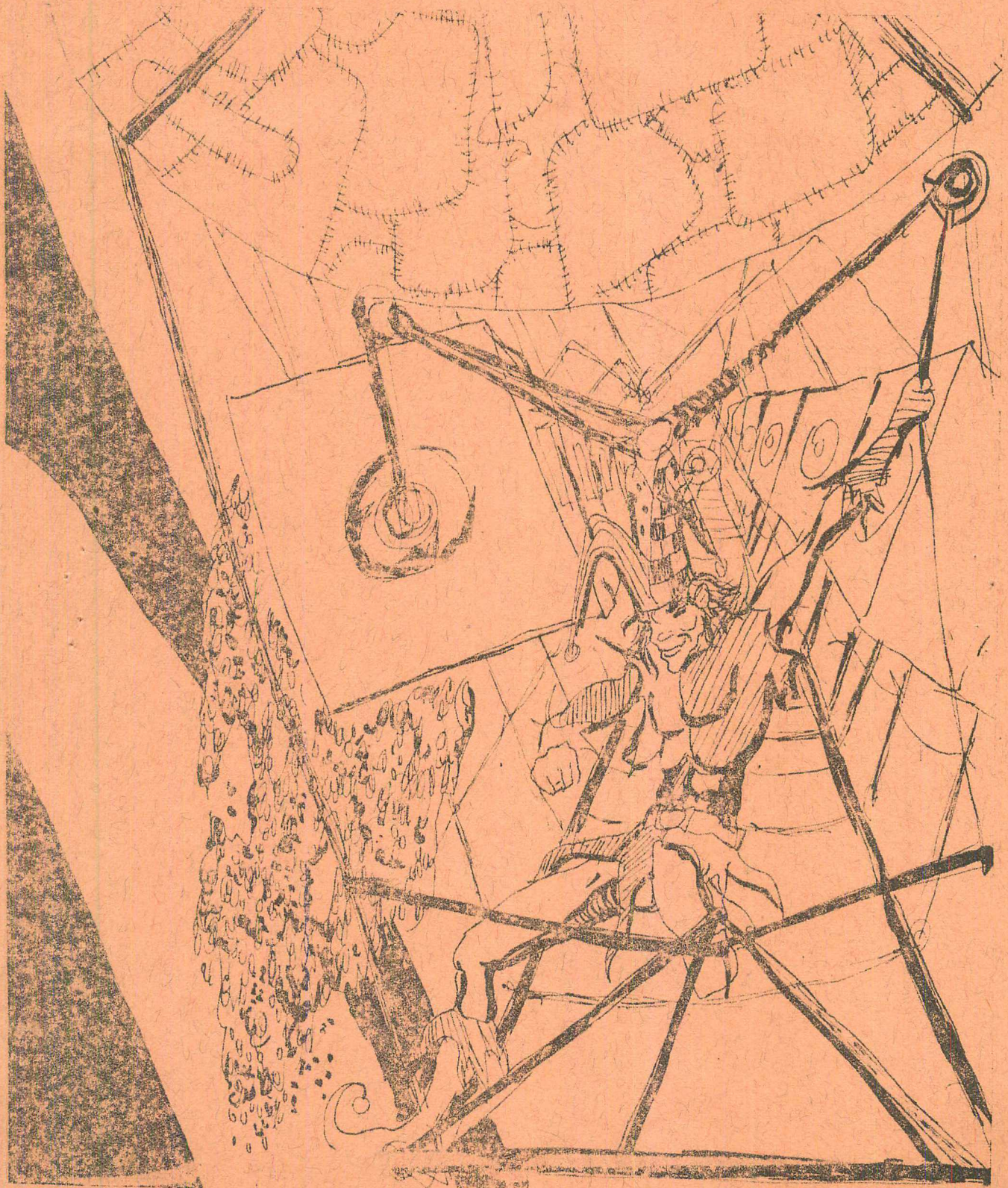


PLACER



PLACEBO 1

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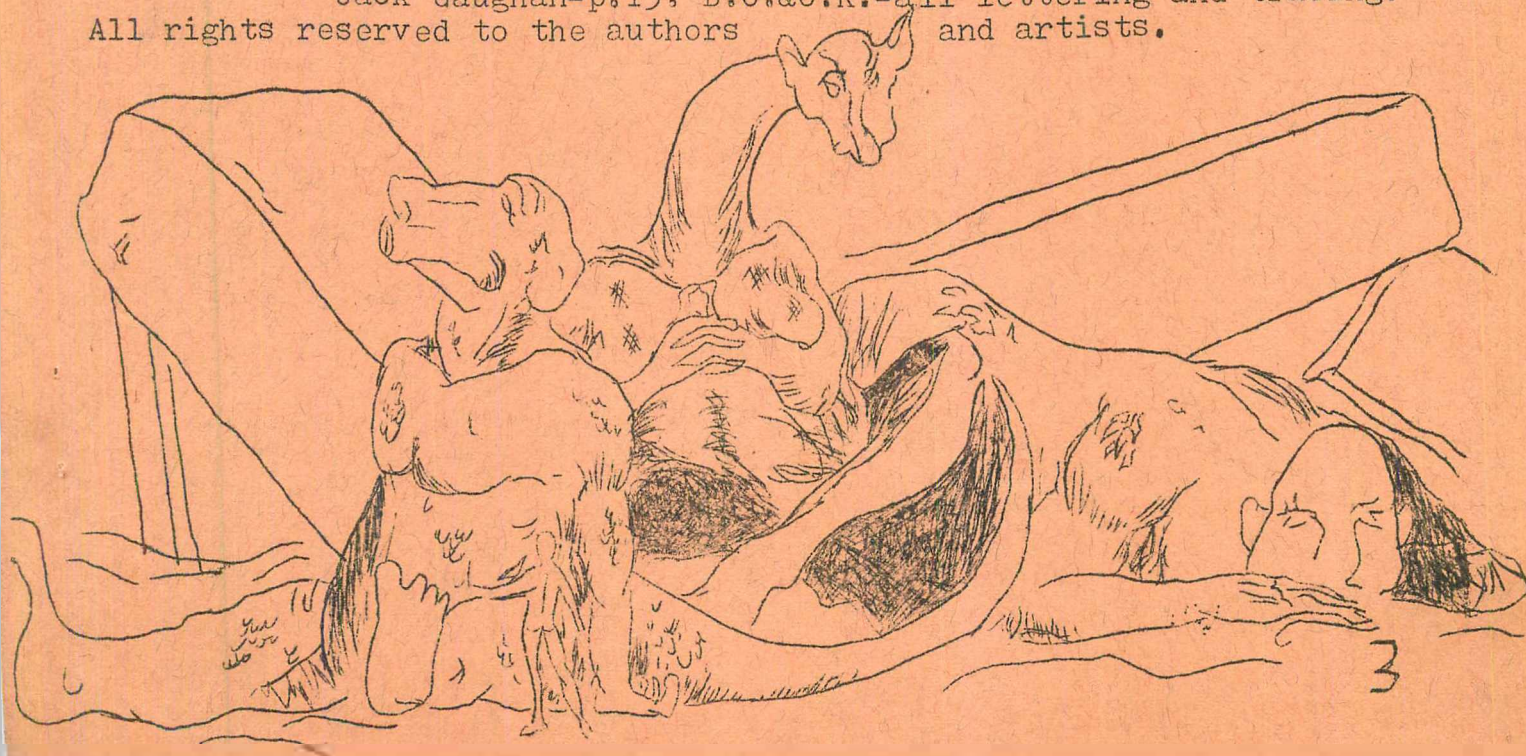
This is PLACEBO #1. the issue for the quarter starting October, 1971. PLACEBO is a quarterly fanzine produced under the auspices of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Society At Queens College. It is available for contributions of articles, artwork, substantial locs, for 25¢ per issue (three ish sub. max.), and in all for all trade for other fanzines (a copy for each of the co-editors please(2)!).

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Jack Gaughan-p.13. B.C.&C.K.-all lettering and tracing.
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SINUOUS CONVOLUTIONS

MILTON FEDER

Imagine two people who want to put out a fanzine. They are friends, so they decide to do it together. Each has definite ideas about what a fanzine should be. Unfortunately, these ideas are not always shared or agreed upon. But since both of these people are intelligent, and willing to compromise for the good of (read: for the existence of) the fanzine, they are able to work together. Their good ideas reinforce each other, their differences make their zine better balanced. The fanzine these two people produced is the fanzine you are reading, Placebo. These pages are the product of weeks of harmonious dischord, (see Barry's editorial) we hope you like it.

It was my original intention to write only a short personal column that, by the authority of my poetic license, we would call an editorial. I would leave all the first-issue pleas and platitudes to my co-editor and everyone would be happy. Somehow, things just didn't work out that way. So it is that below you'll find all the old cliches: the statement of policy and intent, the plea for material, the apology for the faults of this, my first fanzine. You've probably read it all before, and if you'd prefer not to slog through it again, please, be my guest, go right on to my column "The Other Side of the Coin" (or to Barry's editorial "Stet"). But don't write a loc that asks "why has Moshe written two boring editorials, wasn't one enough?" Do not write such a letter, for I warn you, after the prolonged exposure to corflufumes I have been subject to, I will no longer be responsible for all my actions.

