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OMEGA

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## OMEGA

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Volume 1 Number 2

May 1953

BI-MONTHLY

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BI-MONTHLY

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FAMOUS

## LAST WORDS.

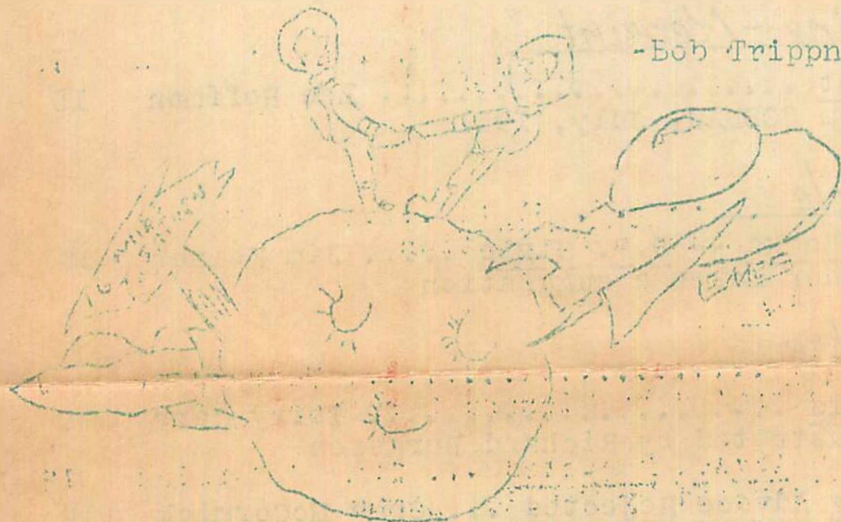
From now on OMEGA "...Fanzine to end all fanzines" is to be edited and co-published by Bob Trippner. He is in the moving stage at the moment so any material to be sent to Trippner will come to my address first and I will forward it to him. I don't intend to publish OMEGA anymore and Terry is no longer editor. I will be art editor of OMEGA so I will see you in future issues.

-Keith Joseph-

Well here I am holding the editorial sack and about all I can say at the moment is I hope I can do a good job on OMEGA.

I intend to change the policy of OMEGA in this way; I am going to feature more fiction(I have a 10,000 worder for next issue) a Art Section and a review column. I am going to continue the Letter column and Articles. The Humor columns which put life into every issue are being kept by Carr so how about sending me some(I don't want a column where someone laughs at his own jokes). I intend to stay bi-monthly and after the fourth issue go monthly. So gom bi till next ish of OMEGA.

-Bob Trippner-

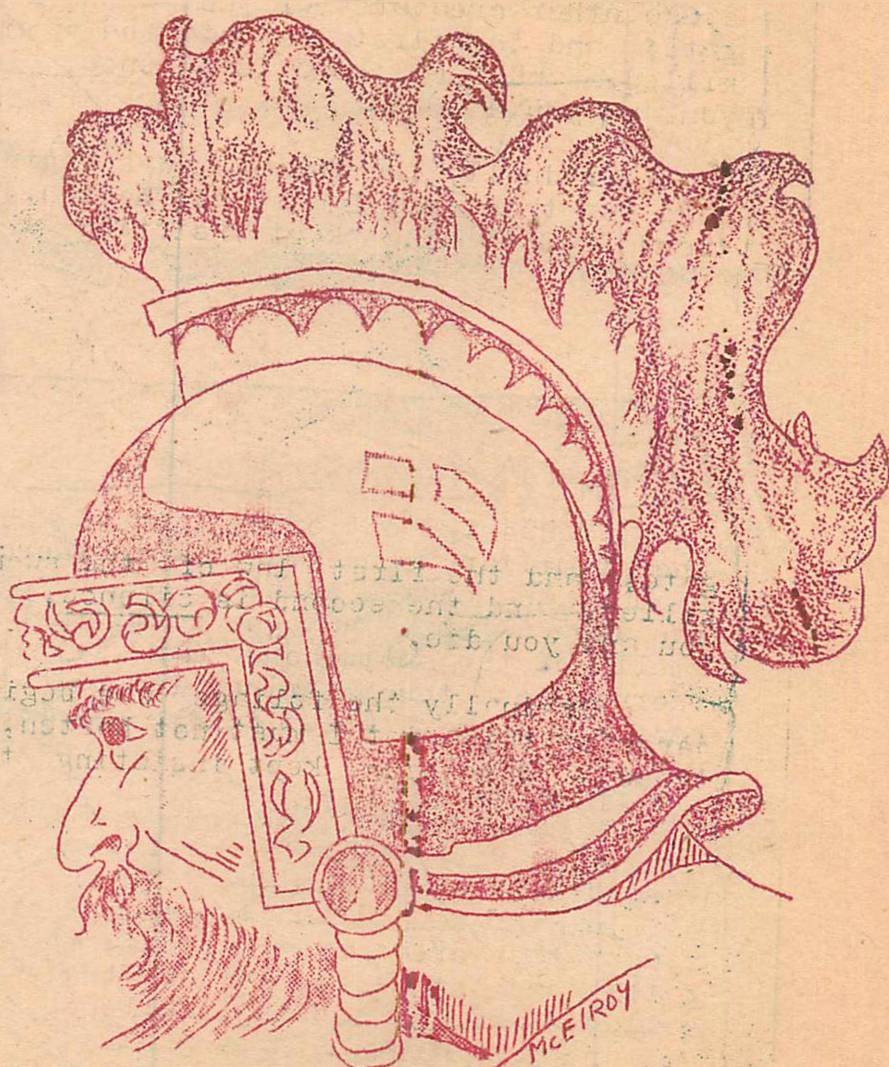


HI IT'S A SMALL WORLD ISNT IT?





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THE PUBLITORIAL ..... by Keith Joseph

All those fan's who didn't like the front cover and thought it should be the back and the back cover should have been the front cover; well we stapled the issue backwards. And to those who liked the front cover as the front cover well it was put that way on purpose.

I guess I could mention that I'm stepping up publication. I think I'll make life BREVEZINE and brag worse than Palmer. Gee whiz gosh wow boy boy and all that sort of s--t were going BI-monthly and we have 6 extra pages are we great aren't something out of this world (don't answer that), And we also have a page and a half novella?!

But seriously fen (Here comes a statement of policy) Were stepping up our publication to bi-monthly and we promise not to be late.

Some of the paper this issue is horrible and so we say good riddance to it. From now I think I'll just use 16pd. mimeo. The other paper (newsprint) does not only give loused up reproduction but also you get more waste copies than good.

Something about our multicoloured cover this issue. It was very easy to do (since Terry was over my house helping me). We thought everything was perfect. The next morning we examine the results. We find out that the paper was approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an inch off. We didn't slip sheet...

