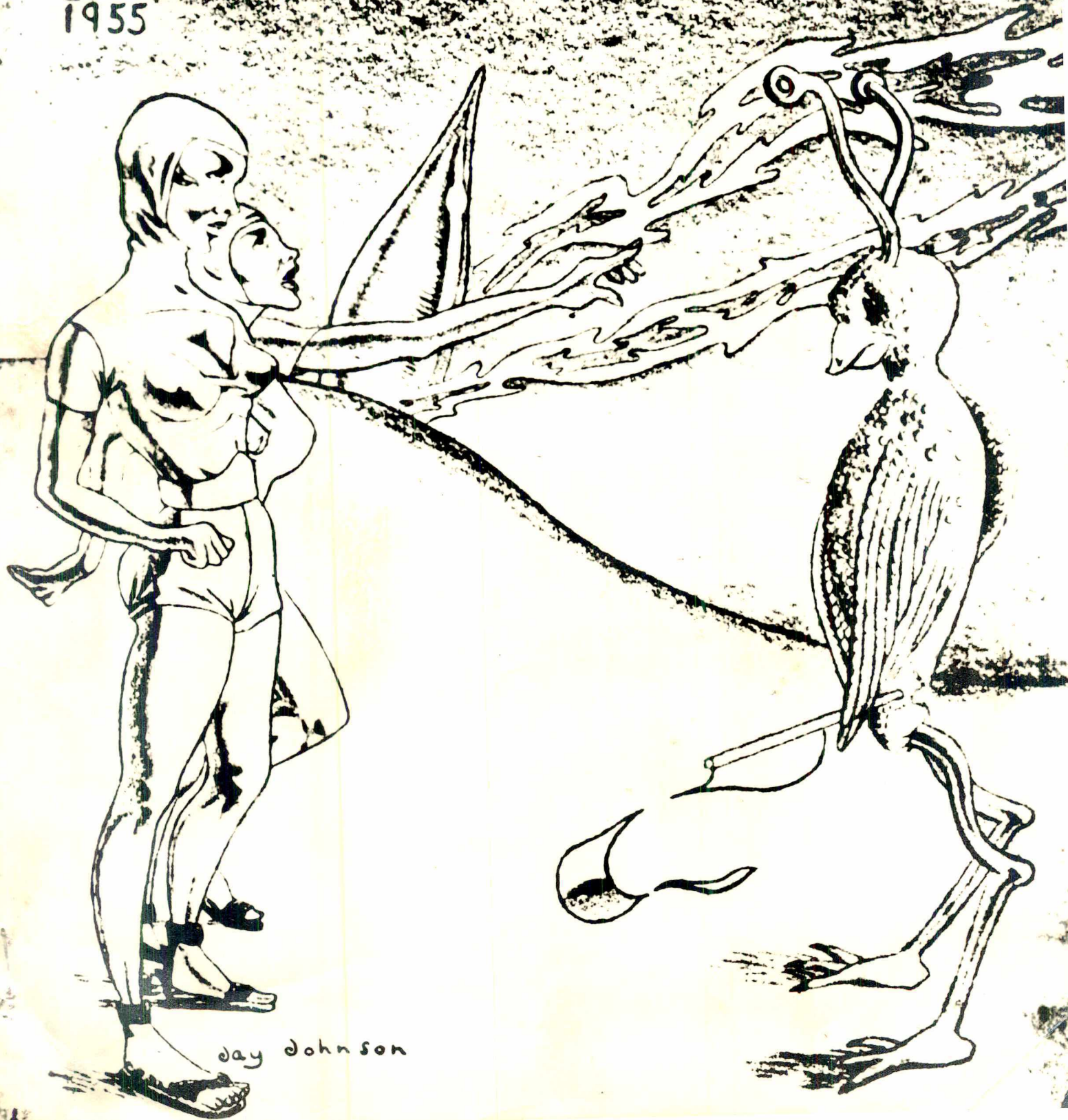


ARIAL

APRIL
1955

N. II



Jay Johnson

APRIL '55

OBLIQUE

NUMBER 2

a GHOULISH publication

THE LINE-UP

First in the line-up is the Editorial (Hello Out There) wherein your Editor expounds freely on many things, including; Sex and Stf, and fans and fanes, and brussel-sprouts and Bnfs.

Next we have a semi-annonymous piece, being that it is written by me, and I forgot to include my name whilst cutting the stencil. It is called MORE THAN YOU--MAN, and it is a parody on Ted Sturgeons masterpiece MORE THAN HUMAN.

We then find an article which happens to be called EXEMPT, the reason for this title is known only to Jan Jansen, who also happens to be the author.

We then come to two columns: OBLIQUE-STIONS AND ANSWERS, and BOURNE: INTO FANDOM, these being written by Larry Walker and Larry Bourne respectively. I hope to make both of these regulars in all future issues of OB.

We then find two more articles, the first of these is full of TIPS FOR THE EDITOR OF A TRUE FANZINE. Next we spy the byline of Fred Malz (sometimes referred to as Kalz) it is placed under an article which asks the thought provoking question, "How Green Was My Valley?"

The issue is then wound up by the litter (thank you R. Bloch) er a letter column which happens to be called (for some reason which is/was known to me) LAST CLASS.

All typos misspellings and/or interliniations are those of the editor.

MOTTO There Is No Such Animal As An Unsolicited Mss.

OBLIQUE

Is edited published, stapled together and mailed out (on a quasi-bimonthly schedule) by, me:

Clifford I. Gould
1559 Cable St.
San Diego 7,
California
U. S. A.

It sells for 50¢ per single copy or 10¢ per year--sic.

All trades are welcome. Sample copies will be sent upon request. Needless to say, all reviews will be appreciated though--NO NEWS IS GOOD NEWS. Circulation this is slightly over 100.

The cover is done in a photographic "reflex" process. It was drawn by Jay Jhonson who resides in sunny-Sany Ago and will consider doing artwork for other zines--preferably off-set or litho repro, contact me if interested.

Interior artwork is by Bill Rotsler and DEA.

HELLO OUT THERE

WILL SEX REPLACE SCIENCE FICTION

Some years ago the joint fields of Sex and Science Fiction were popularized by the same man--a real pioneer in the publishing world--Hugo Gernsback. It seems that they were both, originally, his ideas, however, he did not think of having them copyrighted.

Mr. Gernsback, was so enthusiastic over his new ideas that he decided to let the rest of the world in on them. He, being connected with the publishing feild already, decided to do this by starting two "new direction"*magazines, one devoted to each field. As almost everyone knows these magazines were called SEXOLOGY and, AMAZING STORIES.

The idea of sex being closer to the 'common people' caught on at first, like wild-fire. Not long after this inovation there was the orgynization of a Sex Fandom. At first there were a great many carrespondence clubs. These flourished for about three years, but the sex-fen soon realized that more than just correspondence was needed if sex was to be popularized. They decided to publish sxms**.

These sexzines flourished for about six months, but, it seemed that some fuggheaded beurosrat in Washington disapproved of the entire set-up, and the great majority of the zines had to fold. The sex-fen then, had to be content with occasional conventions, and beach parties. However a few of the more stalwart of these fen moved to border towns*** and are still in business to this date.

Investigation would show that there are still remnants of this once flourishing fandom, this is especially evident in the letter columns of some magazines****. However I feel that, on the whole, sex has lost its popular appeal.

*A phrase recently stolen by a disreputable comic-book pubber.