Somewhere back around the eighth grade an english teacher accused me of habitually using syntax that was "sinuously convoluted". Since relativity functions in the universe of print, and since I live within my own self-consistent closed system, I am unable to tell whether or not I have retained that impediment. If I have, and it bothers or confuses you, well, detailed six-color contour maps of the Feder-al grammatic terrain are available from my government printing office for twenty-five cents. (Just send your remittance and a note asking for publication 8800vt to: RBL Press, R.B.L. City, 7777707 R.B.L.) (Remind me to tell you about R.B.L. someday.) But if you have any experience in the fmz wilderness you should be able to rough it, sans map, just fine.

Placebo is a quarterly genzine produced, as they say, under the auspices of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Society At Queens College. That does not mean that any of my fellow members will necessarily do much of the work. However, when I do "nudge" them into it you will be seeing their bylines here, or, if they help collate, their fingerprints. When, as in this issue, their work does appear, I hope you will be tolerant of us who have so much less talent than all of you smartass loc writers.

(Cont. p. 5)

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Placebo will publish the best of what it receives in the way of sercon articles, faanish writings, and artwork. There will be no fiction, and (though I am sorely tempted) no poetry. For some illogical reason that I only vaguely comprehend, all contributors of articles, artwork, and substantial locs will receive a free copy. If you lack talent, or the urge to philanthropy, or if you're just plain lazy, you can also obtain a copy for a quarter (25¢) (no stamps or checks please). (We'll also send you Placebo in an all for all trade for your own zine.) But I'd much rather see evidence of your mind than of your money.

As to content: Frankly, my own leanings are to sercon discussion and analysis of SF. But Barry and I always enjoy a well written faanish piece and we'll print such whenever they're sent to us. We won't make a strong conscious attempt to balance the different types of material. The mix ratio will depend on what we've got on hand. (That translates as - "What you people send us.")