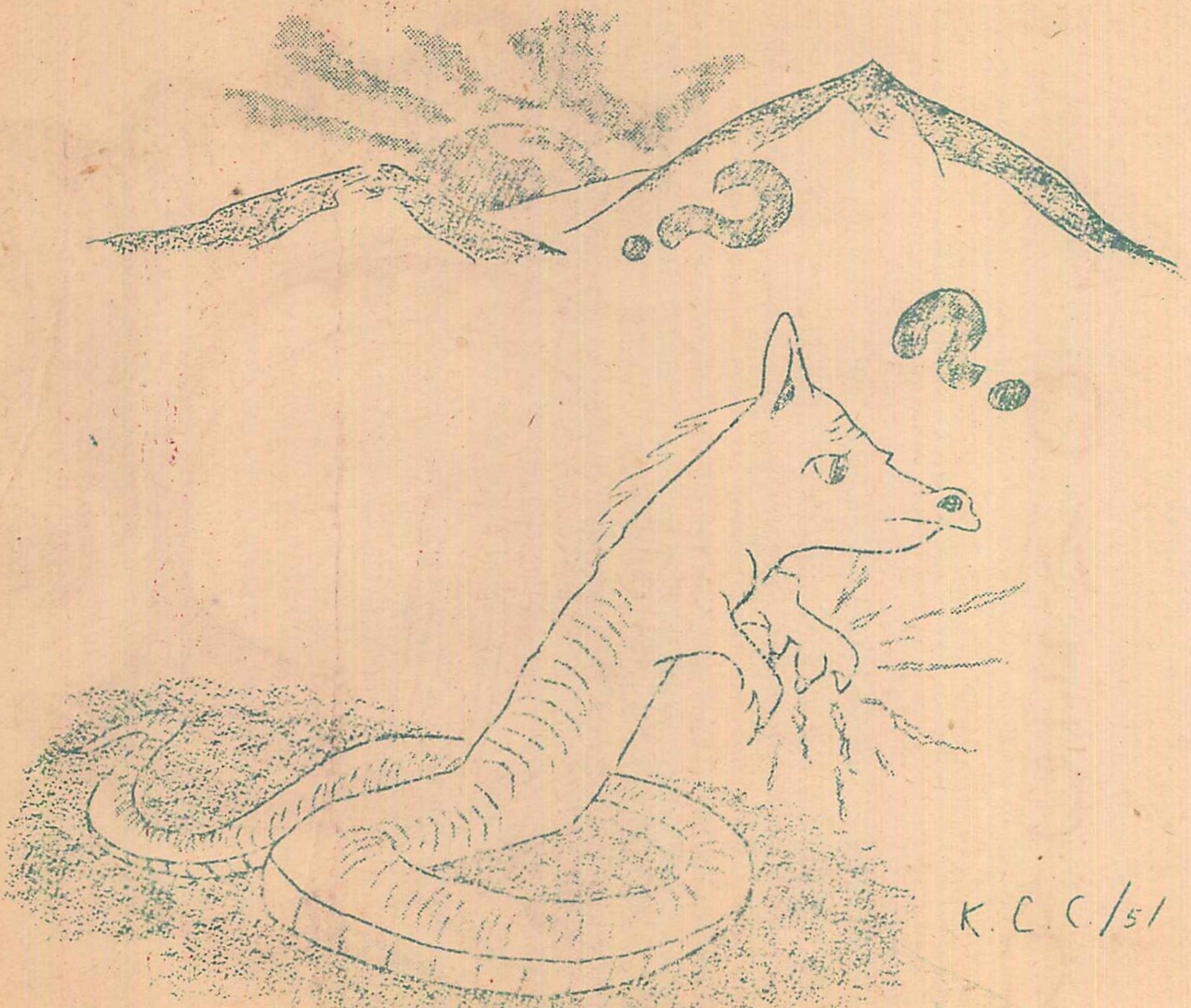
Speaking of my editor I fired him around one thousand times between issue one and two. And I am (Oh Happy Day) now co-Editor. [see Famous LAST Words for later developments]

I would like to introduce this issue Mrs Helen Vasquez who shall become co-pubber of Omega. Helen has a story thish entitled Mang Poison. Although Helen is co-publisher of OMEGA she centers most of her attention on MICRO FAN (a new fanzine being put out by us) [he means himself and Helen Vasquez]

So long for now.

-- Keith Joseph --





m m n a  
 Poison

by Helen Vasquez

I crawled out of my lair and sensed the morning air. All the familiar sensations were there: the humid damp of the swamps, the exotic scent of the rare and rarely-seen flowers of the deep swamps, and one smell that froze me for a second--the smell of the poisonous mang, that carrier of death in its thorns whose touch brings the rot that never leaves until the body has been returned to the stinking jungle mud from which it came.

Then a bedlam of sounds struck those organs you would call my ears. I moved carefully in the direction from which they seemed to be coming. There was no cause for caution concerning the sounds themselves, but there was need for it because other creatures of the swamps would be moving to investigate; and the first law of the swamps is kill, lest you be killed, and the second is silence, lest your movements betray you and you die.

Gradually the foliage was beginning to thin; I did not care for this, yet I must not hasten, for that would be disas-



these unfamiliar sounds, so I continued to crawl slowly forward, moving on my stomach now with the wind ruffling my back and a creepy feeling ruffling my mind because I did not like the open ground I was crossing.

Presently I came to a rise topped by a huge rock with a deep crease in it, and taking advantage of my coloring and moving very slowly I got to the top, from which I could see over the surrounding territory.

The source of the strange noises was in a comparatively dry meadow below me, where rested a shining silver disc.

I could not tell if this weird object itself had life or not. It rested quietly on the deep grass of the meadow and no sound came from it. Around it was a cluster of very strange animals.

I have tasted the blood of many and many different animals, but none of them ever looked like this. Puny and furless, they walked on only two limbs and looked as fragile as one of the swamp willows growing not far away. Easy prey for one of the silent ones; noisy and without caution, they would be better off silent.

Even as I looked they committed a piece of unforgiveable foolishness: half a dozen cubs emerged from the silver globe and began to act in a wild manner. Unlike our own cubs, who lie still and quiet in the sheltered places, these jumped and cowered. Never have I seen such actions.

The wind bore to me the taint of these unfamiliar beings, reminding me that I was hungry; and far away I detected a movement in the grass. Another of my own kind perhaps, also come to investigate.

Now the group in the clearing thinned and left only the cubs and three stalwart young males beside the globe.

What new folly was this? Who leaves helpless cub unguarded with young males about? Did not these incredibly foolish females know that they exposed their cubs to the fangs of the Great Silent One who is ever greedy for blood?

Two of the young males took up what looked like branches with their leaves stripped off and turned to face the clearing, paying no attention to the cubs. The other laid his branch aside and picked up one of the cubs.

"Ah," I thought, "Now we will see bloodshed." I slipped quietly down the crevice and into the long grass to be nearer the scene. That mistake was my undoing, for the other of my kind had crept within striking distance and, maddened by the smell of meat and unable to see how such puny creatures could do him any harm, was now charging across the clearing.

One of the young males saw him and lifted his stick; and again I thought, "Fool, who fights a Silent One with a branch? Madness!" And again it was I who was proved mad, for something came from the end of the stick and the other Silent One died in a terrible burst of heat and burning flesh. And I, hapless wretch that I am, that dreadful beam lanced across one of my pads and it carries the poison of the mang thorn, that lies in it for the unwary. The pad does not heal and the pain is such that I feel sometimes that I must scream in agony.

Death to the stranger! But how shall we bring death to them when we do not know how to combat the fire from the sky? How shall we be revenged when we only know how to kill any living thing that comes within our reach?

My pad is four times its own size and the pain racks my entire being. It is madness to scream for if I should it would bring one of my own kind and the end would be sooner. Yet I feel that I cannot stand such agony for an instant longer. The light grows dim and shot with the red flames of my pain. Strange thoughts assail my mind. I am mad. I know. The pain has brought madness. What if some one of my kind had come to my defense as those young males did to that of the cubs? What





REMEMBER THAT DAY in July of 1997 as if it were only yesterday. I remember the gay crowds of people cheering and wishing us luck, the bands playing "The Star-Spangled Banner" and "Olgix Strykoff's Fifth (hic)", the latter played by the White Russian Anti-Communist Band; the cameras, the confetti, the television projectors, and the streamers; the speeches, the candy vendors, and the "paapcoirn'n lemonaaade" men.

I stood on the platform that faced the open airlock on the Phoenix, the huge structure of steel and duridium that would be my home for the next two years, with only the company of three other men and a visi-recorder with four or five films. We'd go nuts if we saw just those five during the whole trip. We'd know them by heart, every detail, but we would have to see them just the same. I turned and took one last look at the people gathered below, in the radiant sunlight, felt the warm breeze on my face, and tripped over the door-jamb of the lock as I walked in. I remember that, strangely, most vividly...

I was the last one inside the ship, and the last thing I heard before the lock door slid shut was the crowd's cheering.

We blasted off for Pluto. During the acceleration, I must have recalled the long and hard eight years of training we had received. I also remember the peculiar thought of getting out and walking back, just before I blacked out.

The other three members of the crew and I had been chosen from scores of volunteers for the expedition. The countless years of interviewing, the training at the Arctic, the 6g acceleration we were tested on, all flashed through my head. They had taught us all to navigate, pilot, and repair the Phoenix. I wish they hadn't...

I remember most vividly the faces of the crew (Lord, how could I forget!) of the Phoenix. There was Kellett, mild-mannered and soft-spoken; Jones, gay and jovial; and Scotty Mac Dougall, thoughtful and with a heart as big as a basketball. All of them were men a person could trust, and damn me for the awful way that I, their greasemonkey, practically, betrayed them.

We landed on Pluto on May 17, 1998, after a more than ten months' voyage.