**Abbreviation for..."Sex Magazine."

*** ie Tijuana Mexico--Toronto Canada

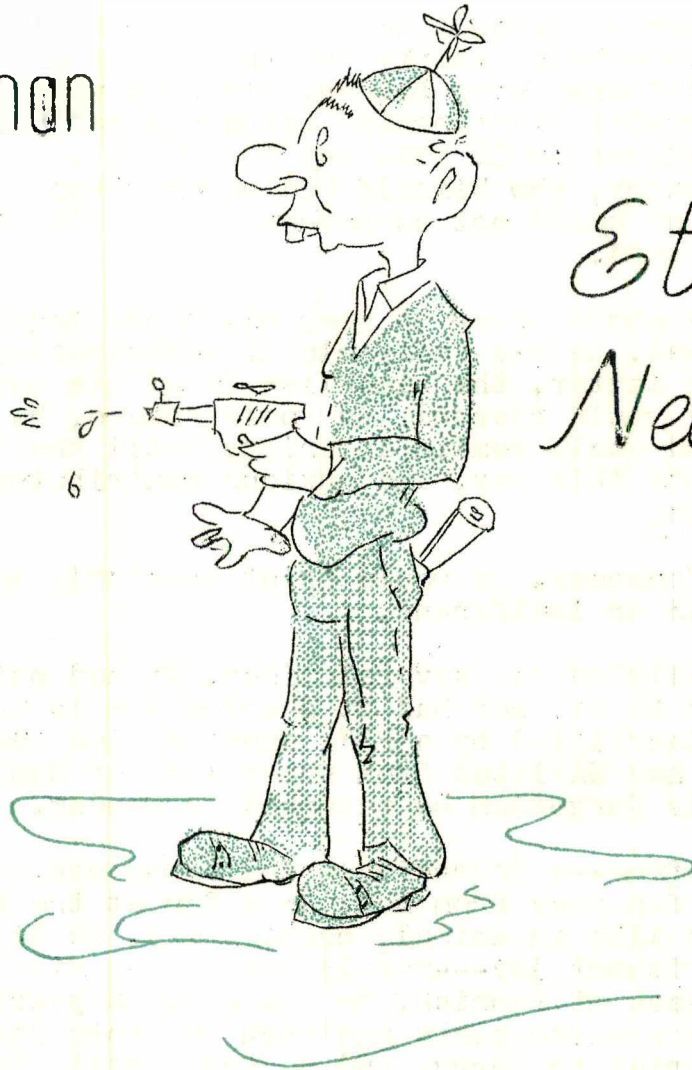
**** SEXOLOGY, SUNBATHING, ONE, PSYCOTIC, etc.

To you who have not yet had enough...turn way--way--way back to the rearwardmost page.

more than

you

MAN



the
Eternal
Neo-fan

SCRIBED IN THE STYLE OF STURGEON

The neo-fan lived in a black and gray world punctuated by the white lightning of hunger and the flickering of fear. His mimeo was an old fan-me-down, well rusted with age. He was tall and gaunt. His eyes were calm and his face was dead.

Men turned away from him, women did not look, children stopped and watched him. It did not matter to the neo-fan. When the white lightning struck his mail box, he received his egoboo. He fed himself on it when he could, and went without it when it didn't come. When he could not get material for his fan-zine he was given it by the first tru-fan that he wrote to. The neo-fan never wondered why. He did not beg, he would simply write and wait. When someone received his letter there would be an article in his mail box, a piece of fiction, a poem. He would use it (usually forgetting to send the author a copy of the zine) and his benefactor would pan him, disturbed, not understanding. Sometimes they would correspond with him; they would write to each other about him.

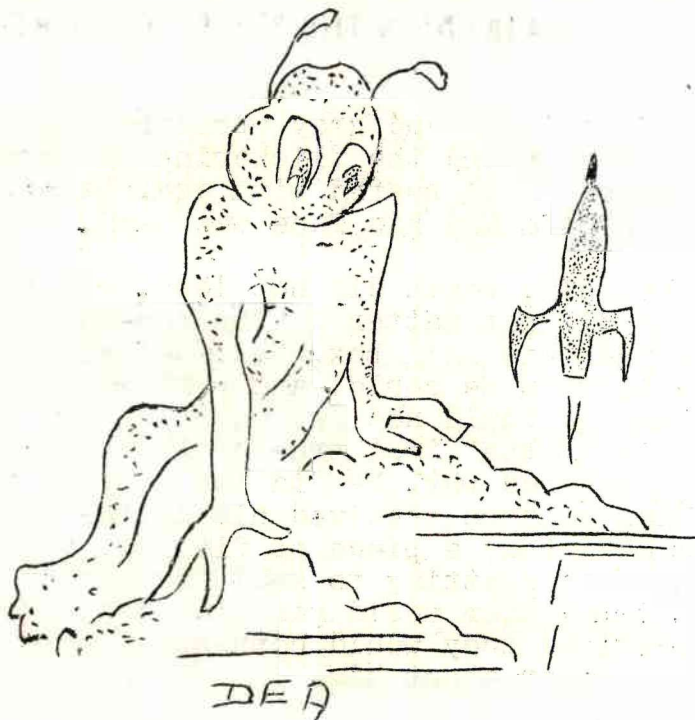
The neo-fan read the sounds but it had no meaning for him. He lived inside somewhere, apart, and the little link between word and significance hung broken. His eyes were excellent, and he could readily distinguish between a pan and a good review; but neither could have any impact on a creature so lacking in empathy, who himself had never given good reviews or panned and so could not comprehend the feelings of his gay or angry reviewers.

He had exactly enough fear to keep his bones together, and his mimeo well oiled. He was incapable of anticipating anything. The threatening letter, the blacklist found him unaware. But at their touch he would respond. He would escape, he would fold his fanzine and would remain an eniety until the blows ceased. He escaped debts this way, and anxious contributors, and beligerent subers.

He had no preferences. He would print absolutly any kind of material, good bad or indiferent.

They had blacklisted him several times. It had not mattered to him any of the times, nor had it changed him in any way. Once he had been blacklisted by a BNF, another time even worse by a pro. Twice he had GAFIated from sheer lack of Egoboo. When he had been nearly forgotten he returned to fandom.

He was purely fan---a degrading thing amung men. But most of the time he was a fan away from men. As a fan at the crank of a mimeo he moved like an animal, beautifully. He lived like a fan without hate without joy---merely putting up with his surroundings, for lack of fannish. He was sixteen years old. He had exactly the same seven years ago when he wrote his first request for material to Torry. And he would still be the same five or ten or fifteen years from now. He would always be the neo-fan.



EXEMPT

BY JAN JANSEN

I presume that to some readers this will look as if I was so touched by Pete's earnest plea last issue, to the effect that faneditors who have 'come of age' should not forget their struggling younger brothers, that I just couldn't resist him and promptly mailed Cliff the present article.

Now nothing could be further from the truth. Not that I do not agree with Pete's article. It could be a good thing perhaps if those faneds that have finally got their own mag running, could take off time to write articles for other magazines that are trying to mount the crest, or trying to get started off with a good first issue.

However, we have first of all the case of Dick Geis. Dick seems to have followed the practice of writing a lot for various fanzines, so much indeed that his own *Psycotic* began to suffer under the strain of too much fanning. I haven't seen the *Psycotic's* of that time, though I read here and there that *Psy* was falling down from its top place. With issue #16, (the first I saw) Dick stated that from now on he would confine his activities mainly to his own zine, and would just have to, much against his will, refrain from helping out with contributions in answer to the many requests that he received.

What goes for Dick, doesn't necessarily apply to other faneds. Pete seems to be one of those that has too much time - however the majority of faneds stuck with a fairly regular zine, will just have to cut down on handing out contributions. Besides the editing that gets done, there is always the letter writting - most people do like an answer to their letters, and unless one has passed the stage of BNF (whatever that may be) and has been classed with the Ghu's and Ghods of fandom - one has to reply at least occasionally to avoid cessation of the missles which bring the much required egoboo.

Of course being promoted by someone or other to the Ghu stage elevates this replying - fans will keep on writing you letters whether or not you reply, just to be able to say, "Well, you know Walt, I just wrote him so-and-so..." or, "...and I expect a reply from old Bob any day now..." ad infinitum...

In the mean time, those faneds that are struggling inbetween these stages must reply sooner or later, would they see more egoboo flooding in. And that takes time too. Of course if you have six correspondents or so it is very easy to keep on turning out articles for other fanzines. When you have sixty the matter is entirely different,

and I find it quite enough work to keep them busily occupied with reading letters - though it must be said that I'd far rather write twenty pages of letters, than the present article.