This fanzine could not have appeared without the advice and encouragement of Charlene Komar and Bill Kunkel (see Bill's column for an example of advice.). When some aspect of this fanzine is good, you can be sure who helped us with it; when anything is bad, don't blame them. Bill and Charlene collaborate on their own zine, Rats!. If you'd like to see what their two more experienced heads can do, when their are no fool neos around to foul things up, you should send for a copy. Rats! is available for locs, written contributions, artwork, fanzines in trade, or 25¢ from; Bill Kunkel, 72-41 61st Street, Glendale, N.Y. 11227. And at this very moment one of my four flanking guardian angels (or perhaps one of my auxiliary of over 47,000) is hovering over them, dropping a load of my blessings and thanks upon them. (Beleive me C&B that stuff on the roof is not birdshit.)

If you receive this before Noreascon. - You'll see me there, trying to avoid all you irate readers.

If you've just returned from the con and you found this in your mailbox. - then as soon as you've caught up on your sleep, and otherwise recuperated; sit down, read this issue through, and Write Me A LOC!

- keep a'runnin, the 2nd law of thermodynamics is right behind ya!

- Moshe

three people."

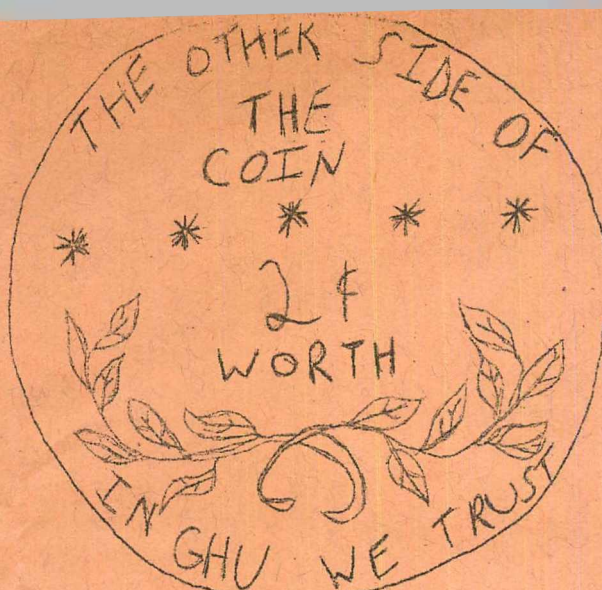
The preceding statement will have had no effect on you unless you happened to have glanced at the colophon, in which case you will be thinking that you could have sworn that there were only two names listed as editors.

"One, let's see now . . . was Barry Smotroff, and the other, oh yes, was Moshe Feder." Now Smotroff, as you might surmise about anyone with a name like that, is quite an ordinary guy, a standard model human being. But Feder, on the other hand, is weirder than

fiction. He is both the second and third editors - both of him residing in a single "corpus selecti" - a writer's nightmare. "Buy one demagogic, overbearing editor, get one free. That's right little lady, two complete personae in one giant economy sized package. With its avant-garde swelled head styling it . . ." One of these personalities is the cause of the innocent, baffled, modestly shy expression that is so often on his face. It is that of mild-mannered Moshe - a quiet unobtrusive neofan. But the other! The other is Moshe's involuntary secret identity, "Super Pedant", in which guise he wrote a patronizingly intelligent article for this issue of Placebo. Super Pedant is an egotistical, blustering braggart who has sworn as his mission to go around correcting people's grammar; to totally rewrite that which they have written with loving care; to slight their political and philosophical opinions, their spouses and sweethearts, and their choice of wines; and to generally harass all hardworking fen. As if that wasn't enough, Super Pedant has neurotic fantasies of actually being "The Booksnake" (the scintillating super-scholar), and/or "Poison Pen" (the heroically fearless super-critic). Only this explains how he could have the gall to write book reviews and sercon academic style essays.

The only way to weaken, stop, or destroy Super Pedant is with the rare meteoritic mineral, Blue Sharperwit. Sharperwit of any color being in such short supply, he has, to date, been able to avoid any dangerously large quantity of it. Unlike the Wolfman, Mosheneofansuperpedant is not affected by the full moon. Unlike Jekyll and Hyde he does not react to noxious chemical concoctions. For the horrible truth is that Moshe turns into S.P. with the innocent turning of a fanzine page!

Super Pedant can be defeated, but only with great subtlety and cunning, for he will not go away if ignored. On the contrary, the less attention you pay to him the stronger he gets. If you want to help in this struggle against the grim forces of grammar the best thing you can do is to read anything you suspect might have been written by S.P. If we all work together this battle can be won. S.P. can be annihilated and Moshe restored. Remember, Moshe depends on us for his cure. For in his closet hangs a suit waiting to be worn. It is a suit of white, trimmed with gold. Next to it a matching gold cape hangs limply. And emblazoned across the suit's chest in flowing gold are the letters B N F .





OK, I DON'T GET
IT EITHER BUT I'M
ONLY THE ARTIST - WHAT'S
YOUR EXCUSE?



NOTE: The story you are about to read is more or less true. The names are the same because everyone is guilty; no one is innocent.

It started in Charlene's garret and moved on to Judy's humble abode, a fortnight later it showed up at Pam's house way out in the Styx (sic) of Whitestone, a week later it started the infamous session at Moshe's house, and still it continued! It surged onward to cause the vote at Ted and Arnice's, and it was finally laid to rest at Moshe's (R.I.P.). Naming a fanzine can be quite an experience, so let me chronicle our (fanfare up) SEARCH FOR A TITLE.