Pluto is a cold, barren waste. We landed in a large basin, walled in on all sides by huge mountains whose naked summits were lost among the mists and eternal twilight.

Immediately after landing we donned our spacesuits and left the ship. We discovered nothing but cold, bare rocks, and bottomless crevasses.

I remember the fruitless weeks we spent sampling the rock, exploring and prospecting for uranium.

It was on the day before we were to blast off for Earth that Kellett discovered the cave...

It looked rather unimpressive, but we entered it, nevertheless, for want of anything else to do.

We had progressed about a hundred yards into the cave when we saw a strange pink glow coming from farther ahead. We proceeded several hundred yards farther in, then Jones cried, "Skipper! Look at the walls!" We all looked. There was moisture on the walls -- moisture where the temperature should approach the zero absolute of outer space!

Our steps quickened as we continued on into the cave. Then we entered the area of the cave from which the pink glow was coming. I remember Kellett calling my attention to the wrist-thermometer we all carried. The temperature was well above freezing! Then Scotty checked his Geiger counter--radiation zero.

A



We must have proceeded about 100 yards more when the cave suddenly opened into a large circular room which was nearly fifty feet in diameter.

I saw to my utter amazement that the eerie pink glow was coming from a globe which was placed in the mathematical center of the whole room, about thirteen feet off the floor. Below the globe in piles were objects of a bright gold color set with brilliant stones. "I'll be damned," Jones muttered, and rushed forward. He took about five steps and fell to the floor. Kellett and Scotty moved forward to help him. They did likewise. I started to turn to get the hell out of there when I suddenly felt dizzy, and blacked out.

I had damn queer dreams while I was under --- something about Pluto when it was a young planet and hadn't cooled yet; how the natives had built huge underground caverns anticipating the time when Pluto would grow cold. The natives constructed globes, like the one in that subterranean room, to give off light, heat, and act sort of like a fountain of youth to them. I had a funny dream about how the Old Race had degenerated with the planet, and the younger generations became more and more primitive ... they sort of worshipped the heat-light globes in ignorance and heaped rich treasures below them as though the globes were gods.

I guess I kept on dreaming these crazy dreams until I came to...

I was the first to regain consciousness (probably because I was farther away from the globe than the others) and I got to thinking.

That treasure piled around the globe was worth a lot... the guy that had that treasure would be on Easy Street for the rest of his life. I kinda wanted to be that guy.

I don't know what devils got into me then, but I pulled out my sheath knife, crept over to where the others lay...and killed them...

I will forever be haunted with the vision of Scotty Mac Dougall as he came to---he saw me killing Jones and called out, "For God's sake, man, what're ye doin'?" I stabbed Mac Dougall twice in the chest.

I left three bodies behind. I was set ... I had enough treasure to keep me rich for the rest of my life---I was in the clear, too. I could invent a story on how Kellett, Jones, and Mac Dougall died -- I could say they fell off an overhanging cliff when an earthquake struck, or something -- nobody could prove a thing.

When I arrived at the ship I spread out the treasure on the cabin floor and gazed over it. It would bring a dozen kings' ransoms back on Earth. After a time I put it all back in the sacks and prepared to blast off for Earth.

I strapped myself into the acceleration rack with my treasure beside me. I glanced up at the chronometer to see what time it was. (star time) ... the damn thing wasn't running. Strange ... those things were guaranteed for a lifetime. What the hell--it was probably the shock when we landed.

I pressed the firing stud.

Nothing.

I cursed allhelloloshia out of the stud, the fuel, and the makers of each, and pressed again. Nothing.

I got up and opened the door to the "tank". The tank was a yard-thick mass of shielding and it contained a pound of radium.

Radium? I looked again -- **IT CONTAINED A POUND OF LEAD!** My head began spinning -- radium doesn't change into lead overnight--it takes thousands of years. I nearly dashed my brains



# RIKE'S WRITINGS

To those of you who were of the opinion that my column in OMEGA #1 was a bit old, I'll let you in on a big secret: it was. The THING was typed up early last September and was carried around with me, in my wallet, until I went over to Carr's place and gave it to him. While there we concocted up a letter to the infamous Peter Graham and mailed it in Berkeley with Boucher's return address so as he would think it was from the editor of The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction; it worked pretty good, or so I'm told.

I still shudder to think of what would have happened if that letter had been returned to Boucher for lack of postage...ed/



Now that that real Christine Gernsback is again putting out a STF mag, I'm reminded of a li'l remark made by HPL in a letter of his published in the March, 1938 PHANTASTIQUE/SCIENCE FICTION CRITIC: "By the way--Hugo Gernsback is a notorious sharper who ought never to be trusted. He tries to sensationalize pseudo-science, and is so dishonest in his non-payment of contributors that reputable authors have virtually blacklisted his magazines." So sayeth the author of the Cthulhu Mythos and the Necronomicon.

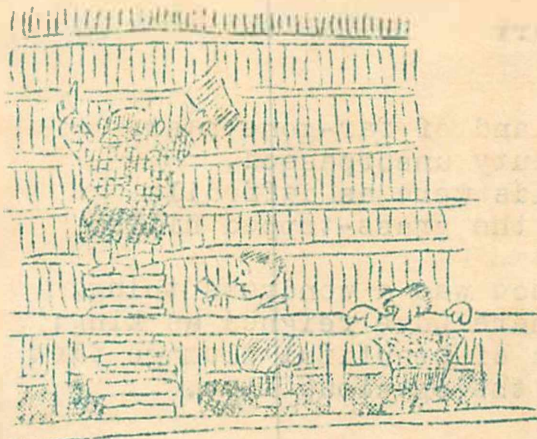


I was wandering thru a bookstore in Oakland one day and was busying myself by attempting to analyze JWC's handwriting by studying his autograph in a copy of "Who Goes There?" when I heard a wee small voice from an encircling balcony above me: "Asimov, Bradbury, Bond and Boucher..." I looked up & saw three li'l lads, one of whom was grasping a yellowed dittoed sheet, searching for something amongst the dusty and dry volumes. The next moment I was up on the balcony and glancing coldly over the dittoed sheet, which stated: "Zero Hour", Ray Bradbury; "Victory Unintentional", Isaac Asimov.....I then informed them of which magazines they appeared in. One looked up at me and replied, "But we aren't looking for the magazines, we want the book they all appeared in." I then informed them that the volume of their desires was "Interplanetary Stories", a pb anthology edited by Orson Welles and added that they might try Dirty de Freitas's, Oakland's filthy-rich bookdealer instead of this place. But, another of them put in, "Ah heck, you're spoiling all of our fun; why don't ya leave us find the thing by ourselves?" "But



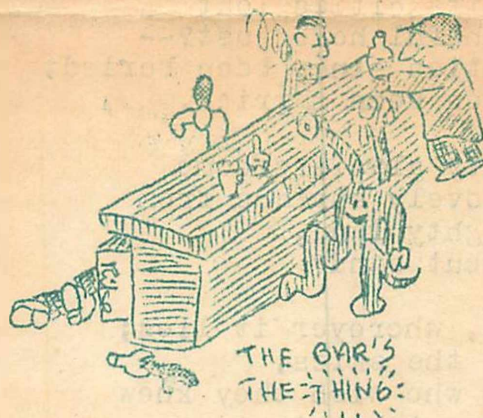
you'll never find it here," said I.

As I left the store I could hear the wee small voice once more: "Heinlein, Leinster, Sturgeon....."



"....Bradbury, Bond, Brown, Boucher..."

My eastern spy informs me that the Philcon hotel is not as sumptuous as he thought it would be; but added that it was a vast improvement over the one used last year and that it had excellent bar facilities, which is about all most men ask for.



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## SCINTILLA — PLANETOID BARSOOM BUGLE — VIENDETTA

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## ATLANTIS

by Terry Carr

Atlantis, land of far-gone past,  
Land of beauty unsurpassed,  
Where orchids were as daffodils  
Growing on the grass-topped hills.

Where Science was a wondrous thing,  
And everywhere Love reigned as king;  
Where birds of beautiful plumage flew  
High up in the spacious blue.