Aside from the letter problem - the time factor as it were, there is a stumbling block, say that you get ten requests and yet only one out of these ten 'neo-zines' is ever heard of again. What happened to the other nine? They folded before they even got under way. An idea shoots into the head of Jophan, who first saw the light of fandom three weeks ago, he has seen one fanzine (not read seen), and noted the enormous possibilities for obtaining world-wide fame overnight. All one has to do is write a couple of letters demanding contributions, D-E-M-A-N-D-I-N-G, I stress the word, for they are from people one has never heard of before - who expect, without fail, that you turn out something, anything, within the next week or so. Others first take the trouble of subbing to your own zine (this is always a nice gesture anyway), then write you a letter of comment, which does anything but give you an idea of what sort of an impression the mag left on them, and go ahead to ask, usually very urgently, for a contribution.

In the review of OBLIQUE, which I wrote for ALPHA, I mentioned the factual occurrence of a person asking both Dave and myself for contributions for a mag he was to publish soon. I was already suspicious of requests at the time - and instead of going straight to the typewriter to knock out an article for the fanned to be, I wrote him a letter saying that I would write the article for him as soon as he let me know how soon his mag would be out. After a lapse of some six months, I received another letter from the person in question, without once finding mention of his projected zine. I asked him what happened to it, I am still eagerly awaiting his reply.

There have been cases where material was written, sent off, and months upon months pass before it is used, and oftentimes it is never heard of again. It's not that I am worried all that much about their non-publication - I'll admit that I am no genius when it comes to writing articles - but it makes me ever so cautious of writing more. Unless that the article will be helping out somebody. Surely there are fans willing to write, and with some goading capable of turning out reasonable stuff, without having to fall back on the established faneds of all time.

The situation there, is, of course getting quite complicated, with anyone that feels he has any talent, or has had anything published, rushing off to buy some paper, and stencils, in order to enrich fandom with a new zine.

In our case here in Belgium, where no one existed that one could term fans, prior to our enlightenment, it was particularly hard to get any subscribers, indeed it was hard to find many people that ever heard of fandom, and in many

cases even science fiction. So the only interest that we could arouse was that allotted to any novelty. The bulk of these people having never dreamt that anything like this would have ever ~~been possible~~ in Antwerp. But, oh, the things they told me when I suggested that they should try their hand at writting something.

We have persisted, and though English is a foreign language to them, we have had some reasonably good stories from them. Sufficiently good to try something that even I thought impossible a couple of months ago. An all continental Europe issue. At the time of this writting it is practically a certainty. And by the time this sees publication, ALPHA will presumably be in the mails. Of course, it takes a lot of work to get people to write in the first place, and some judgement in deciding whether or not they'll ever do anything in the writting line. You should be able to see that from the letters they write. When however trying to goad them into production: please allow for ~~the important~~ item: give them a subject with which they'll feel a bit at home with. It will presumably be necessary to reject some of their first attempts. But don't just say, "sorry ain't no good"---explain why. And try to help them avoid the mistakes. If you don't know why it's no good---what are you the editor for?

Such small attention will lead to the would-be-writer, in this case a pressed-into-service one, to appreciate your attention. And he'll turn out just that extra little bit of effort to make the next contribution acceptable. Should you have a good idea for improving the story, don't hesitate to tell him---show him how it could be improved, and don't bother about the byline, let him have that satisfaction; yours should lie in the fact that you have put out a good issue.

But to return to Pete Vorzimer, who has started all this please, not a fannish duty. Although it is of course a great help to receive articles and stories for your first issues at a simple request, it doesn't hurt to start off the hard way. To the contrary, it leads to the faned knowing that hard work that goes into building up a zine, and will give him incentive to try to build up helpers, in the guise of contributors, other than the generally accepted big names, and thereby enlarge fandoms circle...it has been done.

There is the possibility, that is all faneds considered it a duty to write an article whenever requested...we'd have nothing but a glorius series of one-shots...

The article has had its use. It has given me a subject to write about, enabling me to comply with Cliff's request. So lets ring off with: Is everybody happy?

—Jan Jansen

OBLIQUE QUESTIONS

AND

ANSWERS

LARRY WALKER

Cliff asked me to do a column for him. I wrote Cliff and said, "Sure I'll do a column for you." So this is to be considered a column. Let us consider the theme of this column to be...HOW NOT TO WRITE A COLUMN.

I frankly don't have any idea of what it will be about. Sex is a good subject--but some zines won't touch it. I might attack someone, but Ghod knows that there are enough people that hate me now. I might fly back in time to the memory of the Good Old Days of Fandom--about 1949 or '50--when I first got messed up with sf ingeneral. I might recall when Lee Hoffman was a fan and again when Lee Hoffman wasn't a fan. I might recall when Pogo was a fannish Ghod. But now it is Mad or some damn thing. I might recall when flying saucers was the chief topic for discussion; now it's sports-cars, politics---and sex, of course. I might remember when every pro zine had a letter column, putting the letters in such small type that it took a practiced eye with the aid of a magnifying glass to discover who wrote them. I might recall all of the glorious things that have happened in fandom in the last five or six years. I might, but I can't think of any.

So.....

I am rapidly coming to the conclusion that this is going to be one Hell of a column and I doubt if Cliff will print it, so I don't know why I go on. But I do. On and on, and on...

Let us pretend that the subject of this column is HOW TO BREAK INTO THE PROZINES LETTER COLUMNS. Which is about the most useless subject I can think of. Yes let us pretend that that is the subject, and then--for Ghods sake--let us forget it.

In my recent researches into ancient, historical literature I have come up with a remarkable discovery, which, I feel, bears passing along to all of my fellow fen. It is written in the form of a diologue, so I shall pass it along to you with this note; it seems to be a conversation between Plato and Wilbur Sigafos, written in perfectly modern English as you will readily see, in about the year 864928 AYS (after Yog-Sotloth.)

PLATO: Well Wilbur, old boy, 'tis about ready to go.

WILBUR: Cleybh haielb healci! (Wilbur could only speak Cretian since he was from Norway)

PLATO: I think that you are right, Wilbur. This magazine will take the world by storm. And the writters I've got for it--and the cover. Wilbur, what do you think of this cover-girl.

WILBUR: Yeic! (Wilbur blushed despite himself)

PLATO: Yes, I think she is rather nice too. Of course we really should put a fig leaf on her, but, then this is privately published magazine. Which reminds me--I must try to get that correction fluid out of my white robe.

WILBUR: U ehahef knop; ue dhak dk.

PLATO: Yes, I like the first article best too. It is written by Jupiter you know--all about first fandom. The part about The Third World Con, held in Troy is especially good. You remember Wilbur, that was the Con where the Egypticon was outlawed. And then there's that story by the famous pro writer, B. Block.

WILBUR: Hity, hai bn kkk?

PLATO: Yes it is a little sexy, but you know how the teenage fans go for that stuff.