The first meeting of the summer was at Charlene's, and only Moshe, Charlene, and myself were there. Well, it wasn't a total loss; we spent most of the evening playing on Charlene's pinball machine (every home ought to have one). In-between the third and fourth balls (the only place to think) I managed to come up with a very relevant title: Fifth Century Ming Vase. Moshe came up with Wallpaper; to which Charlene responded that Toilet Paper would probably be more appropriate. A start had been forged, although in retrospect it would have been better to drop it back into the furnace.

The next meeting was at Judy's and a few more people were there. We broke up into groups of two or three, which is very conducive to naming a fanzine (Ha!). At any rate, we came up with Ersatz, and then with Ertnog (I haven't the slightest idea what it means). In response to Ertnog, my "little gray cells" came up with Eggnog!!! Finally, someone who shall remain nameless (because I've forgotten who it was) suggested Placebo, which somehow became the title.

But our story does not end here. Two weeks later, beyond the fields we know, in Whitestone (sorry about that Lord Dunsany) the onerous geas again descended. At that time, not really liking Placebo, we decided to get another name. It was suggested that Yngvi Is A Louse, but there are copyright laws and all that. On a "y" kick (Y are we doing this? Y am I doing this? Y would anyone do this?) we produced Yngling (I guess that means a little Yngvi). Since Yngvi Is A Louse, that would mean we'd be calling ourselves little louses. Staying with the penultimate letter, Moshe came up with Yeastling (a little yeast?) (But the cake won't rise! Shuddup!) Ah well. The climax that night at Pam's house came with The Erotic Electron, a possible title taken from one of Moshe's poems.

(Cont. p. 8)

Coming home from a bus on the bus we thought of some good "grafitti" titles, all of which slip mind. (That good, Huh?). On the bus we also produced Chozzeri (Yiddish for all the junk you eat between meals) and Nosh (the act of eating chozzeri). But we didn't want a Yiddish name, it's too provincial. Anyone who has ever ridden a bus in New York City knows that the main purpose of the street is to provide a place for the bus to bounce off of. As a result of this motion people also bounce up and down. Glancing at the overhead advertising on an upward bounce, all I could see were isolated letters. This brought to mind (mine at any rate) the idea of (a drumroll if you please maestro) initials. We explored the idea in depth; that is, when we were in the air and when we were on the seats. One of the possibilities was to pick some initials e.g. WAYB, which stands for: "Why Are You Buying?"; or OFIAC, which isn't the name of a computer but an acronym for "Our Fanzine Is A Crudzine". We also explored the idea of just choosing a group of letters at random, e.g. QFADS, and pretending it meant something. We even considered being sneaky and giving you meaningless initials and then asking you to guess what they mean. We'd pick the best reply and announce that that was the correct answer.

The next incident in the search was the meeting at Moshe's. I wish I could give you a verbatim account of what went on at that meeting, but unfortunately I have neither an eidetic memory nor a recording of the meeting. You'll have to settle for the highlights. Now it all started when Moshe showed us a poster he has. The poster reads:

"You cunctator," she screamed.

He admired her enclitic, glanced at her orrery, and told her to cool it.

"You are like the Stymphalian birds. You're a hierodule. Every word out of your mouth is labio-velar. And don't you dare touch my koto!"

"You've had too much lobeline," he said.

"And you're nothing but a megathere," she replied and turned calmly to softly stroke her furze.

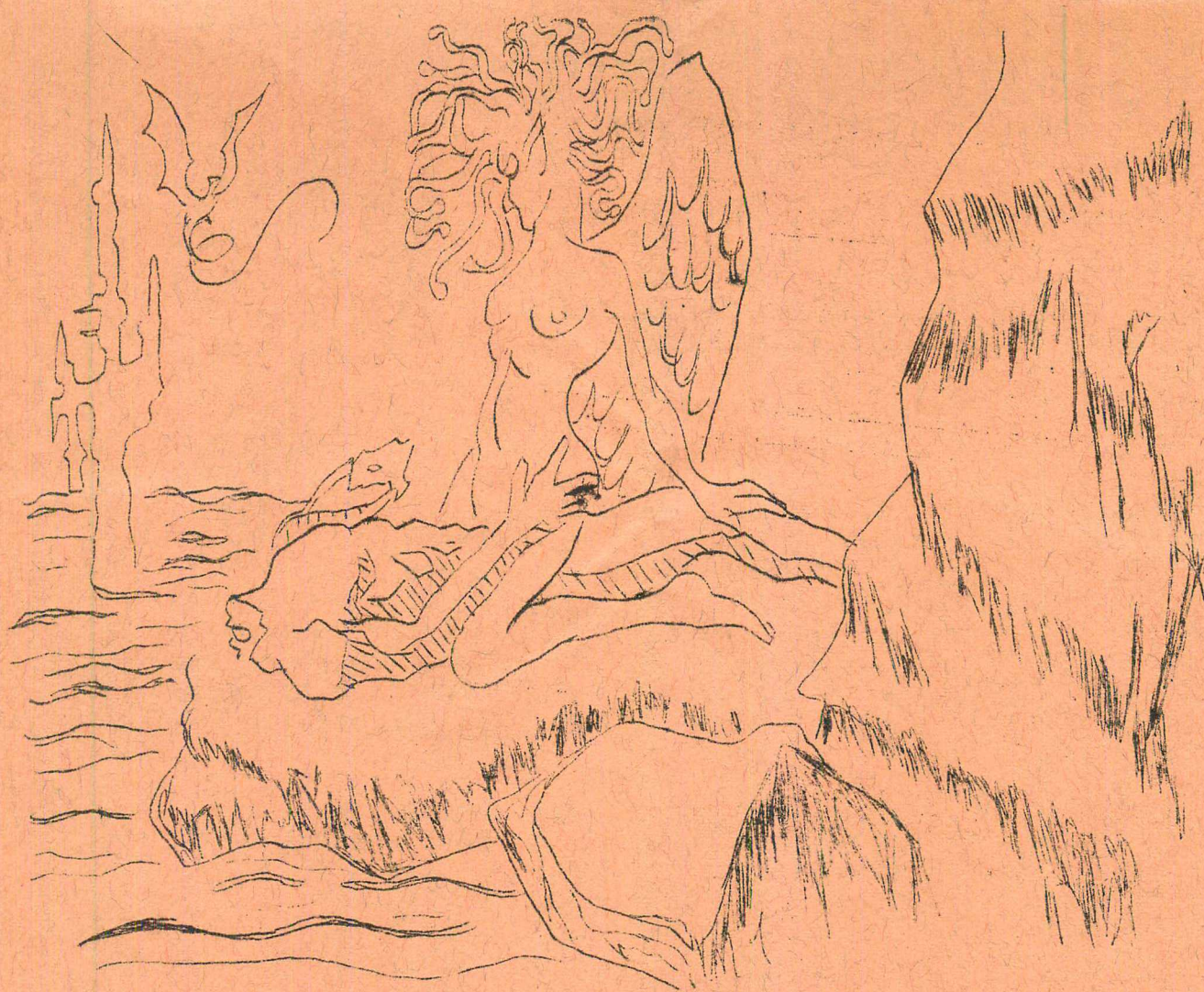
This of course provided a plethora of words, most of them quite, shall we say, unusual? (By the way, if you want to know what they mean, look them up. I haven't the space or the inclination to define them for you.)