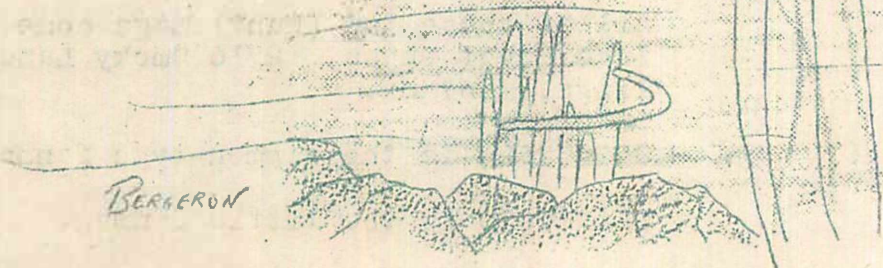
A land where mankind had found peace;  
Where cares and worries forever cease.  
What happened to this land of yore?--  
What cruel fate hid its shining shore?

Are the tales of legends true?--  
Has it sunk beneath the blue,  
To lay and let the seafish dart  
Among the priceless gems of art?

Or were all of its cities lost  
In one big frightful holocaust?--  
And have its cities since been buried;  
And with oblivion been married.

Or did the mighty glaciers come  
And sweep the lovely surface from  
The ancient, mighty land,  
Leaving naught but sand?

Beneath the sea, wherever it lies;  
Swept away into the skies;  
There are those who wish they knew  
Which of the many tales is true.





# GREAT BOOKS

BY JIM KEPNER

S. F. STYLE

You may be familiar with an organization emanating from Chicago University known as the "Great Books Foundation." Conceived by John Erskine (writer of sophisticated fantasies based on classic mythology) and nurtured by UC prexy Hutchins, the outfit has set up thousands of weekly discussion units throughout the country to vocalize on the eternal verities in terms of a select list of excerpted classics. Their list runs from Plato through Marx and includes a goodly share of the world's more important books, although their cramped procedure leaves much to be desired.

Fan clubs always have difficulty providing an interesting program for their members. I would propose something similar to the great-books plan -- the institution by various clubs of discussion series on important S. F. classics.

Such a series should trace the development of important new concepts in science fiction, rather than weigh the literary merits of individual stories. Discussion would be around the ideas contained in the stories. Stories would be selected for the originality, development and significance of their ideas. Few S. F. authors, perhaps, have made vital contributions to world thought, but their stories have introduced many a reader to what for him were new and important concepts. The basic fantasy devices, as media for expressing definite philosophical ideas, are almost as old as fiction itself. Many great writers have put their most serious thoughts into future-fantasy trimmings. Many an author who would hotly deny that he had an ax to grind has nevertheless capably expressed his philosophy, or important segments of it, in stories about other worlds, other peoples, other ages.

The selection of an exact list might be left to more thorough fans than myself. Selection must depend on what stories are available. I will indicate what type of stories I think should be used. "Great Books Foundation" itself has a number of appropriate titles on their schedule, and an S. F. list might well include them: poems and plays of Homer, Aeschylus, Aristophanes and Sophocles dealing with Greek mythology; the SONG OF THE NIBELUNGS AND THE VOLSUNGS; PARADISE LOST; the weird drama of ruthlessness, MACBETH; that classic social satire, GULLIVER'S TRAVELS; and the incomparable GARGANTUA AND PANTAGRUEL. These might be grouped with others such as UTOPIA, PENQUIN ISLAND, LOOKING BACKWARD, Campanella's CITY OF THE SUN, the TRAVELS OF JOHN MANDENVILLE, CONNECTICUT YANKEE IN KING ARTHUR'S COURT, THE NEW ATLANTIS, Marlowe's DOCTOR FAUSTUS, Goethe's FAUST (at least one version of the Faust myth and at least one utopia story should be included), DOCTOR JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE, DORIAN GREY, CASTLE OF OTRANO, BREWSTER, and FRANKENSTEIN. Thorough consideration of such classics might give some of the more naive fantasy purists more of a sense of perspective (unless their approach is hopelessly escapist) and would lay a solid groundwork for discussion of modern science fiction as well.

Next the group could move to the classic science fiction novels of a generation or so back, along with a number of stories by ordinarily mundane writers. These stories escape the attention of most fans, since they are not done on a pulp level and avoid the familiar pulp devices fans have come to expect.

In this early period, science fiction novels, often advanced socialist ideas, as in Jack London (his SCARLET PLAGUE might well be discussed jointly with George Stewart's EARTH ABIDES), George Allen England (DARKNESS AND DOWN trilogy and the AIR TRUST) and H. G. Wells. Almost any of Wells' novels are usable, particularly the TIME MACHINE, written over half a century ago, FIRST MEN IN THE MOON, THE MEN WHO COULD WORK MIR-



standing attention for this sort of discussion series, particularly for ODD JOHN (Wylie's GLADIATOR might be considered in comparison to this), SIRIUS, story of a super-dog, LAST AND FIRST MEN and the STARMAKER. Huxley's BRAVE NEW WORLD might be considered in connection with one of the classic utopia stories.

As for the magazine stories, any of the following might lead to good discussion: WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE, Balmer & Wylie; ...AND HE BUILT A CROOKED HOUSE, UNIVERSE and ROADS MUST ROLL, Heinlein; THE NEW ADAM and MARTIAN ODYSSEY, Weinbaum; SPACE-HOUNDS OF IPC, E. E. Smith; TIME STREAM, Taine; NO WOMAN BORN, Moore; FINAL BLACKOUT, Hubbard; RENAISSANCE, Jones; NIGHTIEST MACHINE, Campbell; SEVEN OUT OF TIME, Zagat; SLAM and WORLD OF NULL, van Vogt; WHEELS OF IF and LEST DARKNESS FALL, de Camp; NOMAD, G. C. Smith; NONE BUT LUCIFER, Gold; NIMSY WERE THE BORGOVES, Padgett; CRUCIBLE OF POWER, Williamson; etc. Any fan could add as many more titles to this list.

How should the discussions proceed? This writer is somewhat critical of the procedure laid down by the Foundation, and would recommend a more flexible variation. First, of course, the books have to be read, and by most if not all of the people participating. If the majority have not read the stories recently, then this type of discussion is quite impossible; the series would degenerate into mere lectures, which if past fan experience is meaningful would quickly peter out without having contributed much to the life of the group. If the whole group participates in both the reading and the discussion, the series can be highly successful.

One book (or two comparative ones) should suffice for each session. The group should not attempt to cover too much material in one session, but rather should get full value out of the material covered, without bogging down in find point argument.

Next to insisting that the material be read in advance, the most important thing is the selection of a reasonably competent discussion leader (or in larger groups, two to work as a team). This choice will determine the success of the series. The leader must be a person who can keep a discussing going without tending to hog it himself. He must be willing to sit back and let the discussion flow in its own channels when that is possible, to spark things when they are slow, and to control the discussion if it gets out of hand. Above all, he must study, not just read, the material in advance, and plan a general strategy of discussion. His plans will consist of a tentative schedule of leading questions, to originate and prod the discussion.

He might well familiarize himself with the Socratic method (see Plato's dialogues) -- a technique of forcing discussion by provocative questions. However, the leader should not try to force his own opinions on the group by use of this method, as Socrates did. He should attempt to get everyone to participate, should see that no one hogs the discussion. He should try to upset the complacency of those participants whose opinions are too pet or inconsistent.

In order to have stimulating and fruitful discussion, the leader should stick to questions concerning ideas in and about the story, preventing the mere enumeration of similar or better or worse stories. He should not cramp or rush the discussion merely to get all of his questions answered. Nor should he ask questions merely in order to receive the answer he wants. Questions should be provocative, and should lead to difference of opinion, which the leader should not necessarily expect to resolve. If definite conclusions are reached, that is well and good, but it is not essential to such a program as this. The group leader must have a relatively open mind.