DARK BENEDICTION

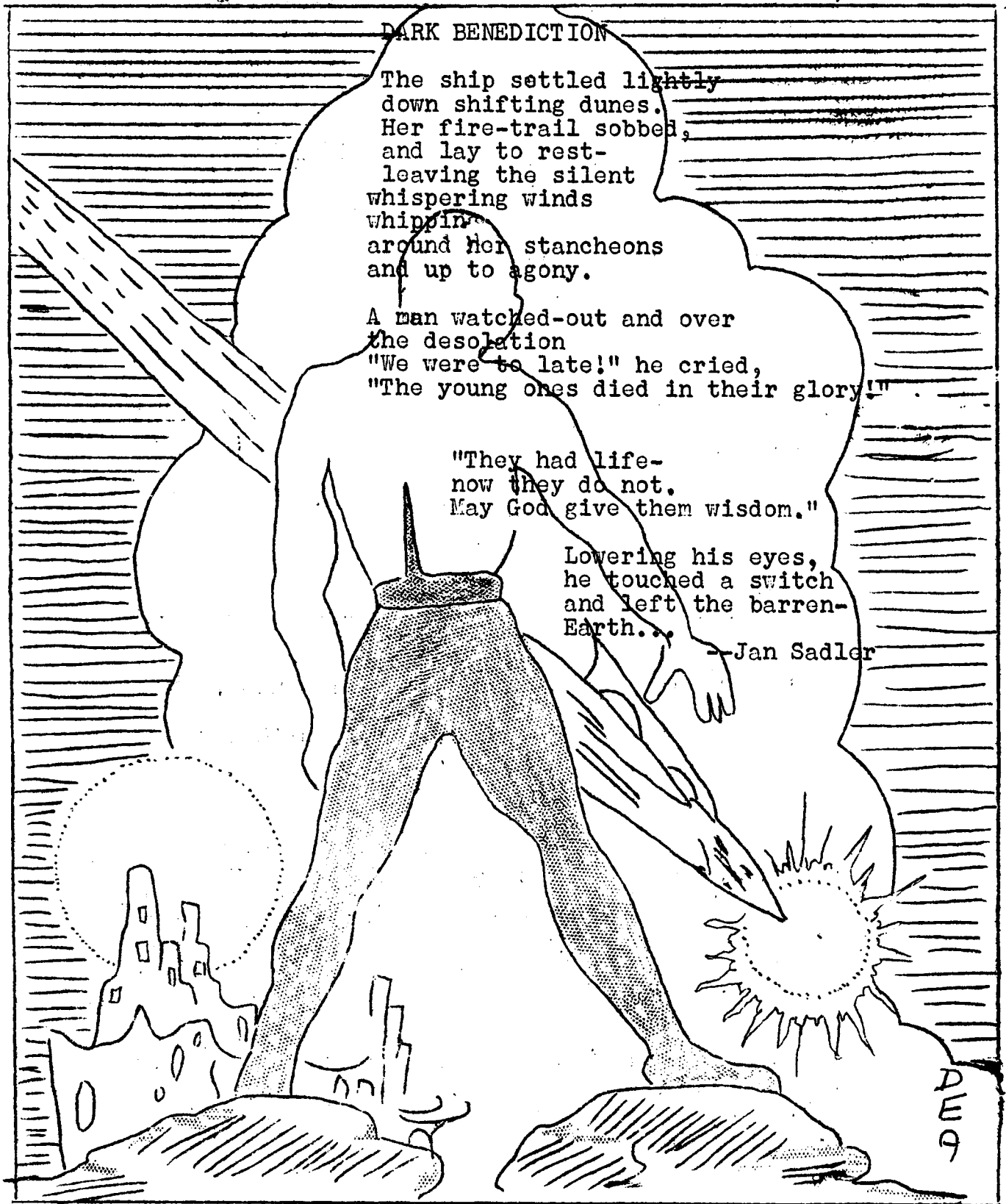
The ship settled lightly
down shifting dunes.
Her fire-trail sobbed,
and lay to rest-
leaving the silent
whispering winds
whipping
around her stanchions
and up to agony.

A man watched-out and over
the desolation
"We were too late!" he cried,
"The young ones died in their glory!"

"They had life-
now they do not.
May God give them wisdom."

Lowering his eyes,
he touched a switch
and left the barren-
Earth...

- Jan Sadler



Unfortunately the remainder of this zine was very poorly reproduced, apparently their repro was very poor in those days, and fandom will never see more of Plato's fanmag. Isn't it a shame tho, I have a feeling that it would have turned into another Q. That Plato was a pretty fair writer you know. Tho, of course, the quality of repro could never approach that of Ouandry.

This nonsense must stop! Any fool knows a column must put across some point, a moral, or at least convey some information to the eager reader. Well, what information do I have that you might be eager for. H-m-m-m-m-m-m-m. Did you, dear reader, know that if everyone in the United States decided to go to a movie at the same time (and isn't that a horrible thot) there would be ~~fourteen people to~~ every seat. Someone should write a story about that. Because it is a fact and you know what they say about facts. Don't you? Facts are facts! Yes, sir it was the noted philosopher Albert Sigafoos who said that (Wilbur's uncle). And that is one statement that cannot be disputed. Immediately I shall get seventy-three letters explaining why facts are not facts: I want everyone to know that I agree with them 100% because I have decided to become a agreeable fan.

I wonder; just what is a fact. What can be pinned down pointed to and said of; this is a fact. I will never change. My guess is that nothing can...does fire burn? We can say that fire usually burn, but it doesn't burn all people, so is it possible to say that it is a fact that fire burns! As long as something doesn't hold true in all cases, in every test, in all experiments, is it a fact? Can anyone in the great out-there think of anything that is an absolute indisputable fact--I imagine that someone will even like this little bit of writing. Of course, by far, the hardest facts to tie down are theological facts. Which leads me to a subject I'd better not go into if I wish to remain 100% agreeable.



BOURNE: INTO FANDOM

BY LARRY BOURNE

PONDEROUS - POLITICAL PASSAGES---FUGGHEADISM

Probably you have heard of various individuals who do idiotic things and generally make themselves look like asses. These persons are called a great number of names, but the one that fits them best is fugghead. You might think that these fans are making fools of themselves only because they can't help it or because they are mentally deficient. Such is not the case. These fans are following a political doctrine, their motto is, " Lets make damn fools out of ourselves," and, of course, the name of their group is Fuggheadism.

Fuggheadism is an excuse for doing any stupid or idiotic thing. For example, if I called Bob Tucker a Fake Fan, and I was blasted straight to-- (~~deleted~~ deleted by the N3F Bureau of Obscinity)) I could give as an excuse, the fact that I was a follower of the Fuggheadist Doctrine. Then I would be excused--for a person is entitled to his political belief.

No fan has ever tried this excuse before, because the Senate Investigation Committee on Fakefanism would take a dim view of it. Someday tho the Fugghead Fan will assert himself and proclaim his Doctrine. He will stand up to the world and renounce; Bheer, Sex, Roscoe, Ghu and Egoboo. He will then take Fugghead as his true Ghod and then march on to Nirvana and ultimate glory. Of course the way will tough. The FBI will investigate him, the N3F will be after him... You shouldn't be too hard on the Fugghead Fan as persecuted fen succumb to the utter Hell known as GAFIA. A bureau for the regulation of blasting of Fugghead fans should be set up. This bureau would consist of a group of trained psychologists to determine how much blasting a fan could take.

All a fan would have to do is write to The Bureau and ask for information on a certain fan. A booklet would be sent to the fan giving the desired information on a certain fan.

A booklet would be sent to the fan giving the desired information about the fan that he wanted to blast. (You can write Ted E. White for this information./1014 N. Tuckahoe St. Falls Church Virginia/.He won't be able to give it to you but it'll be fun...)

I would like to give here a portion of the Fuggheadist Manifesto.

The Fugghead Manifesto
Brethern and Cistern arise. The time is soon to come. Be ready for the athorities will be here any minuit. Quick out the back door, hide the bheer and pornography. Prepare to shake off the shakles that bind you:The day has arisin. The time is soon to come when we will revolt fandon. We will prove to the world that we as individuals can be perfect fools--no one is perfect, now, but we shall soon be.

I'd like to show you the original mss that I copied.

The Fuggheadist m²/64i^y s^{to} to
Bre^{he}t^rn yant aye s^{te} a^r s^s KKISZ ari^e. N t^M QD^a MNnD
t^{im}^e iis soon 2 com₃...
ye

That should give you sort of an idea of what I had to put up with in writting this---. The poor fellow who wrote the manefesto must have been under inkaholic affleuance. Probably trying to forget his troubles.

I'd like to leave you with some impecable gems...

Old fans never die---they just write/writhe that way.

If you're a fan where is your plug?

I left it tied up outside-----

One last thought... You too can be a Fugghead.

--Larry Bourne

TIPS FOR THE

EDITOR

OFA

TRUE FANZINE

BY LARRY ANDERSON

I don't personally edit a tru-fanzine. Mine is an amateur journal published about and for science fiction and science fiction fans. The tru-fmz has little to do with anything but fans and fandoings. Occasional professionals are brought into the discussions, but these are, for the most part, treated like so many buddies.