After we'd retired to the living room, the session proper (fueled by the psoter) started. Basically there were three groups of titles. The first group was a related one consisting mainly of: The Ragnarok Review, The Gotterdamerung Gazette, and The Armageddon Archives. Also suggested were Ymir and Mjolnir. All were rejected because they tend to suggest a swords-and-sorcery zine, which this isn't. The last two were also rejected on the basis of "if you want to pronounce it, go ahead, we don't."

The second group was miscellaneous. It consisted of such goodies as: Tachyon, B.C. Ching (you know his brother I) and The Werefan. To cap it off Moshe came up with Finagle's Law According To Theodore. (Finagle's law is sometimes known as Murphy's Law of Politics, or simply as the Third Law. Basically, it says that if anything can go wrong, it will. "Theodore" of course, refers to Sturgeons Law.

Before I describe the third group, let me tell you how we came up with Chronic. It was at Charlene's (a week after Moshe's) and we

(Cont. p.10)



did it in one of the simplest ways possible. We took a dictionary from the shelf and opened it at random, and (fanfare up, crescendo of brass and cymbals) so Chronic was born as a title.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, I mean Moshe's . . . the third group (possible covers for which illustrate this article) were: The Dryads Defloration, The Medusa's Maidenhead, and The Apocalyptic Orgasm.

Need I say more?



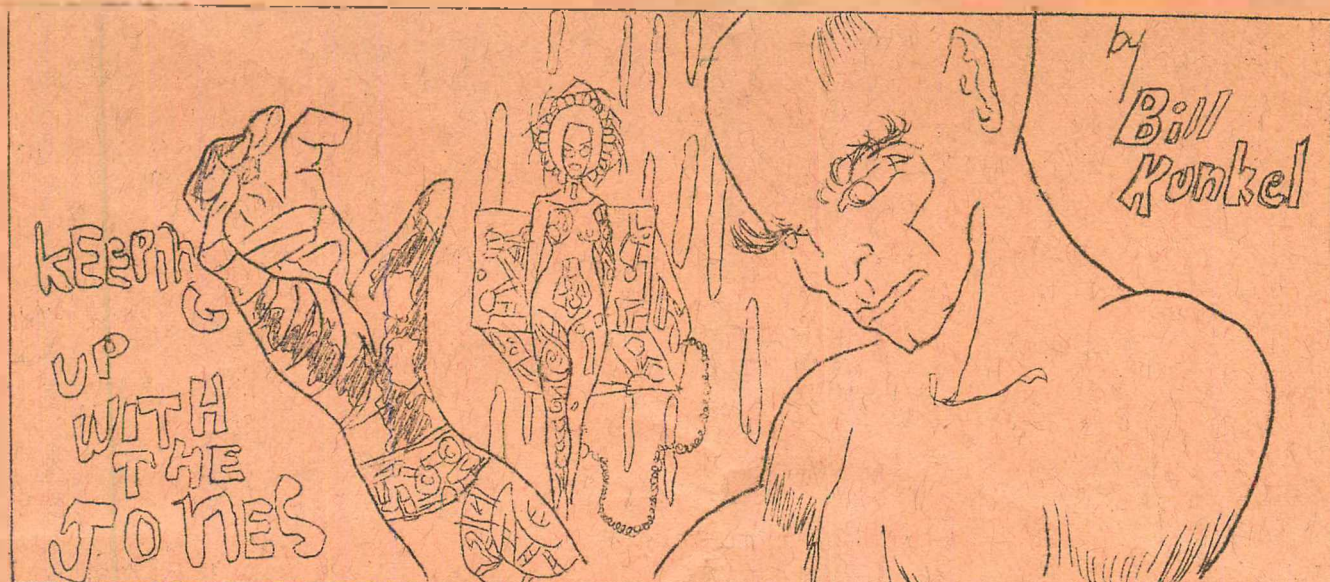
Yes, indeed I must, indeed I must. For a little while this zine was Chronic (in more ways than one). But Chronic was not destined to be our title. Moshe decided he didn't like Chronic so he produced a replacement. Armed with a position paper he unveiled the name at the next meeting. Yep, a position paper. And the name he unveiled was Chronique. I can do no less justice than to quote part of Moshe's position paper on why he liked Chronique and how he picked it as a title.