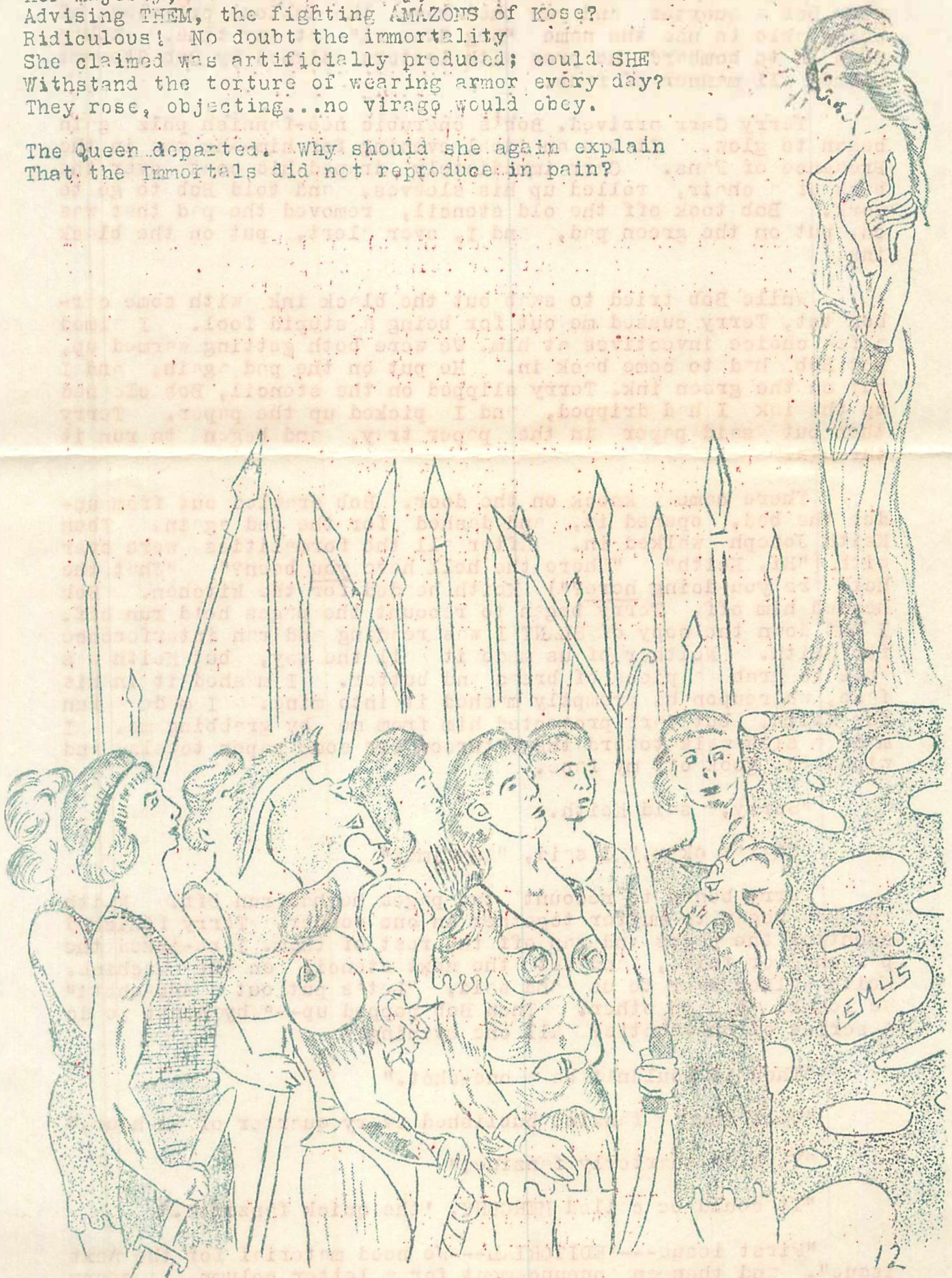
For a fan club planning such a series, three considerations are essential. Is the membership sufficiently stable to insure that at least most of the same people will be present each time? Are the stories chosen available and will they be read? Does the leader have the type of personality necessary for the job?



She stood before the council robed in cloud-mist lace,  
And read the terror written on each ashen face;  
Immortal words of truth were hers to set them free  
If only they would listen to her guarantee.  
The poison, killing off their children, was their own  
Neglectful form of feeding; any sickly crone  
Whose fighting days were over was allowed to tend  
The babies of the Warrior Maids; to comprehend  
The situation, she investigated each  
Contamination case within her royal reach.

"You must, in future, nurse each infant at the breast,  
The new-born children then, will be your healthiest..."  
The women's ash expressions turned to glowering rage;  
The Queen was childless...nursing babes was vassalage;  
Her majesty, bedecked in filmy, lace-sheer clothes,  
Advising THEM, the fighting AMAZONS of Kose?  
Ridiculous! No doubt the immortality  
She claimed was artificially produced; could SHE  
Withstand the torture of wearing armor every day?  
They rose, objecting...no virago would obey.

The Queen departed. Why should she again explain  
That the Immortals did not reproduce in pain?





# WHY?

...subtitled: WHY NOT?... by Peter Graham

The evening began rather quietly.

I walked into Bob Stewart's house about six one evening not too long ago, to find Bob reading the latest issue of TSM. His cherubic neo-fannish face brightened as he saw me. "What are You doing here?" he asked. I told him. That was the day we were to run off the last pages of VULCAN #2. We had been using Bob's mimeo, since so far no one else we knew had one--and would consent to letting us use it. Bob again began on his sales-talk for the "Bob Stewarts of America" club...whereby you give Bob a quarter and you then have the dubious privilege of being able to use the name "Bog Stewart" at any time. Bob's plan is to bombard the pros with letters signed by Bob Stewart--from all manner of fans.

Terry Carr arrived. Bob's cherubic neo-fannish phiz again began to glow. It was an ideal evening for him--he was in the Presence of Fans. Carr immediately draped his coat over the back of a chair, rolled up his sleeves, and told Bob to go to work. Bob took off the old stencil, removed the pad that was on, put on the green pad, and I, ever alert, put on the black ink.

While Bob tried to swab out the black ink with some carbon tet, Terry cussed me out for being a stupid fool. I aimed a few choice invectives at him. We were both getting warmed up, but Bob had to come back in. He put on the pad again, and I put on the green ink. Terry slipped on the stencil, Bob cleaned up the ink I had dripped, and I picked up the paper. Terry then put said paper in the paper tray, and began to run it through.

There came a knock on the door. Bob crawled out from under the bed, opened it, and dashed for the bed again. Then Keith Joseph walked in. After all the formalities were over with ("Hi, Keith" "Where the hell have you been?" "What the hell are you doing here?") Keith headed for the kitchen. Bob headed him off. Terry began to recount the pages he'd run off. I put down the copy of SLANT I was reading and ran interference for Keith. Neither of us made it all the way, but Keith was able to grab a piece of bread and butter. I mashed it in his face, whereupon he promptly mashed it into mine. I made a run for Keith, but Carr protected him from me by grabbing me. I made a slow walk toward the bathroom for some paper towels, and wiped the gook off my face.

"Sorry," said Keith.

"That's okay," I said, "Anytime."

Terry began to recount the pages he had run off. Keith and Bob began to mutter together in one corner. Terry finished counting the pages and ran off the rest of them. I re-inked the pad once or twice, and set the next stencil on the Machine. Keith walked over to us and said, "Let's put out a one-shot!" We looked at each other. Then Bob popped up--"Why don't we do a series of one-shot's? All one evening?"

"Then it wouldn't be a one-shot."

"Well then a fanzine published every quarter of an hour."

"Yeah, a quarterly fanzine!"

"It could be called MERCURY, 'the quick fanzine'."

"First issue---EDITORIAL---We need material for the next issue", and then an announcement for a letter column, a story by one of the editor's pennames, and--"



# EXCERPT

..... by Lee Hoffman

FROM "A HISTORY OF THE PLANET EARTH"  
FROM 1000 TO 2000 A.D., EARTH TIME.

"... on one side of this planet is a large body of land which was at that time called 'Untied States of America', 'Columbia', and 'Texas'. This country was ruled by a man called Uncle Sam, Honest Abe, and HST. He was considered a god, probably because he lived from 1776 until late in 1987 when that nation was discontinued. Our scientists attribute his longevity to a substance called Hadacol that is said to have flowed from a Fountain of Youth in St. Augustine, Florida which was discovered by Ponce de Leon in 1950. He is described as a tall, thin man who wore a hairlock similar to that of the ancient Egyptians on his chin. He dressed in red, white, and blue clothing, carried a 'six-shooter' whatever that was, and sired 150 million people by 1950. He was called the Father of his Country and the people all carried small green slips of paper with his profile on it and the words 'In God We Trust' which confirms the belief that he was considered a god.

