



ONCE I
PUBLISHED
A FANZINE
AND IT AL-
MOST NEVER
CAME OUT...



BUT THEN
I CAUGHT A
CASE OF
"LANEY'S
COMPLAINT"
AND I
GARIATED...



I GOT INTO
ROCK, AND
THE ROCK
SCENE
LED TO -



THE
DRUG
SCENE?



BUT AFTER A
WHILE I REAL-
IZED THAT WAS
A CUL-DE-SAC,
I WANTED A
TOMORROW
AND I WANTED
TO GET
MARRIED...



SOOOOOOOO...
I GOT BACK
INTO THE
GOOD OLD
FANZINE
BUSINESS....



NOW, I'M
FEELING ALL
HEALTHY &
I'M DOING THIS
FABULOUS,
FAANISH FMZ
& IT'S ALWAYS
ON TIME,
RIGHT?



SO?
MAY I HAVE
IT, PLEASE?



THANK YOU.

Rats!

10

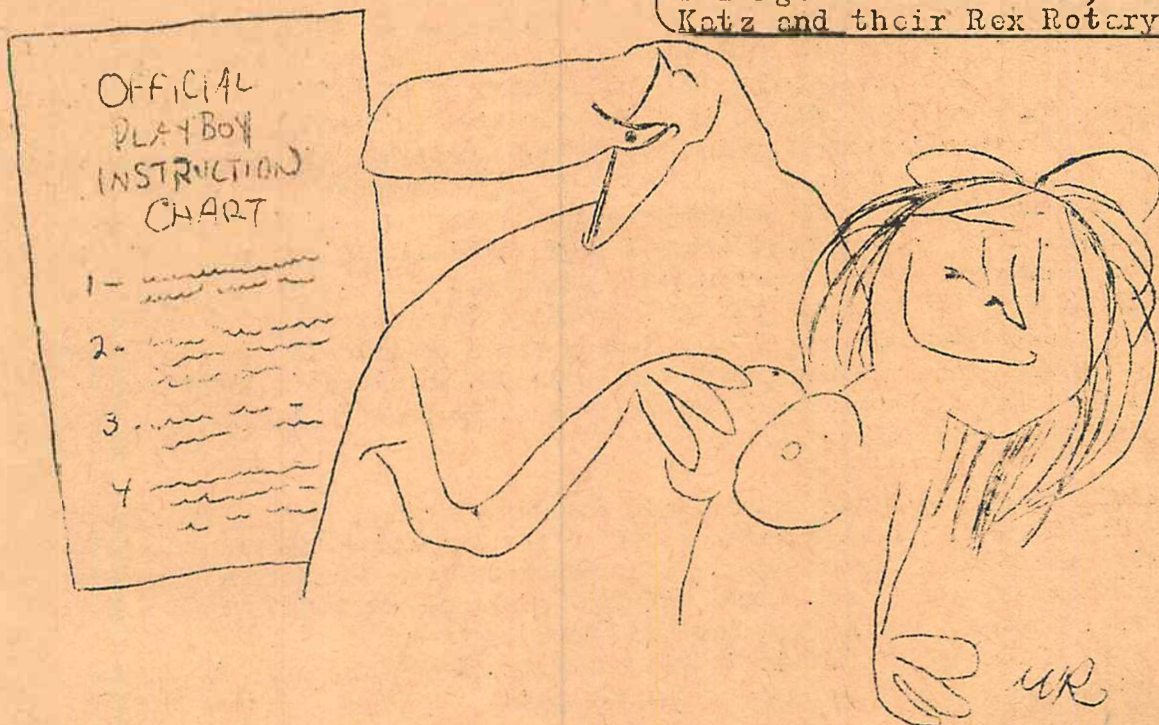
This is the Pre-WorldCon Issue::Cover by Ross Chamberlain, script by me (BK)::other art by Atom and Bill Rotsler::Thanks to Terry Carr::Space limitations forced Arnie Katz's article to be held over to September::: RATS! is the new-old fmz, which reminds me, a good way to get future issues is in trade for old fmz:: all other trades-one to each of the editors, if you please:::::::::: The mlg list is being cut next issue, so do do something::No long-term (more than 3 ish) subs!::::

the Right-On Fanzine!

RATS! #10 is edited by Bill Kunkel (72-41 61st Street Glendale, New York 11227) & Charlene Komar (85-30 121st Kew Gardens, New York 11415) RATS! is obtainable, as always, for a publishable letter of comment, art work, your fanzine in trade (all for all) or the old sticky quarter.