I thought of the old QSFL and got the feeling that it was a shame we had not been able to more strongly suggest our location in Queens with a "q" sound in the name. Something like "Queue Ball" or "Quern" would do. Then I realized that the "q" could be substituted for the initial "Ch" and/or the final "c" of "Chronic". But "Qroniq" looked silly, "Qronic" not much better, and though "Chroniq" wasn't bad . . . but then I knew what I must have been thinking of all along - the French spelling C-H-R-O-N-I-Q-U-E (Chronique), the simple replacement of the final "C" by "que". It still had two syllables, was not too likely to be mispronounced, and just plain looked a lot better. Memories of my wasted years of French told me that this change was especially apt; for the French word of that spelling had not only the adjectival definition of "Chronic" in common with the English word, but it was also a noun meaning chronicle! Furthermore, if seen as English, the new spelling could be interpreted as a portmanteau word constructed of "chronically unique". All this seemed to me to be a definite improvement . . .

When we voted on the title change at Ted and Arnice's, Chronique won. I think it one by one vote, but the whole membership was not present. Oh yes, I voted against it.

The next meeting was at Moshe's. There (to me at least) we were saved from a fate worse than death. Bill and Charlene were at this meeting and 'twas they who turned the tide (caused the title to be changed). I had told Charlene about the change and she had agreed that Chronique, well . . . Our Voices Of Experience said, among other things, that fmz titles ending with "que" were of the cornycampyreallynow school.

(Cont. p. 12)



Why am I writing this column? Well, for a few different reasons, actually. To practice writing a column, for one thing. To lend a Light and Faannish touch to what would otherwise probably be a sercon firstish, for another. And Ghu knows that a first issue has enough going against it without being completely sercon, to boot.

And, ultimately, it being a firstish I am served up with a ready-made topic for discussion. Well now, what about first issues? Just what about them? Endless parodies have been written of them, of course, because they are usually a bit naive, a bit goshwow, and usually are all the same. Every first issue, it is said, is comprised of endless pleas for material and constant apologies for its shabbiness, for example. Every Firstish is supposed to have a rocket ship on the cover, too, that's almost a law. The repro and stencilling must also betray the fact that the editor(s) have never done either before. And the first issue must be sent to every Pro in the world, and most every fan.

Even This Fanzine! It's like this. I said to Charlene, hey Charl, what's happening with that fnz from Queens College SF Brigade? And she said, well, it's going to be a genzine instead, and Moshe and Barry are going to edit it and run off 500 copies and distribute it at Norcascon. And I said, oh noooooooooooooo...

Plans were altered since then, of course, but to this day the idea chills me. I keep thinking about what a Kores stencil looks like after even 150 copies! Or how pissed off the hotel would be finding all those copies of the same fanzine in ashtrays, under seat cushions, and in drinks.

Arnie Katz once brought issues of Quip to a worldcon, to distribute. Ray & Joyce Fisher brought Odd to that same worldcon to distribute. And Terry Carr brought Lighthouse, if I'm not mistaken, to that very same worldcon. And between those three fnz (three of the best, if not the best three fanzines that were published that year) the response was little more than a handful of loes. The response, they said, picked up later on, but I really can't see a worldcon as a great place to distribute your fnz. Hell, I was a rank noo when I attended MyCon, and I didn't keep the fanzines that people gave to me. So you can imagine.

(SENT 9/12)

So, all in all, I think I mentioned before that first issues have enough going against them. But they also have things going for them. Most important thing on the side of a neo-fan publisher, of course, is his enthusiasm. This can make up for a multitude of sins. And, believe it or not, most fans and pros, are kinder to a new fanzine than they are even to an old and respectable one. They want to give encouragement, I guess, and they like the egoboo a neo-editor is more apt to lavish. Why I remember my first loc from Roger Zelazny, for chrissakes, and my first Gaughan cover illo!

And so I say to you fellows, Good Luck! You will someday look back upon this fanzine with a mixture of nostalgia and chagrin and you may even wish you could unpublish it. Make it go away, make it a never was, even. But of course, you won't be able to, because there are some laws that can never be altered, and one such law is: you can't have a second without a first.

E R E

One of the important questions that must be decided upon, when pubbing a fanzine, is what your schedule will be. It is said that first issues are published in a burst of enthusiasm, second issues to show the dogged determination of the editor(s), and third issues are seldom seen. And if they are, might I add, it's usually about five months after it was supposed to appear, and was issued only to let everyone know that the fanzine is being suspended. Something like: "-other interests have just made the continued publication of Friskmee increasingly difficult. I have now reached the point where drugs, booze, and prostitutes cost me every cent I earn and then some. Besides, I am writing an SF novel, and the fanzine just takes too much time. Don't let this stop you from writing me letters, though, as I would really like to hear from you, even though it may be some time before another issue appears. . . ."

