught, and it's all happening so splendidly around the clock, that one forgets too easily. Forgets St. Louis, Mo., forgets fandom where I grew up, which gave meaning to my teenage years, which I have loved deeply in all its campy hang-ups, the way Mothers love America. Sometimes I feel like writing a thing for some fanzine, when something weird happens to me, when I find out about something I know other people don't know about and would find interesting, and sometimes I even start writing it--- but it never gets finished; the novel I

DOUG LOVENSTEIN

I'm in the hospital with two broken arms received by carrying ODD #18 from the mailbox to the house, and strained, bloodshot eyes from reading the thing. Yet I sit up after my bed time and write a letter of comment — I'm either delirious or dreaming or dead.



Liked ODD #18 very much — the main features this time were the art (were the art?) if you discount B. Bowers' piece (which I'm discounting because I didn't read it), so comment I will make on the art first. Logical. The Rhodes work I didn't like as much this time because his pieces (especially p.17) were just too crowded...had too much in them. I did, though, like his piece on p.14, and the one on p.92 was great — best thing in the issue. I really loved the way he used the blocks of lines so effectively. Next comes generous J.B. Gaughan on pretty page 83. His illo on 85 was also very nice — different than his usual fare. Everything else by him I loved except the Shaggy Dragon story which for some reason bugged me. I also liked Bob Jennings' work a lot; he has a cool, unique style and is amazingly consistent in the quality of his illos. Then there's Dick Flinchbaugh (watch this kid!) and on down.....Keep art a major feature in ODD! (1985: Remember ODD? ... Yeah, the one with all the goddamned fine art.)

Liked Katz' "Bludgeon" very much. It interested me especially since I'm putting out A! and I've concentrated muchly on the layout and editing in #2. The appearance of a mag is a very important thing. Of course, it doesn't matter what the thing looks like if it publishes sheer crud. On the other hand, bad repro & editing can, as Arnie says, injure good material.

Loved Richard Gordon's thing. Now I know that it's this town and not me, and that someone else does dig Country Joe, and Butterfield Blues Band, and The Grape, and the Harum. And the Beatles are topped by no one (or at least they haven't been) in my book. So there. And put down that Blooming Bewk!

425 Coolville Ridge, Athens, Ohio 45701

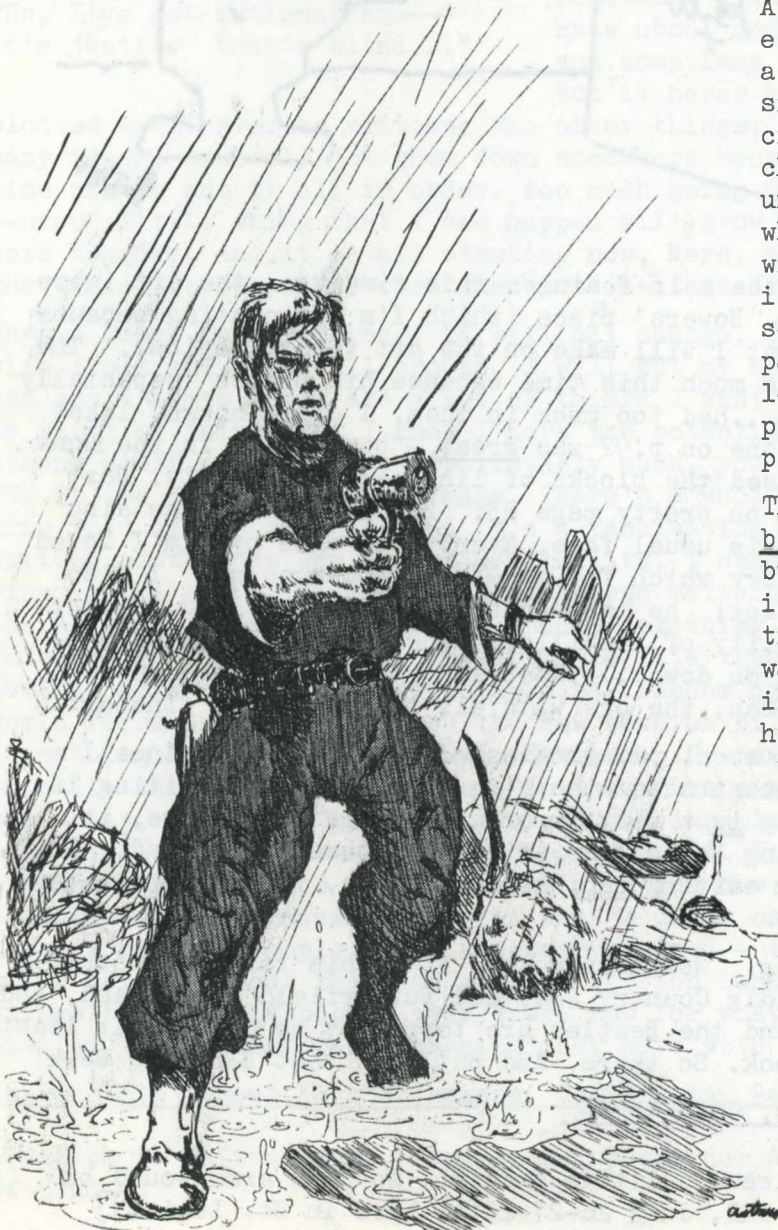
[[That's why we made this issue a little smaller, so your arms would be healed in time for OZARKON III, July 26-27-28th, here in St. Louis.]]