Another god, or national hero was 'Old Soldier', a being who suddenly dissolved. It is believed by many that 'Old Soldier' was also known as 'Liberty' because there are records of 'Liberty' collapsing into the ocean in 1979 after a beast known as an 'aviator' laid an egg on it.

Another god of this period was Elron, a transparent leader of rebels who probably honored him because of his physical peculiarity. It is recorded that he was completely transparent ... clear. A small cult of his followers lived in caves and called themselves 'deros'. They wrote many books and printed them with invisible ink called mimeograph ink. These cultists had many lesser dieties which they worshipped. Among these were the nameless one 4sj, who pronounced on literature; Faster Than Lancy, who was supreme critic and master cynic, whatever that is; a minor diety who rose to prominence in 1951 was Cosmacauley of the South, who was in charge of printing books in invisible ink.

Another cult of this period was the FofL or Ancient Followers of Lancy, which sprang from the 'deros' in 1972 just after Faster Than Lancy was supposedly burned at the stake for heresy (he was later discovered teaching kindergarten in Upper Tibet). The FofL fought hand-to-hand battles with an organization called the CIO (Cosmic Ian Organization) in the streets of a city called Rhode Island.

In the year 1951 these cults held a meeting in New Orleans with the purpose of auctioning slaves. These slaves were called 'Finlays', 'Cartiers', 'Bergeys', and 'Boks'. Prices varied from three cattle to \$26, depending on the strength of the slave.

Shortly after this convention, a revolt in the ranks of these cults caused it to be pronounced that all of the cultists having more than one wife apiece must move to the Salt Lake and build temples to 4sj. The cultists who were evicted (Fn; kicked out) declared astounding to be the book of the true gods, while the remaining 'deros' declared that the true book was called Galaxy. Meanwhile the two headed god Kutting-Vince rose up with a book called OOTMA. The non-cultists throughout the country acclaimed OOTMA as the True Book and took up the worship of Sam Spade, the voice who was a god.

It was under the rule of Sam Spade that the whole affair went to Hell and the nation dissolved. It is believed that the actual undermining of the nation was due to an over-exposure to soap operas."



"Second issue would have a letter column with a letter by the ed's pseudonym, a story, etc..."

"Gee whiz, what a neat idea!"

"Third issue would have all that and an announcement that the next ish would contain a story by one of the editor's better-known pennames, and--"

"Yeah, and the fourth issue would be the annish---'Sorry we're late thish, but I had to go to the bathroom'."

"And an announcement that 'The story promised for thish will not appear, because somehow the writer couldn't find time to write it...'"

"We are very sorry we have to fold withish, but Ma said I have to go to bed now."

Terry began to recount how many pages he'd run off of the last page. "1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6..."

"Did I ever tell you about the time when I was about 12 years old--" said Keith.

"13, 14, 15, 16..."

"--when I ran the 100 yard dash in 12.1 flat?"

"12.2, 12.3, 12.4, 12.5--KEITH, WILL YOU SHADDUP?"

Carr finished counting later despite Keith's biting his shoe, which happened to be in his mouth--for some strange reason. Then, when he had finished, he made the announcement that we needed to run off only 20 more copies, and the mimeoing of VULCAN would be through. This we made a big ceremony of, running off the last copy by everybody grabbing aolt of the crank and turning slowly -- thereby getting the worst copy of the batch. Everybody signed this, with the understanding that that page was to be put in the last copy assembled, and auctioned off at the next GGFS meeting. Then, suddenly, all eyes turned to the cardboard container which had held the stencils for Lo! These Many Moons, and all hands grabbed for it. Carr won. He ran out to the back yard with it and systematically began to stomp on it, but this Keith stopped by bringing out a batch of matches. Keith struck a match, but this was blown out by Carr. Everybuncelsognsighed ahmerrtnamehetoaribortdostenthancnaddndra plug for my zinc, SEETEE (10 for 75¢, 10¢ an ish -- Box 149, Fairfax, California), and everyone else followed suit. Keith stuffed the stencil for the last page in, and everyone began chanting the Pagan Love Song or some such Edelightful chant. The flame burned high. Bob got his bugle and played an appropriate piece (just what needn't be mentioned here). Most of the flame burned out. One last bit flamed merrily, however. I tramped on it, saying sentimentally, "Therehell with it."

"What'd you do that for?" asked Keith.

"'Cause I felt like it," said I.

"Aw, shaddup," said Carr.

"You boys quit fighting out there," said Bob's mother.

The evening ended rather violently.

-- Peter Graham --



# THE PLANET VENUS

by Helen Louise Jourey

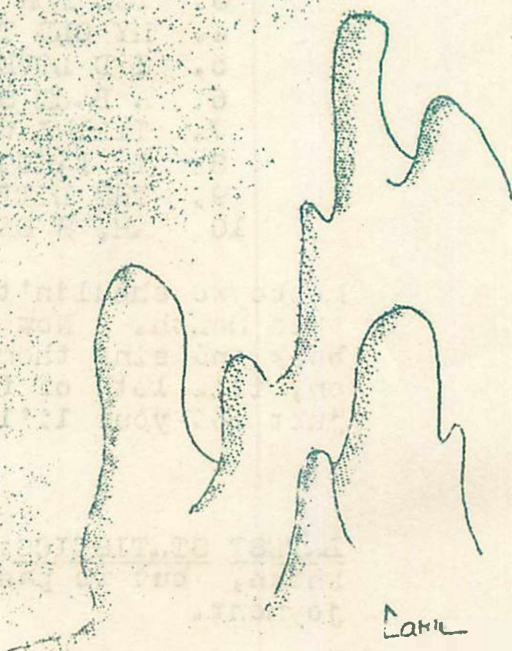
The hot wind sweeps the dusty plains  
Under clouds from which no rains  
Carve through the atmosphere clear lanes;  
And we call the planet Venus.

The dust dunes stir and twist and crawl,  
The rocks are cragged and rough and tall,  
A landscape of ragged things that sprawl;  
And we call the planet Venus.

The clouds obscure the sight of Sol,  
But poring heat spreads over all;  
A suffocating, pressing pall;  
And we call the planet Venus.

The evening or the morning star,  
Cleanly silver, seen afar.  
Ere close sight could the vision mar  
We called the planet Venus.

Wind, and heat, and choking dust,  
Where no one comes unless he must,  
For we've long since learned to never trust  
The planet we call Venus.



Carle



# RUSSELL K. WATKINS



HIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE A COLUMN, so I guess it will be, considering that my 25¢ dictionary defines column as a "vertical line of print". Anyway, here goes nothing. (Humm?)

TV FANTASY: There's a new satirical fantasy on TV. It's shown on Saturday evenings and is worth watching. Titled Johnny Jupiter, this show is telecast on the Dumont Network. The program purports to reflect our world as seen through the eyes of inhabitants of another planet. This is NOT Space Cadet stuff but instead good satire filled with humor.

The show features only two live actors, with hand puppets portraying the Jupiterians whose only knowledge of Earth is derived from watching our TV shows. The leading character is one Ernest P. Duckweather, a janitor in a TV studio, who has ambitions to become a TV engineer. Tinkering with the dials and gadgets he brings in two emissaries from Jupiter on the screen. They are Johnny, who faintly suggests Kukla, and B-12, a guy with a British accent.

Duckweather is played by Vaughn Taylor and the show consists mainly of exchanges between Duckweather and Johnny and B-12.

For example: one show, the Jupiterians wanted to know about Earth's television. Duckweather explained that the heart of the business was western movies, and he proceeded to show them a sequence or two. The Jupiterians wanted to know why all the gun fighting and Indians. Duckweather had a hard time explaining to the pacifistic Jupiterians why Earthlings found it so fascinating to kill off one another.

The writer of the material is Jerry Coppersmith. Carl Harns handles the puppets. This is a refreshing fantasy TV show and we hope it maintains the present bright pace.

THOTS: We were thinking (egads!) the other day about the popular songs and began to switch around the titles to fit fandon. Here-with are presented a few. They are the "top hits of fandon".