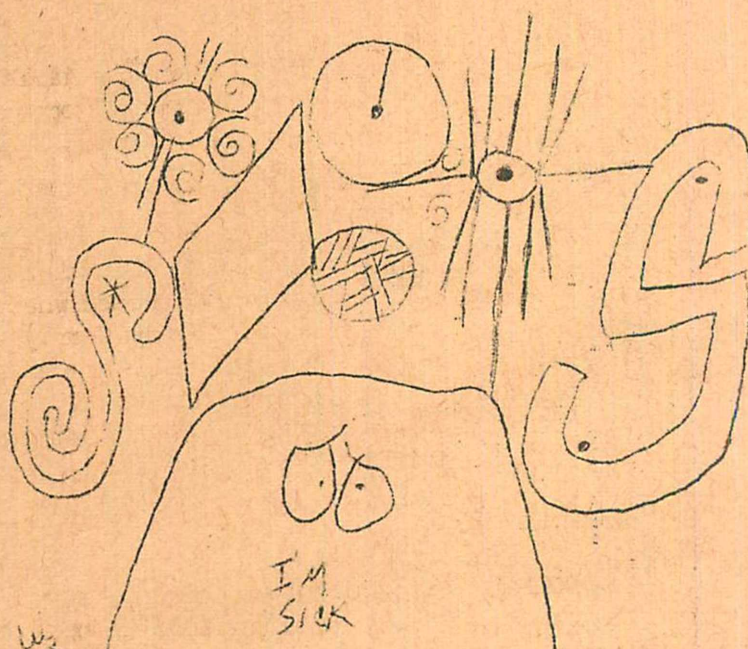
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Publishing credit once again belongs to Arnie Katz, Joyce Katz and their Rex Rotary 1000.



editorial
by
bill kunkel

DRIVE!



BILL KUNKEL? MEET STELLAR!

My reemergence upon the fan scene, I will admit, has been a rather unspectacular one. I did manage to get out three issues of RATS! in the prophesied three monthes, but credit for that could be laid more aptly on the doorsteps of my co-editor - who pushed and prodded the issues onto stencil and into the mails - and Arnie and Joyce, who published and helped disseminate them. Aside from that, I have scribbled but one letter of comment and did a pigwidgeon's share of article and column writing. THERE IS A REASON FOR THIS!

No, it has not been a productive period, mainly due to the fact that I have not been producing. Rather I have been studying; poring over the dusty lore of fandom and soaking up the ~~st-~~ talents and talents (we would hope) of suchlike as Durbee, Laney, Hoffman, Warner, Tucker, Carr, White, etc. My education in fanhistory is being conducted, as well, in a rather intense fashion, by my own choosing, since each new trip to the Katz's means more old fanzines, each one delighting me more than the last. I can't help but stay up well into the night, reading by the ever-diminishing glow of the lambent flame. It's true, compatriots, I have unthinkingly swapped addictions and now live in the clutches of the superannuated fanzines.

I call my life my own, but who am I joshing? I rarely sleep. I can't write (unless it's about you-know-what), and I have lately taken to bringing issues of STELLAR to the dinner table, and FAPAazines into the bathroom. Tom Perry's QUARK rides me to and from work each day and those rare snatches of sleep that I finally do get are filled with dreams like this beaut:

(swirling images and the sound track issues spiraling cadences of dilating flute music) - The Scene: A paneled ranch house of the expensive type found on the cliffs overlooking the Monterey beach area. Enter Chuck Connors and Johnny Crawford in their "Riflemen" personas and garb. "Luke McCaine" picks up the mail, keeps a fanzine and an envelope, tosses a second envelope to "Mark", his son.

"Well son," Lukas says, "I didn't win the Emmy. In fact I came in last."

Mark grins. "Well don't we make a helluva pair."

"You lost too, eh?"

drivel:::

"No, I won."

"You little shit."

"Well," Mark says, getting up from the table, "here comes your cousin Heidi."

Heidi enters. She is wearing a Storm Trooper uniform and carries a pair of glasses which she carefully places on Lukas' nose. She clicks her heels together and thrusts her arm outward, then turns to exit.

"Is that all she does?" Mark asks.

"She's also in charge of the Muzak."

"Oh. No wonder all I ever hear is "Deutschelände Iber Allis". Hell."

(cut to the exterior of the ranch house where a caddy is parked on the lawn. I enter the dream at this point, as does Terry Carr.)

"Cripes," Terry yelps, "how the hell are we going to fit fifty people in there?"

"It's a big car," a matronly woman who I've yet to meet assures him. But he is not convinced and sits down on the grass to grumble.

"Terry," I ask, joining him on the lawn, "is the car tour really going to Darien, Conn.?"

"Yes it is."

"What for?"

"They're holding the worldcon there this year. Personally, though, I thought they had a crummy bid, but there's just no accounting for some people's taste. Phillistines!" He shakes his fist at the crowd, who ignore him and procede to get into the car.

"Oh well," I sigh, "might as well get in while there's still room. Hey look! I think that's Abbott and Costello!"