ARGH! — if I may be forgiven the plug. But it is justified, I think. "...man could insure than in a few short decades, he could enjoy several centuries of life..." Well, I will concede the possible discovery of some time-distorting drug, but, otherwise...ARGH!

The latest issue of ODD was all right. Even the View from Gordon's Beak — as I have come to think of it — was interesting; incredibly wrong in parts, but interesting.

All considered, ODD #18 was all right...

Except for a horrible brownish imperfection in the paper that pages 91 and 92 were printed on. It shows up on both pages, but is more clearly visible on page 91 where there are $96\frac{1}{2}$ millimeters between it and the bottom of the page, and some $17\frac{1}{4}$ millimeters between the right edge of the thing and the page's right-hand edge. And its diameter is something on the order of 25 million angstroms!



Although I lack the necessary facilities to make a complete chemical analysis, the circular atrocity's general, visual, characteristics are not unlike those produced when a fountain pen filled with ordinary machine oil is touched briefly — .237 seconds — to the type of paper I am typing this letter on. Type of fountain pen: Parker 45. Medium point.

There was one of these blotches in ODD #17, also, but I let it pass, thinking it to be a once-in-a-lifetime mishap. This, I admit, was most unscientific, and it only goes to show you how conclusions reached without adequate data can be crashingly wrong. Differences there were — the blemish in ODD #17 was on pages 17 and 18, rather than 91 and 92; its position on the odd-numbered page was somewhat different (47 mm. from the page's bottom, $61\frac{1}{4}$ mm. from the page's right-hand edge); its brownish

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color was slightly (but perceptibly) lighter; and its diameter was a trifle greater ($29=1.7 \times 10^6$ A.) — but they can be attributed to carelessness on your part, a variation in impact on the part of the mar-producing instrument, and differences in the two sheets of paper that page 17 (ODD #17) and page 91 (ODD #18) were printed on.

What with this flaw appearing on page 17 of your 17th issue and then again in the immediately following issue — immediately in order, not time; definitely not time — a subtle pattern presents itself to the watchful eye. Surely this cannot be coincidence!

In addition to all the above, there is now a black, partial fingerprint partially obscuring the oily eyesore on page 91 of ODD #18. It is mine. But you are responsible!