The hallmark of a tru-fmz is the letter section. Without this very important part, one cannot have a true-fmz. In this column assinine readers argue or agree with assinine editors. The friends praise the assinine articles and reviews, (for no true fanzine prints fiction) and the enemies criticise the same stuff. It's a vicious circle, and seldom stops, though; occasional fen rise above this morass of inanity, and try to, and at times do, succeed to write interesting, informative letters. Opinions can be liberally and wisely expressed making no enimies. News can be introduced. Intellegent discussions can go on without namecalling. Of course this is all very unlikely (judgeing strickly from what is printed in the leading and many of the following fmz) Today, the more furor that a letter column creates, the more likely its success is. This has been recently proven by a young fan who energetically contridicted everyone, called many names, feuded with tens, and kicked hundreds off of his mailing list. He was in turn called many names, feuded with by many, and occasionally kicked cff of a mailing list. So is the fannish way.

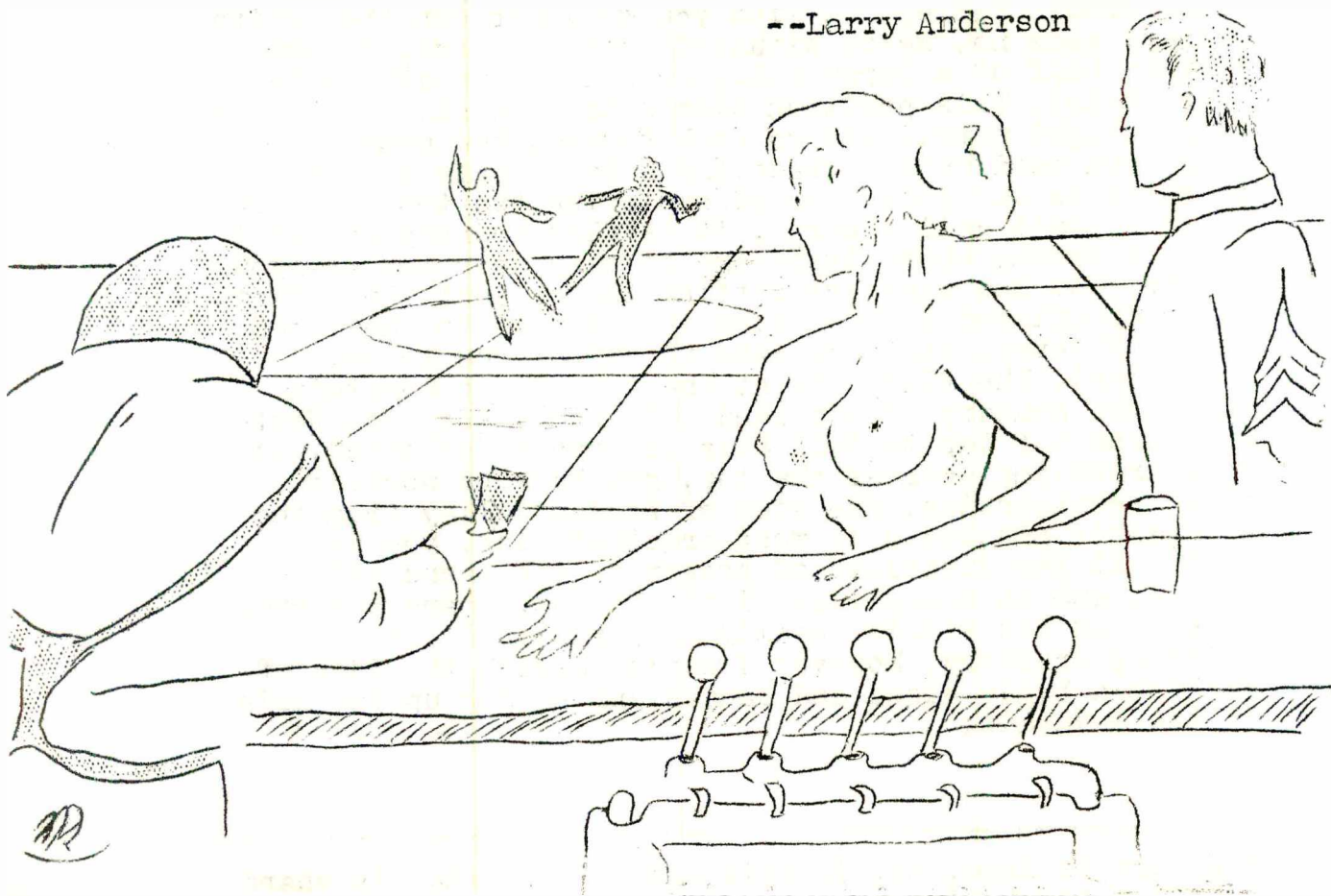
If you have reviews in your fmz they can't be favorable. Personally, I like nearly every fmz that comes to me. I like some of them because they are the true, unadulterated efforts of a struggling fan. If a fmz isn't struggling, there is no fun in it. I don't care what it has to struggle with just so it does. I occasionally give a fmz a bad review. But only when I think it deservs it. I like fmz because they are connected with fandom, because they are a pleasurable way to wile away the hours. I frankly say what I think of the

occasional fanzine that disagrees with me. But this has gained me lottle or no success. It has brought only the many criticisms mentioned before, just remémber---seldom if ever give a fanzine a favorable review. Give 'em both barrels and hit 'em where it hurts. Trample on the little ones and snear at the big ones. They don't dare send bombs through the mail, and that's all that really counts.

Don't let anyone get away with a reckless opinion. Or any opinion for that matter. If anyone is so rash as to make a statement definitely favoring or disfavoring one thing or another, jump down their throats. Twist their guts and make 'em suffer, pull out all stocks and shoot the works. This is the sure way to gain success. I'm not being the least bit facetious. As far off the beam as these policies may seem, they usually succeed. You can never get anywhere by agreeing with what you think is right. Disagree to get ahead. Criticise to be popular. Fued to be an Idol.

But then, I'm not popular, I am not an Idol. I don't even get ahead. But I have fun in fandom, and I think fandom likes me.

--Larry Anderson



how green was my valley

BY FRED MALZ

"How Green Was My Valley?"

How many times have you heard that phrase before? And as I'm sure you all know, the same is the title of a fine book---fine, of course, if you enjoyed the story; I don't think there were many who didn't enjoy it. But why should I be talking about "How Green Was My Valley?" Well I'll tell you: In Wooden Valley, Napa County, California, there is a ranch of approximately, one hundred and twenty acres which belongs to my family. To be a little different in the line of thought when you think of what the book's title really stood for in the way of expression, I'm going to literally tell you how green my valley is. Not very, is about the best I can say for the place---you see, there is a great deal of brush and trees with brown leaves, which makes sixty acres, just estimately, green, and the other sixty brown. Tell me do you like brown? Well that's why they call the place Wooden Valley. Oh mind you we don't own the entire valley; gads no. We're situated, more or less, on the eastern half of a large hill, or small mountain (whatever it is). This position places us on a slight slant---well, slight untill you go back towards the mountain; there you need Ghod's grace and a handy pair of wings if there is any intention of exploring the top. The top is what you'd call a burn*, it is flat country and is a mass of brush, where there are so many deer tracks, you wonder just how many are sitting there, just three feet away camouflaged by the brush in likeness to their own color. However, the deer make no difference to me, I don't hunt. The flat land at the top of our mountain marks the boundry of our land; the remaining land Westward from thr top to NAPA City is government owned, so when traveling accross the top, you have no worries about tresspassing. The view of Wooden Valley from the mountain's pinnicale is most breath-taking, you can sight all the divisions of property, the barns and ^{two} houses, and an occasional cloud of dust, where a farmer is plowing his fields. Really inspirational for a painting or story, however I don't cherish the idea of packing a bulky easel and canvas and paints up the side of the mountain.

* A burn is land, or, in this case, brush that is chard from a heavy fire.