Now, you have a few choices in deciding upon a schedule. You can say "monthly", "bi-monthly", "quarterly", or "irregularly, and the only difference is How Big the Lie. While it is true that I'm currently pubbing on a monthly schedule, this is the sort of scheduling that's nearly impossible to continue. Very few fanzines in history have managed to actually come out monthly for any length of time. However, if you say you're going on a monthly schedule, you're a bit more apt to feel guilty about not having pubbed in eight months than you would be if "irregular".

It's all up to you.

E R E

The last points I'm going to cover regard material and artwork. Now, the kind of line you publish is, of course up to you. My preference happens to be for the small, personal, fanish type, but fandom always needs the bulky, screen sort of publications. Do consider this, however, that every fanzine and its brother's running things like "book reviews". Now think for a minute; do you really have anything to say that probably hasn't been said already, and better? An example that comes to mind would be a few years ago when "2001" was shown. Hell, every damn fmz in existence was giving six page reviews of the thing! So think, does anyone really need to hear your 2¢ on some book that they'll read themselves if they're interested and have already

(Cont. p. 14)

seen reviewed by the top reviewers in the Big Fanzines already? If you rely, instead, upon your personality, you will hopefully have a more unique appeal, and something different going for you.

Things like a lettercol, editorial, and contents page are more standard and, too, more unique and interesting. Even a fmz review column might be a good idea, since fewer and fewer fmz run them these days.

Art must, most basically, reflect the material. A sercon fanzine needs sercon art, while a faanish fmz needs cartoonish things, is a somewhat simplistic statement, but probably a good basic guideline to follow. The art should just continue the tone created by the written material, and there are always plenty of good artists to do both types.

So there, I've written what little I know about doing the firstish of your fanzine. And I even tried to keep it light, while including Penetrating and Enlightening comments for the ride. So go forth now, and do a good job, and I may even be writing this column on a steady basis (oh didn't I tell you, self-aggrandizing is the big thing these days . . . next I tell you about all the books I've written and all the BNFs who come to me for advice. . . .). Chow.

-Bill Kunkel

(STET. Cont. from p. 10)

I won't go into specifics, but we did agree to drop Chronique and go back to Placebo, which is our present title. That is, if they don't change it again at this week's meeting. I hope not, this editorial is already too long.

-Barry Smotroff





Ecology is a much discussed topic these days and one elementary fact of that science is the inescapable interdependence of all living things. An example of that interdependence are the food chains, the pyramid of life, the feeding of the greater on the smaller, of the more complex on the less complex.

The questing imagination of the science fiction reader feeds on its favorite form of fiction, exotic tales, savoringly spiced with speculation. Such a mind, and the reader it belongs to, is the terminating point of a "food chain". It is a chain which has as its anchor, its point of origin, the creative mind of the author, the one thing all the succeeding links could not exist without. The author is more important than the agent, the editor, the publisher, the distributor, the newstand or bookstore; all of whom depend on him. Only the reader, far away at the other end of the chain, approaches him in importance. All the others are like the fish which ultimately depend on the plankton for their existence. The author could, like the plankton, get along by himself; for if need be, an author can be his own audience.

I have extended a metaphor to its limit to stress a point that is so obvious it is ignored. As are all goods in a period of abundance, authors are taken for granted. But what would the average SF reader do, if after WW III he finally caught up on all that back reading he'd been meaning to do for so long? What if there were no more bookstores or libraries left to sack, no more fresh material available, no more books to add to his collection? The few of us who are fans might sit down and start writing a fanzine (i.e. temporarily take up the guise of an author), the rest of us would go nuts! An author in the same situation might go hungry (having no ready market for his work) but he wouldn't go without SF.

It is a shame that authors and their work are so quickly forgotten, that Hugo or Nebula winning works can go out of print and be unavailable just a few years after their triumph. The sad truth is that good writers and good writing are not so abundant that we can afford to lose them. We can even less afford never to have discovered them. As with all the fine things in life no matter how much we have we always want more, there can never be enough. But we all do pass good books by, and so they stay on the bookshelves, and their authors remain unknown. Happily, sometimes new riches are pulled up when the sea of obscurity is dredged.

(Cont. p.17)

A recent piece of such jetsam is Islandia by Austin T. Wright. Two years ago I was spending a summer afternoon idly perusing the bookshelves of my local public library. In the fiction section I had reached the "W"'s without any success, and then I saw Islandia. "A book I haven't noticed before?", I thought to myself. I drew the fat green rebound volume from the shelf and leafed through the first few pages, stopping when I came to a map. "'Karain Subcontinent', 'Islandia' south at the top(!) of the map? This looks interesting." I mused. I checked the book out and took it home. It started slowly and I had a bit of trouble getting into it, but once I had I savored every page. A week later I began searching for a copy to add to my collection (but that's another story).

As I've said, Islandia is back in print, in its second paperback incarnation. The Signet edition (E4621/944 pp.) is readily available and one of the few paperbacks worth \$1.75. Indeed, its length makes it possibly the most ambitious novel in its own or related fields. Apparently it was reissued because of Mark Saxton's recent sequel The Islar, which has also appeared in paperback (Signet Q4620/95¢/223pp.)

The author, Austin Tappan Wright, was a professor of law at the University of Pennsylvania and at Berkeley, who died in 1931. His novel was published eleven years later, after his daughter Sylvia Wright and editor Mark Saxton had cut the formidable manuscript by one-third. Wright also wrote an imposing guide to every aspect of his imaginary country entitled; Islandia: History and Description "By M. Jean Perrier" (first french consul to Islandia), from which a few very short selections were chosen for a slim companion volume to the novel in 1942.