If there hadn't been so much ink in that illo, and if the defect had not been there in the first place, I feel quite sure that I would not have left a black, partial fingerprint on the paper while measuring it.

Such imperfections as these have no place in ODD; they would be more suitable in ----- [[Tsk, Tsk, Mr. Whittington.]]

Until you are willing to give up this careless disregard for neatness, I'm afraid ODD will never receive the fame and respect it might otherwise deserve.

308 Park Drive, Festus, Missouri 63028

[[Words fail me.]]

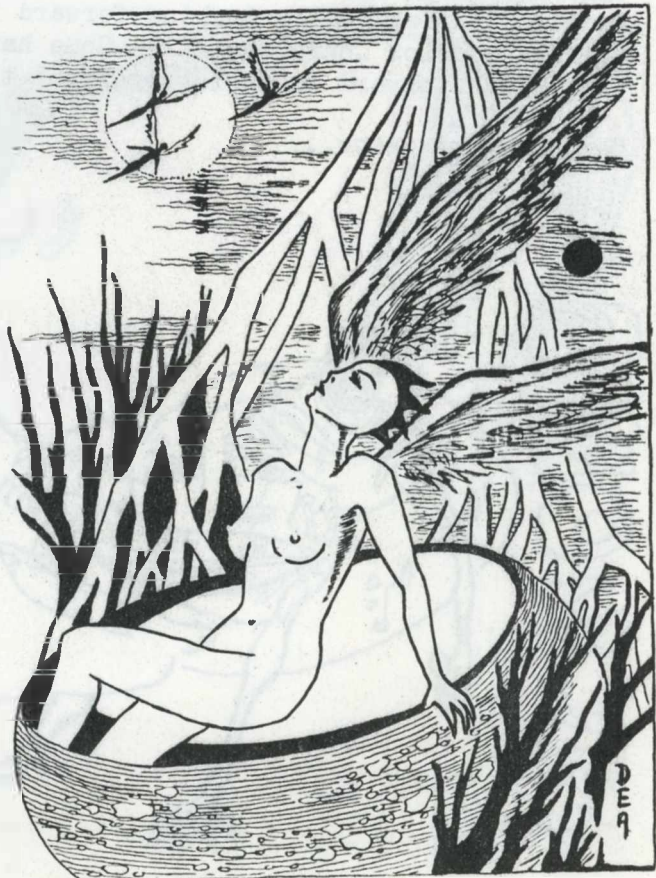
A FEW ODD REMARKS:

Is there anyone who has not yet read Dick Lupoff's ONE MILLION CENTURIES? It's a fascinating book and should be read twice: once for the story, and the second time for the pleasure of Dick's plays-on-words which are, in themselves, effective sub-plots.

Read with interest two new Lancer books by former Missourian, Robert Moore Williams: ZANTHAR OF THE MANY WORLDS, and VIGILANTE - 21st CENTURY. Coming up in the future will be another new novel, THE BELL FROM INFINITY.

Spent another pleasant evening reading THE COUNTERFITS, by Leo Kelley, published by Belmont books. Kelly has a pleasant, easily readable style and produces a lucid novel of bizarre ideas. Recommended.

For the lovers of WEIRD TALES, T.G.L. Cockcroft's Indexes are definitely recommended. They are sold in the USA by F & SF Book Co., Box 415, Staten Island, N.Y. 10302.



INDEX TO WEIRD TALES BY TITLE and INDEX TO WEIRD TALES BY AUTHOR sell for \$2.75 each or \$5.00 for the two. Mr. Cockcroft has also compiled an INDEX TO THE VERSE IN WEIRD TALES; if F & SF Book Co. can furnish no information on this, write T.G.L. Cockcroft, 84 Pharazyn, Lower Hutt, New Zealand.