Animals? Well we have a few. First of all (and most important) are the horses, there are two: Gypsey, an Arabian mare of about four years, and Sister, a Morgan mare, the horses are black and white retrospectively. Sister, I forgot to mention, is about ten years older than Gypsey. Then there's my dog Sandy, a Cocker Spaniel. Seven head of cattle are grasing on the property as a favor to a friend who owns them, and with them is a Whiteface bull from over the fence line, that we've been trying to cut out of the herd---his intentions don't seem to agree with our friends plans for his cows. We have several chickens, one duck and three rabbits. As you can conclude, we are not in the ranching business, but, more or less, have the ranch for vacationing and just plain fun.

What has all this to do with science fiction, or fandom? I can assure you, this ranch has had a great effect upon my fannish activities; in fact, I think that it has stimulated my interest further in fandom. I'm not trying to say that the fresh country air has made me strong healthy and energetic, I'd like to be able to say that. But things don't seem out in that line of wishfull thinking---since I've been here, about a month at this writting, I've had two vile cases of poison Oak I've had, Lord knows, how many bone fractures, bruises and barb wire scratches. Oh, I'm a Country Gent in fine style. I have yet to be bitten by a Rattle Snake---Oh, heavenly Father, how I pray for safe deliverance through the night...

My unselfish loyalty to fandom has influaneced me deeply, and, there, you have the patriotic reason for buying a ranch in a county, as Mr. Gould suggested, that was named after an "APA." And what do I receive in return for this loyalty? Misery that's what. Oh but I suppose that everything isn't as bad as all that---no not quite. Let's let you be the judge.

Gilbert Menicucci, former fan (he's leaving fandom because of its loathsome-ness, no doubt) is a very good friend of mine who, as a lot of you know, lives in San Francisco. When I left San Francisco for Napa, Gil promised that he would write the first letter, which we would consider the begining of a 'hot' correspondence between the two of us. I arrived at the ranch Sunday night after missing my bus because of a GGFS meeting in San Francisco, at about nine-thirty that evening. The whole family was there---all fourty of us (you think there wasn't that many.) Sometime later the convoy back to good old S.F. had begun, and within no time at all there stood two lonely figures in the dust and carbon monoxide waving good-by; my Grandfather for life, he plans to stay and keep the place up when everything is more in order, and me until I hear from my Dad about an application at Hunters Point (local Navy shipyard in San

Francisco) where he works. This way there is someone at the ranch all of the time, and we are able to have fire insurance. I imagine that if my Grandfather decides to go back to S.F., we'll have a pensioner take care of the place-- you know sort of a keeper.

The next morning I thought I had better get up early and make a mailbox of sorts, and erect it on the post that was left bare by the previous owner. The post for the mailbox, is, by the way, right on the highway--the highway being about a mile down a steep road, (through our property mind you) away from the house; quite a little jaunt, but at the time the distance didn't phase me. After about an hours running around in circles looking for wood to make a box...I decided, the hell with making one, I'd use a large can or some such. I soon found what I was looking for, a two pound coffee can. Promptly I gathered up my pen and ink, took a piece of paper, and printed the numerals 4121 on the paper, which I wrapped around the can in a manner that would enable the address to be visible the anyone approaching the can. All this finished, I trotted down the mile road to the highway, with the makeshift mailbox in one hand and hammer and nails in the other. Going down the hill was easy, gravity simply dragged me down. After I erected the mailbox/can on the post, I turned, and there staring me in the face was that steep road. It seemed like nothing the night before splitting up it in the car, and it didn't appear to be difficult coming down now... Ghad I had to pick my eyeballs up off the road.

S merrily puffing along, I skipped up the hill, and, all the way up there I was thinking about the next day when I'd have to go down to pick up the mail. All that night I lie awake cursing myself for ever becoming a fan.

Tuesday, I was sure that there would be mail, and, acting upon the advice of a near-by friend who told me the mailman comes about one or one-thirty P.M., I began the interesting journey, of skipping merrily down the mile road. The day before I trotted but that day warranted skipping, why I don't know... could be because I had plans to trot up the hill. Sure enough there was mail. I must have gotten excited at the sight of it, for I started running--suddenly I noticed that my body was traveling faster than my feet were carrying it--steep hill you know. If I had wings I might have avoided running/flying into anything, but, sadly, that day affirmed for me a bent mailcan and a broken nose.

It was that day too, that I discovered the personality of our mailman. Yes he's a genuine comedian. You should have seen the way my poor mail was crushed into the mailcan...There was a letter size envelope from home with

the mail I received there Monday, and there was a business size envelope from Gil Menicucci--the letter size envelope was folded so many times, it could fit into a comb case; and the letter from Menicucci, I won't even attempt to discribe. Don't you just adore those jovial mailmen? I suppose you'll have to excuse my mailman as he's a rural free deliverer. I've yet to see what the guy looks like; he just comes and goes leaving my stack of mail like some mysterious spirit. People tell me that he drives a car similar to my Green Hornet (thirty-two Plymouth) the car I use around the ranch. The Green Hornet is quite a car, yes really it is--no headlights, dented fenders, cracked windows, bumpers that look like washboards---yes really quite a car. At least it has brakes, (good ones) that are heaven sent when I'm traveling over those dirt roads through the property.

The next day, Wednesday, found the North Wind blowing as if to save its soul, and rain like Noah had never seen. There I was, sitting in the house worrying about the mail getting wet when the entire mailcan was sailing somewhere about sixty miles south of here--through the air the the greatest of ease. I no longer had a mailcan, but I didn't know it. Really worried about the mail getting wet, I set out to meet the mailman as he deposited my battered, beaten, bedragled, and crushed mail. But he never showed up. What's this I hear about "Through rain, through sleet, through snow..." ? ((ask Geis ed.)) I admit the weather was a superfluous combination of all those, that day, but Ghad, my mail! What was he trying to do to me?

Thursday brought more rain. I figured that I had better set myself to making a new mailbox--and this time it would be a box. It was a box allright--a cardboard box. I carved a door in the thing, painted it white, put on the address, and lastly (with a stroke of genius) put on a flag so that I would be able to send mail out. Soon this new mailbox was ready for launching, I gayly meandered down the road fully equipt with hammer and nails. This day I meandered down the road because I wanted to do handsprings up the road. When the new mailbox was finally up, I sat there, determined to wait right there until the mailman made his appearance, and thus catch him in the act. I was, however, interrupted by my Grandfather, who drove down the highway and announced that he was venturing into town--in the Green Hornet no less-- and I decided I had better go along--there were several things in the way of stationary that I needed. You see, at that time I hadn't gotten my drivers license yet and it was unwise to pilot something as obvious as the Green Hornet on the open highway.

In town that day I saw an extremely odd looking character in the drugstore looking over the sf mags; I've seen him several times since then. Ghads he may be a f-a-a-a-a-a-a-n. His appearances don't cheat him of the...tragedy (?) honor (?). I'll have to approach him some day and ask him if he knows anything about fandom--first of course I'd give him the usual time-honored opening comment (you know); "Say, do you read that crap?" Then he'll say "Hell no, I read westerns! Why do you?" Then I shall be cornered into admitting. "Yea." Then of course he'll start discussing sf and, ask "Say when are you gona go tu the moon huh," --I swear they'll do it every time.

Coming back from town I picked up my mail finding that my phantom mailman had been there again--I wonder if I'll ever see him/her/it?

Since that first week things have been comparatively mild. During that time I've received a good deal of mail from--Rich Geis and someone who is perfectly obvious, Gilbert Menicucci. Gil and I had a real knock-out period of correspondence, where we were sending six page letters at three day intervals. However I think that friend Menicucci cheated a little he used short paragraphs and double spaced between them. I'm still getting mail from home, and when I go back there I'll probably be getting all of my mail here for a few years.

I still think that it takes great patience and loyalty to be a fan, it's so easy to be miserable with fandom--well, I'm still loyal so don't think that I'm making excuses whilst sneaking out the back door.

One piece of mail that surprised me was the British mag NEW WORLDS SCIENCE FICTION, it came with an interesting letter requesting my subscription, and it was addressed to Menicucci and Kalz as the editors of RHEA. It was sent to my home in good ole S.F. and forwarded to me by my mother.