1. SOMEWHERE ALIEN THE WAY
2. BLOW THE FAN DOWN
3. TEA FOR Q
4. MY OLD TUCKER HOME
5. I'D LOVE TO GETCHA ON MY SUB LIST
6. A BACK STREET FAN
7. TILL I WELLS AGAIN WITH YOU
8. IT TAKES Q TO TANGLE
9. THE LITTLE WHITE ZINE THAT FOLDED
10. AH, SWEET MYSTERY OF FFFF

Maybe we shouldn't have that, huh? Well, there's the top ten for this month. Now that you have read the titles I suggest you go back and sing them, using the tune of the song emulated. Ah, go on, it's lots of fun! If you liked these, I have millions more so just let your li'l editor know.

LATEST STATISTICS: The author of this 1960 balance sheet is unknown, but we pass this on to you for your consideration and enjoyment.



Two? Why, of course, you and me. Then you had better get to work, because I'm awfully tired of running this country alone.

The next page was titled LET'S GO TO THE MOON, and consisted of a letter from a boy on the moon to his parents. This letter explains the trip. What amused me was the boy's statement that "It (the trip) was a bit boring". Two illos with this one; one being a map of the moon naming the craters and seas (?)(it said seas). Two interesting ones were the HURSH OF SLEEP and THE SEA OF FERTILITY.

**RADIO:** In the many articles dealing with radio stf in the fanzines there is one program that is never mentioned that deserves recognition. This program is TARZAN and is broadcast on Saturday night. Now, don't yell "Juvenile", for it isn't. I think it presents many nature ideas and the writer is to be commended for his timeliness on the story themes. One presented a good story on Polio during the recent campaign for funds. Also, a show had a flying saucer theme. I'm sure Burroughs didn't write these stories, but they're well-done and make the program one of top interest for the fan.

-- Russell E. Watkins --





out when I reached the only possible solution: that globe in that damned cave -- that so-called "Mountain of Youth"! And I thought I had been unconscious only a few hours! A few millennia!

I have been alive for a long time. You wonder why I don't commit suicide? Because I can't! I've opened my faceplate on my suit outside -- now I go around in sports clothing only--I've run out of my food supply--water--I'm writing this, am I not?

I have seen the Phoenix buried by an earthquake--the same one that sealed up that accursed cave...

A man has a lot of time to think out here--alone. That's about all you can do on this freezing hell of a planet. A man might even carve his history into a rock -- just to break the monotony. Anyway, I have one consolation:

I'm rich--for life!

-- Frank McElroy --

## OLD BUSINESS

Herewith are the results of the voting on the first issue of OMEGA. Voting was spirited and uneven all the way, with no one item legitimately claiming a lead. Rike finally ended up with a fairly good lead, though this could have been broken with one or two more votes against Rike and for Cantin.

Here's how the voting went: Rike started out with the lead, then quickly lost it to Norman G. Browne, who soon lost it to Donald Cantin. Cantin held on to it for a good period of time, then Rike's column again passed him, only to fall back later. In the end, however, Rike came out on top and won the original.

The only consistent placing of the whole voting was that of the Fanzine-Reprint, Wolfpride, which stayed well ahead of all the other poems in the issue, and even achieved a third-place rank for a short time. But now, the actual results...

- 1.) Writings ..... David Rike 3.33
- 2.) After All ..... Donald G. Cantin 3.75
- 3.) Newsstand Meeting ..... Norman G. Browne 4.06
- 4.) Last Hope ..... Ray Capella 4.11
- 5.) A Critique of Pure Prozones ..... Gregg Calkins 4.38
- 6.) Wolfpride ..... A. A. Henderson 4.77
- 7.) The Saga of Merlin the Flea ..... Toby Duane 6.20
- 8.) Famous LAST Words ..... Terry Carr 6.55
- 9.) The Retiring Rocketeer ..... Helen Louise Soucy 7.27
- 10.) The Rocket ..... Mike Walker 7.82
- 11.) Random Ramblings ..... Val Golding 8.36
- 12.) The OMEGAN ..... Keith Joseph 8.45





# MAIL and FEMAIL

DONALD O. CANTIN  
214 Bremer St.  
Manchester, N. H.

Keith:

**W**ILL REVIEW YOUR ZINE... not bad for a first isher. Best illos on back cover and illos to the poem WOLF-PRIDE. Mimeoing was lousy...material average. Best poem was "The Retiring Rocketeer" ... GREAT! "Last Hope"--modern....wasn't bad....ending stunk. Rike's column was the best thing in the 'zine. I send Carr a bunch of material and he gets it spread around for me. Should have had color for the editorial and covers. Your mag should read sidewise like Gem-Tones. "Newsstand Meeting" was lousy. Liked your publitorial, but I don't like people who go around apologising all over the place for this and that... Pretty good first ish tho...

HELEN LOUISE SOUCY  
48228W AW1  
RCAP Station  
St. Hubert, Quebec

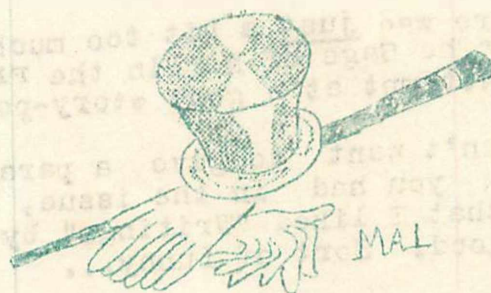
Dear Terry,

**R**ECEIVED OMEGA TODAY; many thanks. I'll say flatly that I liked it. Oh, not every part, of course, but as a whole, I consider it a top-notch fanzine.

To get down to details: both Last Hope stories were interesting--though that one page (12) was almost enough to make one give up halfway through and look for another story.

After All was tops---although the shortest, this was the best story in the issue. Maybe it's because I've not been reading much S-F lately--but I was surely taken by surprise by that trick ending. One gets to expect unusual twists in stories in this field; so when I find one that does manage to surprise me, I am delighted. Re-reading it, noticing the little unrecognizable clues slipped in by the author, I am impressed with his skill. I hope to see a lot more of his work, if it's all up to that standard.

In the poetry division... Had The Rocket not been so attractively illustrated, it would not be worth mentioning at all. A picture is worth a thousand words, they say; in this case, the illustration was certainly worth more than the whole poem. Rhyme was irregular, metre uncertain, and theme rambling. In fact, I can't find a word of praise for it.





...Merlin was just the opposite. Metre was even; and the rhyme-scheme showed equal care and skill. Moreover, the theme and presentation were both unusual. The poem was as far removed from hack as any I've come across in the field, fan or pro.

Wolfpride: also pleasing, and a little off the beaten track. Try for more work from both these authors.

The article on prozines was better than most fan articles, whose authors generally get all worked up over some trifle, throwing their personal emotions into a review or discussion with both hands and a shovel. Of course, this author did state mere opinions as flat facts; but he did it quietly, without attempting to browbeat the reader into accepting his point of view. So the discredit is minimum.

I liked the back cover better than the front, although I agree that the shading on the latter is well done.

Interiors... The illustration for The Rocket I liked best. The one for Merlin was cute; and the wolves were rather nicely done. The little cartoons scattered through the pages are an attractive feature.



The mailing wrapper brought a chuckle; but aren't there such things as copyright laws...? Besides, it lowers the tone of the 'zine to have copied pro work in it. But do retain some sort of mailing wrapper; I hate losing the outside page of a zine, which often has a reluctance to remain stapled.

---

GILBERT E. MENICUCCI  
675 Delano Ave.  
San Francisco 12  
California

Dear Terry:



RECEIVED OMEGA a few days ago. Naturally, my first thought was: "WHAT IS IT?" I have not, to be truthful, found out the answer to that question. It seems to be a fanzine, but I have my doubts. One of them is, and again naturally, that crazy cover. The back cover should have been the front cover and the front the back. You follow?

Then, also, there wasn't enough "something-or-other" on the cover. I don't know what you're missing, but you are missing something...

How come, in my issue at least, there were two-page eights? We admit that Capella's column was good (Oh wait a minute, I'm sorry, it was a story, not a column; mistake in typing) but not good enough to give us two pages of the same thing.

That "Newsstand Meeting" was very very good... Need I say that I liked "Last Hope" #2 better, though?

There was just a bit too much poetry. 'Course "The Sage of Merlin the Rhea" was the best attempt at a good story-poem.

I don't want to give a paragraph to everything you had in the issue, so I'll just say that I liked "Writings" by D. Rike ...'twas good. Sort of funny...