Jean-Pierre Turmel, 38 Rue Annie de Pene, 76 Rouen, France, tells of a new French SF prozine to be edited by Jean-Pierre Fontana. The new magazine, ESPACE, is probably on the stands in France by now (if the mid-May riots haven't messed up distribution); if you are interested, you might write to Turmel: I am certain he will see that you receive information about publishing schedule, sub rates, etc.

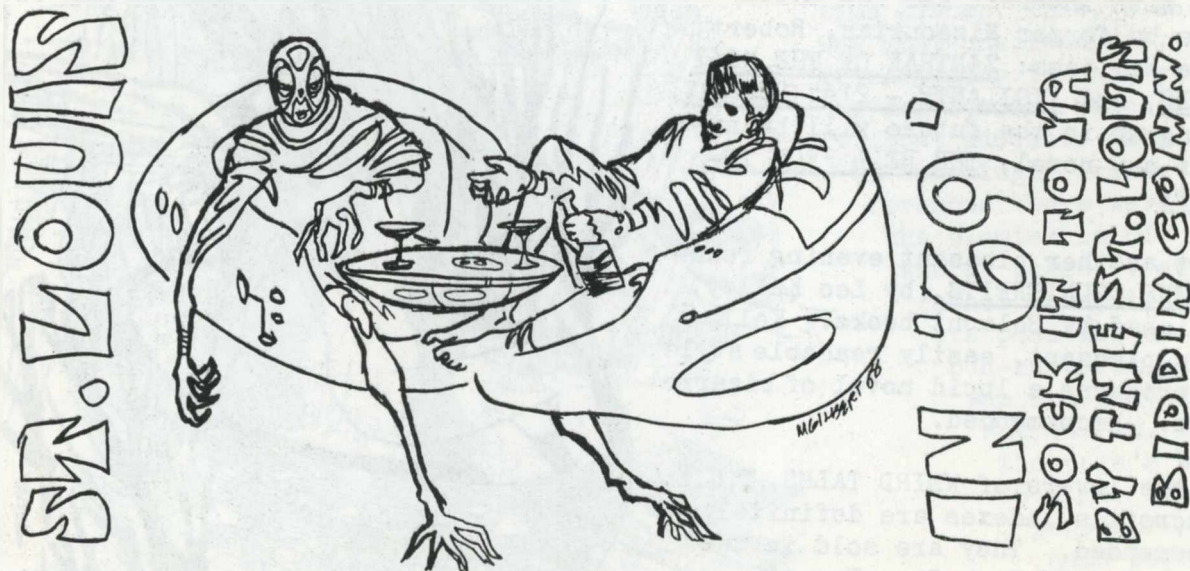
Mike Montgomery, 2925 Pennsylvania N.E., Albuquerque, New Mexico, still has LotR buttons available at 25¢ each or 5/1\$; (include 6¢ for postage for any size order.) Titles still in stock: Frodo Gave His Finger For You; Sauron Is Alive In Argentina, and Gollum Eats Goblins.