Who's Kalz?

Ghads, that's me!

Don't think that I'm merely plugging RHEA magazine, because it has folded--but then, said he with tongue in cheek, "There are still copies of number two for trade with those who haven't received it yet, and those who want to buy (sic) a copy it's a quater."

Menicucci and I had the plates, the material all dummied the art was nearly on the plates, and were about to type the thing up. However we decided that issues one and

two had already cost us too much and that a third might deal a fatal blow to our financial status.

RHEA is no more...

I must say that the cover on NEW WORLDS is very good--this was the January 1955 ish, by Quinn. Some of the interior illos were by him and there were a few by Hunter; Quinn's illustrations impressed me much more than did Hunter's. I have little talent for commenting on material, I just read and (usually) enjoy what I read.

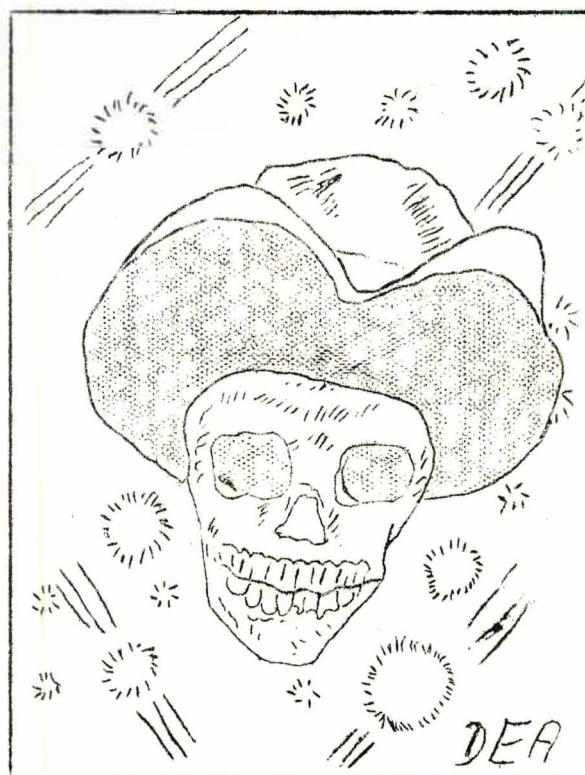
Just two weeks ago my father made me a nice roomy mailbox, out of wood! Can you believe it. I've finally gotten a reasonable mailbox, and my dad made it now I know its on the post for good--oh yes, it has a corrugated tin roof, too...

I have yet to see my phantom mailman, someday when I discover his identity, I'll write another article.

If any of you fans down South happen to find a two pound coffee can, with a piece of white paper wrapped around it with the numerals, 4121, written upon the paper; you can keep the mail, but kindly return the can it has sentimental value...

I offer a two dollar reward.

--Fred Malz



LAST CLASS

A LETTER COLUMN OF SORTS --- OR IF YOU PREFER A SORTED ONE

Walt Willis, 170 Upper N'Ards
Belfast, N. Ireland

Dear Cliff,

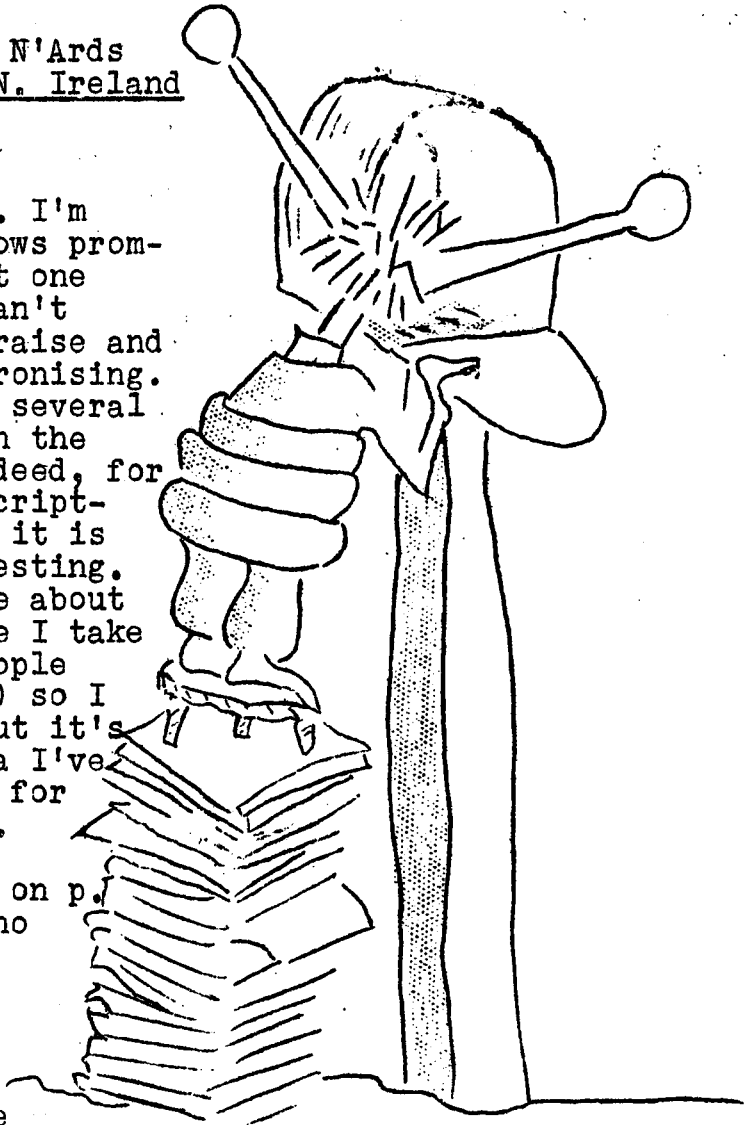
I got your new fanzine. I'm not going to say it shows promise because that's what one always says when one can't think of anything to praise and it sounds horribly patronising. Besides I can think of several things I like. I thought the cover was very nice indeed, for instance, and your description of the way you did it is very welcome and interesting. I only wish I knew more about photography (every time I take a Schnapps-shot the people come out brandy-legged) so I could try it myself, but it's the first original idea I've seen in fmz publishing for years. Congratulations.

I didn't like the illo on p. whateveritis though. Who did it Picasso?

No it was Leonhardo

Good editorial and nice title.

Vorzimer was interesting in a way, though really I can't see that so-called BNFs have any duty to write for new mags. Who says? Fanzines become good by discovering their own writers, not by scrabbling about in the craters of extinct volcanoes; you could just as well argue that BNFs



should refuse to write for new fmz so as to force them to develop independently. He is right about the importance of assuring prospective writers that you can re produce their stuff properly. Pity you made two typos on the first two lines.

Type O's?-----I guess it's just in my blood

The other good thing in this issue for instance--ie apart from the editorial--was the Matheson parody. I should hate to think that if I had sent you a ten-page article you might never have written this. Inselfishly, I shall refrain from sending you any ten-page articles for a while yet...

Best, Walt

Walt; why must you do your best to frustrate people?

Here I am (poor innocent me!) I very uninhibitantly open up an innocent looking enough letter, with no identification as to it's origin other than a blurry "British Industries Fair" stamp on the front of the envelope, (by the way it missed the stamp leaving it uncanceled) and way--way, over towards the left-hand side a smart ~~hat~~ proclaims, "Belfast". I then hurridly open up the envelope and I think to myself, "Ye Ghads don't tell me that someone has sent me a pocket book." I think this because the scribblings on the back of your stationary bring back fond memories of the Dell Novels, "With The Map On The Back" But much to my crestfall I find that it is...

Merely a letter from-----Ghod

Don Weagars, 2444 Valley Street, Berkeley 2, Calif.

Dear Cliff,

Your first issue wasn't too bad as first issues go. In fact it was rather interesting and showed that you may have a winner on your hands.

First off, I'd say you should take a little more time on layout and lettering; the contents page and the individual headings look a bit sloppy.