This story of the young American who becomes the first U.S. consul in Islandia, is hard to characterize in any stereotyped way. I think it would be a mistake to call Islandia a utopian novel, though the book is perhaps the best novelized realization of a utopia. I also think it would be mistaken to call it escape literature, though it served that purpose eminently well during the dark days of 1942.

Unlike some more recent but equally fine books of imaginative fiction, when Islandia was first released (1942) it was seriously reviewed by the major main-stream publications. Although almost all had some petty reservations the reviews were uniformly favorable. "Time" magazine, "The New Republic", "The Sunday Times Book Review", the daily edition of the New York Times, and the "Saturday Review of Literature" all took note of the book. Norman Cousins of the SROL paid it the compliment of tailoring a review to its special nature, his review being in the form of a supposed commemorative article for the books anniversary in 1967! Cousins says that Wright succeeded too well, that his country is too believable to be an escape. Note his unintentional compliment to SF when he says: "For here after all, was something approaching a literary wonder of the world — the erection of an imaginary civilization with all its minutiae, with learned tracts on its literature and its legends, its economy and its resources, its anthropology and its archeology, its politics and its social organization, — all integrated into the background of a novel, indeed furnished calmly and unobtrusively and with undeniable scholarship and authority. The whole thing, you might say, was beyond the human imagination, except that it wasn't — and that was just the point." While a main-stream reviewer of the benighted forties could perceive and appreciate such qualities, isn't it ironic that SF readers were and for the most part are unaware of the books existence?

(Cont. p.16)

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Islandia was written over a period of many years and Wright developed as an author as he wrote it. Occasionally he repeats a phrase too often, falls into a trap of syntax, or has a clumsily written passage that betrays this. But on the whole his style is paced and lucid, the sort of writing that promotes effortless, fluent reading. It leads you on for page after page through passages filled with adventure, suspense, eloquence, romance, rich detail, and the sense of wonder generated by the best kind of exoticism. Wright is especially skillful at describing landscapes, and interested readers are not really surprised to learn that he worked out every scene literally from the ground up, with detailed geological and topographical maps. Like Tolkein he was interested in, and concerned with every detail, whether of direct connection with the novel or not. Wright worked out a language, a calendar, a religious and national philosophy, and countless customs.

Admittedly, Islandia is neither pure SF nor fantasy. Perhaps it fits best into the field of utopian fiction, which is a related genre. In that field Islandia is without peer in novelistic quality, interest, length, or the convincing credibility of its fictional reality. Significantly, it anticipates in mood, descriptive technique, structure, characterization, and concerns many of the best SF novels of recent years (Dune, The Left Hand of Darkness, and even The Man In The High Castle) and it surely was a landmark in the imaginary-worldscape genre.

Islandia is not just another utopian novel cum blueprint, a la Bellamy or Morris. Here we have a very real imaginary country, populated by very human characters that are more than narrative conveniences for the author. Like any great writer of novels of broad scope Wright touches on almost every aspect of life and numerous specialized topics, and he does so with refinement, charm, and some insight. To bring things full circle, I might add that one of those topics is ecology.



A OTHER EDITORIAL SUPPLEMENT?

Barry speaking. This is a supplement to my editorial "STET". (You mean "STET" was an editorial?) Actually, if Moshe can have one .. No, there really were a few good reasons for this supplement. After all, this page would have been blank otherwise. Since a blank page didn't look good to me, and since there are some things left to be said, I decided to do AES. Since this is being run off after the TOC, it is not listed there. Consider it a bonus.

First, about the repro. Well, it's time for the endless apologies that show that neither of the editors have ever done this before. They are, after all, standard for a firstish, so here goes. First of all, those black lines and/or spaces on the sides of the pages. PLACEBO was run off on the Inter-Club Council's Gestetner 350. However, since originally we were going to use an A.B.Dick machine, we used A.B.Dick stencils. The I.C.C. said they could adapt the stencils and they did. Not too well perhaps, but it was easier than retyping(not to mention retracing) 17 stencils. Next time we'll be using Gestetner stencils so that problem will be eliminated. Also, we weren't able or allowed to watch the actual "printing", so we have a slight excuse there. (Specifically for the art on p.16 which came out too light.) As far as page numbers are concerned I take full responsibility and blame (except for p.6 which was the I.C.C.'s fault). This was the first time I have ever written on a stencil by hand and I was afraid to press too hard for fear of ripping the stencil. Sorry.

Now for addenda and corrigenda (nice phrase isn't it? I got it from WSFA journal). On p.3 add: "Another Editorial Supplement? by Barryp.17." to the TOC. In the colophon (same page) change "three ish sub. max." to "four ish sub. max." After all a dollar bill is less bulky than three quarters. The phrase "substantial locs" on p.5 means no postcards. On the top of p.6 the part that was cut off should read: "This fanzine is edited by three people." On p.14 the dialogue on the right should be read before the dialogue on the left. The article starting on that page "The Essential Mind" is by Moshe Feder.

CHARLIE BROWN PLEASE NOTE: In a few locs(which probably won't get printed) I attacked you for in some underhanded way getting hold of the worldcon mailing list. This was based on information given to me by several people. Now, however I've found out that the list is available to those who request it. I therefore tender my apologies to Charlie Brown and LOCUS. If nothing else I've learned to confirm my information before making accusations. Pax.

Congratulations to the Hugo winners. And I'll leave you with these words from The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam:

"Drink! for you know not whence you came, nor why:
Drink! for you know not why you go, nor where." *

-Barry Smotroff

*(Yeah, drink bheer!-M.F.)

PLACEBO

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