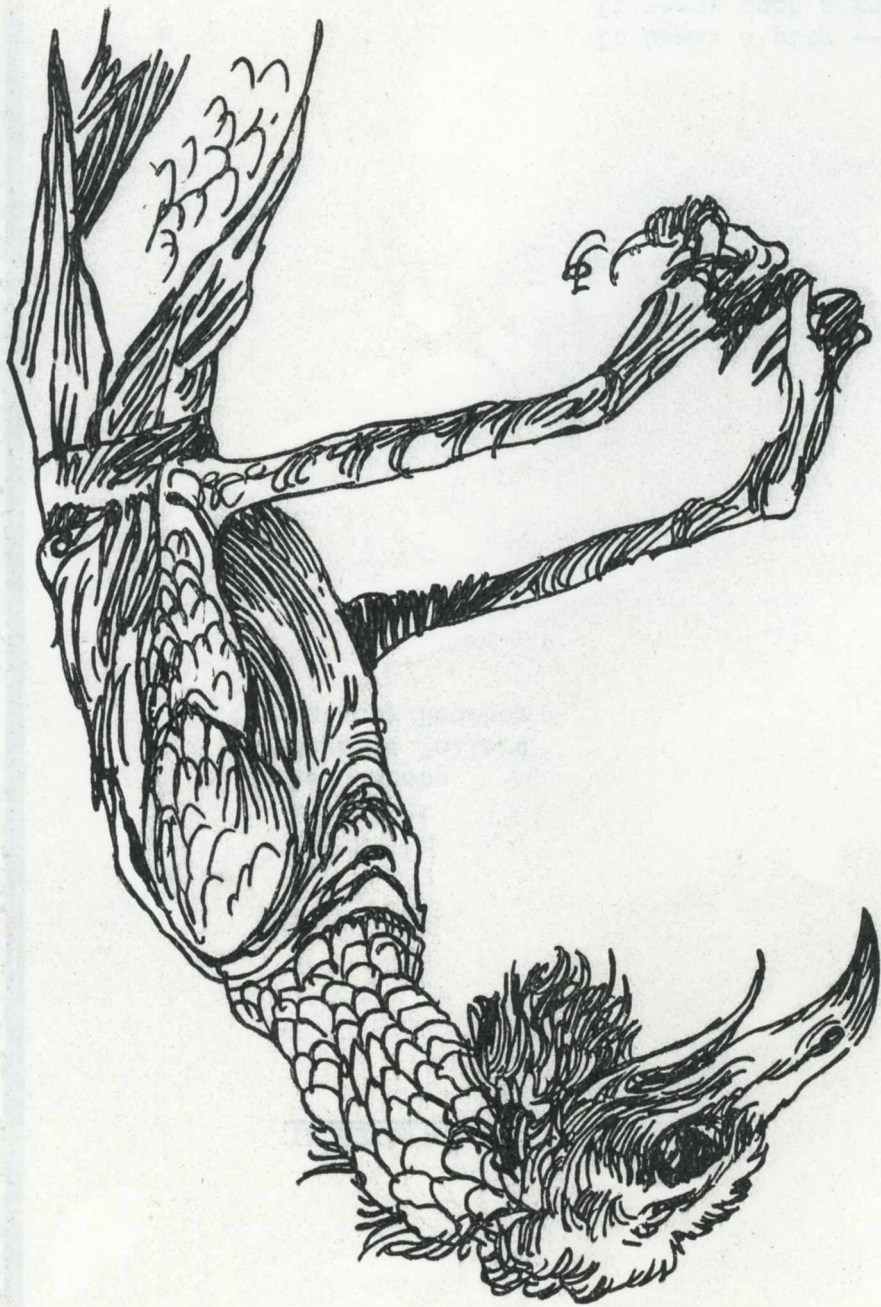
And don't forget OZARKON III, July 26, 27, and 28, 1968. St. Louis' third regional Science Fiction Convention will be held at Ben Franklin Motor Hotel, 825 Washington, in St. Louis, Mo. \$2 attending membership should be sent to: Norbert Couch, Rt. 2, Box 889, Arnold, Missouri 63010. Room rates start at \$7 singles, \$9 twins; reservations should be made direct with the hotel. Guest of Honor will be Harlan Ellison. Fun Galore: OZARKON III.