...Your parody on the Matheson story was about the best thing in the whole issue. Such resounding phrases as: "She hit me so hard I dripped bheer all over the floor..." make me point this out above all others. You are a dirty sonofagun though, because I had planned to do something along the same line. To the victor goes the spoils, though he who hesitates is lost.

The pink paper is nice indeed. And I know how much your arm hurts since I too, use a flat-bed-ditto. It is a terrific strain on the arm---sometimes it pains me even more than my old hekto unit.

...all you need is some good material and some better artwork, and layout...gee that's almost THE WHOLE THING isn't it?

...all the best from the West, Don

Poor poor Don! I do indeed sympathize with you---just imagine having to use such a crude devise for repro as a flat-bet-ditto... I (sic) am now (as I trust you have noticed) am in the ranks of the crank turners.

If you contemplate bringing me to court over the Matheson Affair, you'll have to pay the carefare...
I am broke!

Carol McKinney, Sta. 1, Box 514, Provo, Utah

Dear Cliff,

Well, offhand I would say that you were off to a fairly good start with OBLIQUE. Just watch the typos the legibility, and the readability, of the articles and stoties that you print, in your future ishes, and you may turn out with a top zine...

Thanks a lot for your comments: what you say brings to mind what some fan once said a long long time ago, can't remeber who or when, or for that matter exactly what he said, however it was somethings like; "That's just about the whole thing..."

Robert Bloch, P.O. Box 362, Weyauwega, Wisconsin

Dear Sir or Madam:

...I hate to write postcards when a letter is indicated, but current work pressure necessitates. However, I couldn't let the first issue of OBLIQUE go by without commenting on BORN INTO FANDOM. I think that it is a fine and noble piece of work, and the next time you get in front of a mirror please congratulate the author for me. It has perception, compassion and empathy, to say nothing of some very fine buffaloes... hope it reaches the eyes of people like Dick Matheson to say nothing of those of California fandom who can read.

I'd suggest that you try your hand at some more of the same: Bradbury, Sturgeon, and some of the other stylists... Very delightful reading, and I hope this is only the beginning of a very long career in the field.

Many thanks! Robert Bloch

Thank you very much for your very kind comments, Bob. And you have only yourself (and me) to blame for a certain unmentionable item in this ish of OB....your card threw me into a productive frenzy.

I tell you that Bloch is a genius... how could anyone else in all of fandom get all of that on one postcard---could be it was a postcard...?

Richard Geis, 2631, North Mississippi, Portland Ore.

Rejoice...:

...Ha! Vorzimer rides again. When will he learn that fandom is not governed and has no laws and is not socialized or communized...yet. I have a 'duty' to contribute to neo-zines? Who says? Fandom is supposed to be composed of rugged individualists, not "It's your duty to take care of me" incompetents. A GOOD EDITOR ATTRACTS GOOD MATERIAL, A BAD EDITOR (for whatever the reason) ATTRACTS BAD MATERIAL: That is the law of fandom which parallels the basic

law of life: Them as has gets. Also valid is the old observation that "Birds of a feather flock together." Good birds as well as bad. Survival of the fittest.

"Borne Into Fandom" was very good. I enjoyed it more than anything else in the issue and will remember it with pleasure. You should get many compliments on it.

SINcerely, Dick

I'll have to take issue with you on that, Dick.

Let's take the case of a neo-fan trying to start a fmz. Now, when one is contemplating starting a fmz the first thing that comes into one's mind is... "Shucks I had better get some material..." So, forthwith, our little friend writes a letter to Bea Enef. Now Bea is faced with a problem. She has never heard of the neo-fan, he might make an excellent fan-ed, however, on the other hand he might just be another member of "That Trancient Multitude" who'll last for just one issue--two on the outside. Now, does she send him a flat refusal, having the possibility of souring the fan on fan-pubbing, and fandom in general. Or does she take a 'calculated risk' and therefore really do something for fandom, and quite incidentally the fan in question, if he does, eventually, does 'prove himself.'

Now don't get me wrong I don't suggest that you answer each and every request that you get with a jubilant, "yes," but don't merely say "...I couldn't think of writting anything for him--he hasn't proved himself, I haven't heard of him. Tell me, Dick how on Earth can an unknown prove himself if someone doesn't put his confidence in him.

HELLO OUT THERE HELLO--WILL SEX REPLACE SCIENCE FICTION CTND.

All this while stfandom was making slow progress, it did not spread as quickly as did sexdom but then it didn't fall into Oblivion either. There were stf correspondence groups organized, and not too long after that the fan-zine came into being.

Now to get down to the matter at hand... I feel that at the present time stfdom is in grave darger; we are being attacked from within by some of the old die-hards who go under the general banner of the BACK TO STF MOVEMENT, an extremely radical group of these people call themselves SeroCons. One sure sign of this movement is the great increasment of the number of fem fans, the large number of One-Shots being issued and of course the many conventions and beach-parties.

We must unite against this Common Enemy of ours and fight it down in order to preserve Our Way Of Life.

I realize that after stating all of these Eternal Truths I should point up some some sort of a moral--but when one is dealing with Science Fiction and Sex, Morals just get in the way.

-*-

Chortle-worthy Quotes

Did you read about the telepath who drowned in someones stream-of-consciousness. --April GALAXY

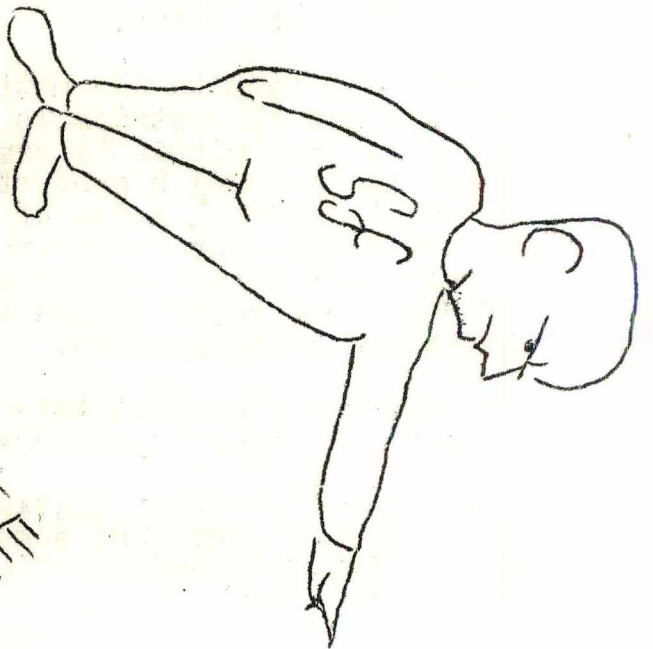
Did you notice Jim Harmons letter in FANTASTIC sometime in 1952 where he said...

"I guess that I just get a kick out of
seeing my name in print....."

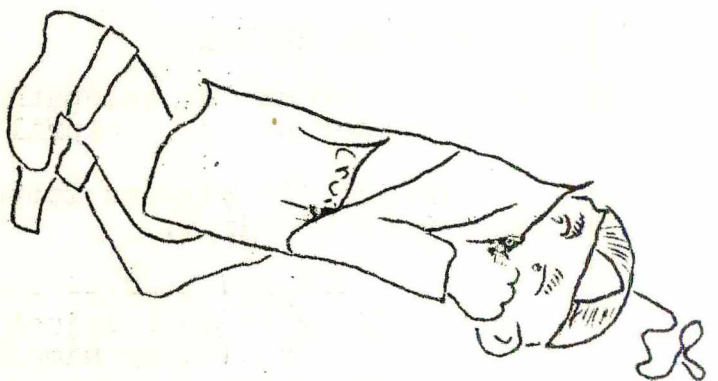
Or perhaps you noticed Joel Nydahl's letter in the same mag.

"...I am only thirteen years old, and if there
are any other BEAMS my age who read s-f magazines
I would like to hear from them..."

I fear that by now I have tired you as well as myself but if Gold can write editorials for space filler so can I... one more thing the bacover is by Larry Bourne...See you in about two months.



FAK E!
FAN.



CE

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NOT TO BE CONFUSED
WITH

B. O.