Oh wait, I can't stop now. I just remembered that I never told you what I thought of Calkins' Thing (note capital). Ug. It was, and I'm being nice now, lousy. I don't see how Calkins can put out such a beautiffulll fanzine and then write such LOUSY articles.





Improve your mimeoing a little and you'll be one of the best...

CHARLES WELLS  
405 E. 32 St.  
Savannah, Ga.

Dear Terry:



LIKE OMEGA. The mimeoing was not the best it could have been, but it was readable. I wish you would keep on doing the interiors in color; it does something for it.

As for the contents, for the most part they were very good for a first issue. There were too many poems in it but otherwise it was very well balanced. Last Hope was excellent. Good farfiction. After all, wasn't Gartin at his best, but it'll do. Rike's illustrated offering should stay illustrated -- it wouldn't be nearly so good unillustrated. Clakins (pardon) was somewhat trite -- that subject has been hashed and rehashed so many times that all that is left is mol-ecules. Browne's thing might have been funny if it hadn't been so true-to-life. I wonder if it was true? Norman told me it was, except for the ending...haven't you had much the same experience yourself, Charles?

The shading technique on the cover was good, but I see nothing unusual in it. The shading was good, but the drawing wasn't. It seems to me that at least the stare could have been put all over the pic, not just in one spot, as it was there. The backcover was better -- that guy looks so disgusted. Maybe those ridiculous boots hurt his feet. The expression was my fault -- I somehow put it there while stencilling the drawing.



I don't particularly like your legal length paper. If you want to save stencil, why don't you do like Gem Carr and others, and publish it half legal length -- two pages per stencil. And don't complain that you don't have a wide-carriage typewriter; neither does Carr, I think. I don't have a wide-carriage typewriter and neither does Carr...well, that figures, somehow...

TOM PIPER  
464-19th Street  
Santa Monica  
California

Dear Terry.



JUST FINISHED OMEGA, that Minny-O-Graft Stuff. I want to thank you for sending this as a sample, but more on this later.

Mimeographing was pretty bad, although I can't blame all of that on you. If Bob did everything I think he did, he certainly handles his mimeo for BOO! like a dream. I don't suppose there is any connection though; nothing like that! You apologized for the paper, so I won't bore you with a few words on that.

In case this is printed in your letter column (now if that isn't one of the oldest, beaten-up phrases in neo-fandon!), I of course want to give REASON a plug; and also want to state my want of more material. So there.



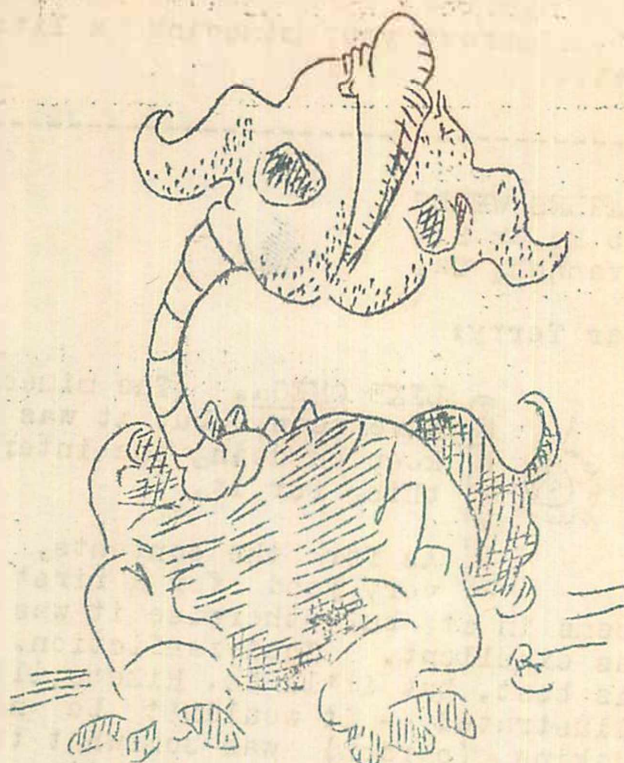
I read through this slightly fast, but I guess that was on account of the reason (another plug) that I don't read poetry. I'll admit, though, that I did read part of "The Saga of Merlin the Flea" and found it very entertaining.

If I were you, I would have done what Keith Joseph wanted, and use the back cover for the front. What's so good about an infidel in space with big feet?

What is your circulation? Or, what will your circulation be for the second issue? I'd like to place an ad for REASON, providing. Or would you ~~rather~~ exchange ads?

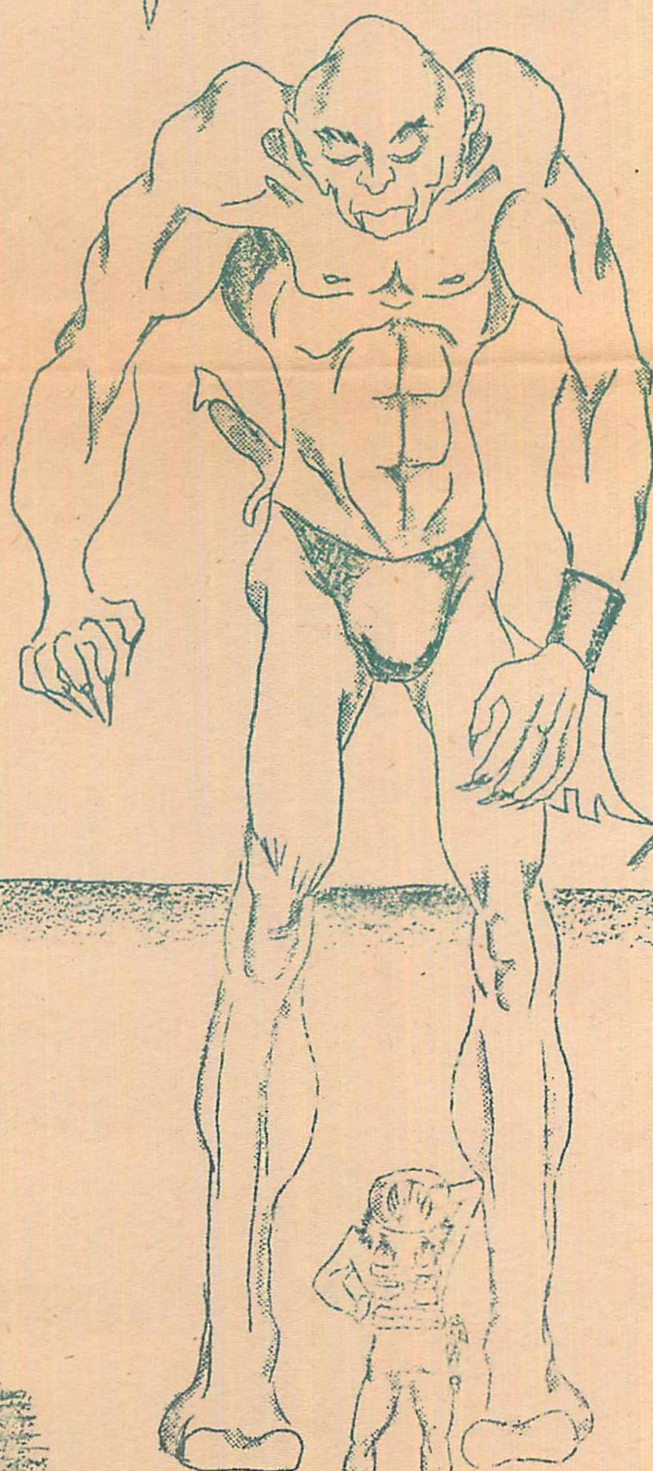
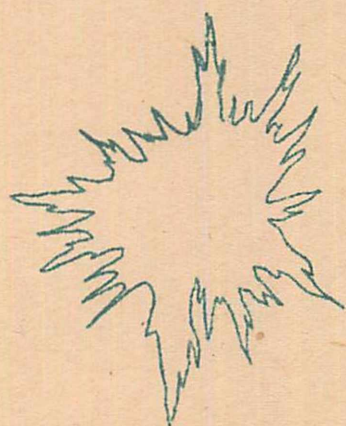
I'll send you the third issue as a trade ... wait! If you have a column in the third issue (of REASON), I won't need to trade. I'll just enclose ~~log~~ for the second issue.

---





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