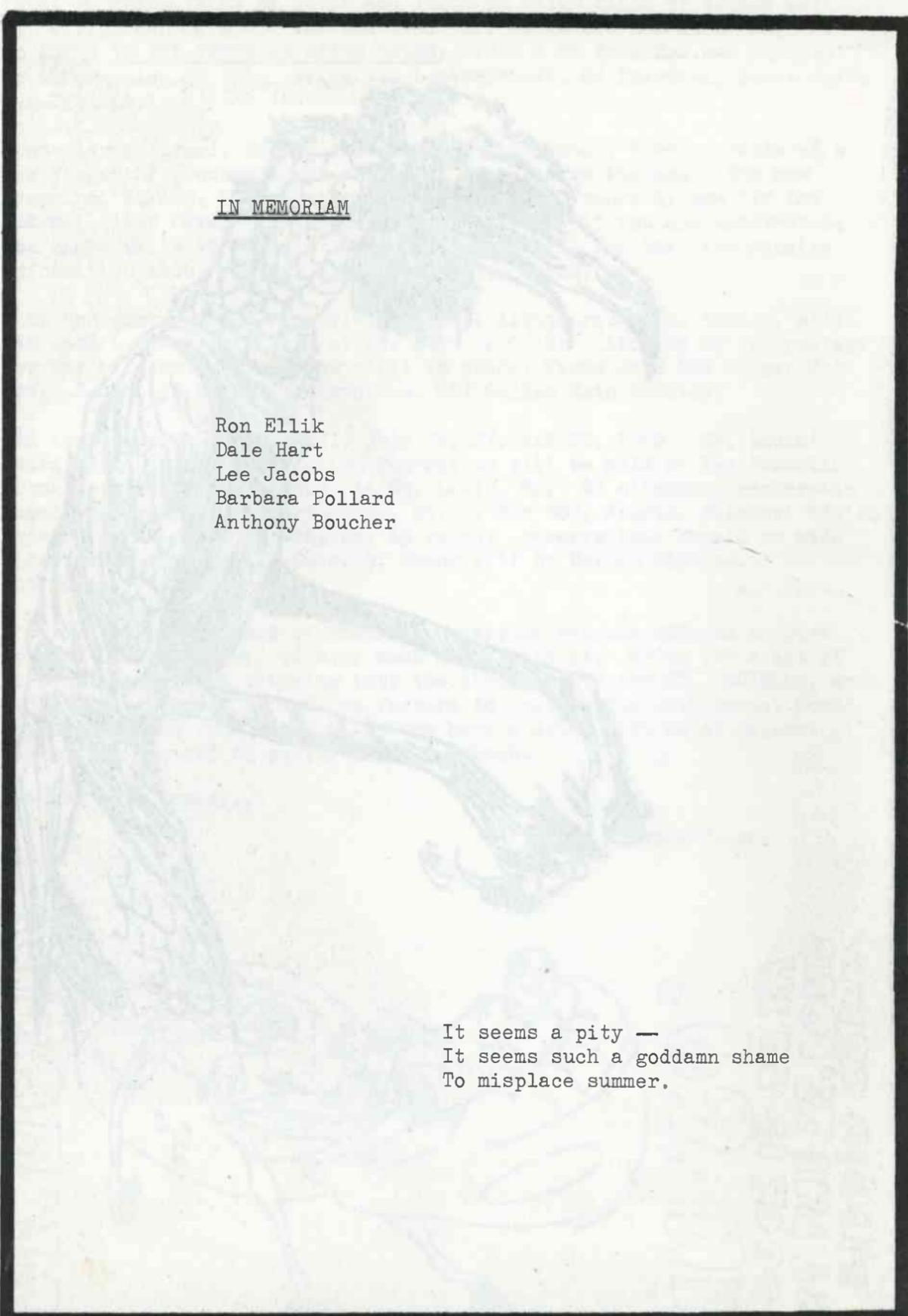
I'd like to give a word of thanks to everyone who has offered support for St. Louis in '69; we very much appreciate it. We've put a lot of careful thought and planning into the arrangements for ST. LOUISCON, and we're enthusiastically looking forward to hosting the 27th Annual World Science Fiction Convention. — Come have a drink with us at Baycon: we'll look forward to seeing everyone there.

See you next issue...

Ray & Joyce Fisher







IN MEMORIAM

Ron Ellik
Dale Hart
Lee Jacobs
Barbara Pollard
Anthony Boucher

It seems a pity —
It seems such a goddamn shame
To misplace summer.