Terry shrugs. "They make all the cons. Even the regionals." Suddenly his eyes light up. "Hey Bill, I've got an idea. Why don't the two of us hitch to Hawaii and hold our own Worldcon?"

"Okay. Sounds as good as that Darien, Conn. Con. I'll be right back, I have to take a leak."

"I'll wait right here."

I lope excitedly along the firm summer grass into the bathroom, where German marching tunes spew against the sterile tiles from a small Muzak speaker on the door.

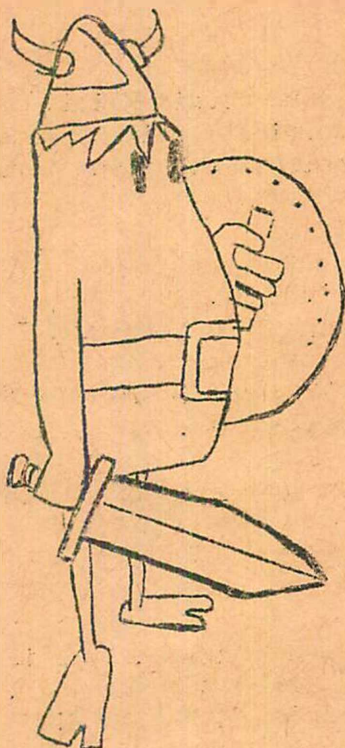
When I return outside, Terry is gone. And what's more, so is the lawn, and in its place - a desert.

(snake charming music rises subtly from the sand...)

Just as in "The Wizard of Oz", at this point the dream becomes technicolor (by Deluxe). The sky is a sleek vermillion and the air is crammed with noises. Assorted vultures, desert rats, coyotes and cactuses let loose with a cocophony of howls, barks, yelps, caterwauls and shrieks to a most unpleasant effect. I hold my ears but the din persists for several more moments and then, abruptly, it's over. Silence. I can even hear the crunch of sand beneath my feet as I take a few cautious steps. I can even -

drop! The last step was taken with too little trepidation and I am now falling through a hole in the sand. As I fall I look up and catch a quick glimpse of the sky. I hit bottom, and bottom is as sandy (thank heavens) as top was. I look about and realize I'm in some sort of subterranean chamber. I notice the walls are a sort of white plaster and most of this underground place is taken up by cabinets, trunks, coffers and portmanteau-type things. A sword is now in my hand so I quickly cleave the bindings (in the very best sword and sorcery fashion I thank you) on these rather prosaic treasure chests. And what is my prize? Ye ghod! Cabinets and more cabinets filled with (you guessed it!) Old Fanzines! Venerable HYPHENS! LIGHTHOUSEes and IN-NUENDOs! Look, a chest of drawers stuffed with EXCELSIOR and SKYHOOK, and prime issues (weren't they all!). Oh all these grey haired, time-honored fmz of olde! My head is just swimming, so drunk with joy am I that I am barely aware of the bearded Arab lounging in the corner reading VOID and smoking from an elegant hookah.

drivel:::



"But who are you?" I inquire.

"My name," he says, "is Ted White. I have been waiting for you."

I fall silent. The only sound is the soft murmur of the water pipe.

"But I have never met you!" I protest, a fact which holds up in reality as well as in the realm of dreams. "How could you possibly have been waiting for me?" I feel vague, disassociated and unfamiliar.

"Don't be so stupid!" the arabesque TW advises and a warmth of recognition flows over me for I have, at least, read Ted White. "When I say I have been waiting for 'you' I mean by 'you' whatever imbecile happened to drop into this underground crypt of mine. You see, I have something for you."

"Oh?"

"Yes. Wait here while I get it." He somehow disentangles himself from the low divan and trundles off into the recesses of the cave, displacing a few more fanzines as he does. Hmm, a copy of SPACEWAYS and the first issue of QUANDRY, which I immediately begin to thumb through, not getting beyond the colophon before

he's back, clearing his throat.

"Well," he smirks, "here it is. I'm glad to be rid of it."

I don't even bother asking the crotchety old Dedouin/Fan what's in the dust colored satchel he has so carelessly tossed before me. I simply open it and spill the contents onto the blonde, sandy floor, and there behold - lettering guides of all description; shading plates of every conceivable design; stencils that cause me to quiver at the touch of their soft wax faces and in all, anything that one would ever need to create -

"— a legendary fanzine," Ted (Praise be Allah) White chortles, completing my muse. "That is everything you could possibly need, and more. Just remember to take it easy on the layout, why I remember - but I digress - now, you must return to the Overworld and create the fanzine that will one day be sought after, discoursed upon, annotated and enjoyed by the multitude of fans-yet-to-be! Good-bye, and good hunting, Yates. You'll need it."

I thank him profusely, and then procede to hoist the entirety of my booty up to the surface where a mule team headed by the Old Ranger has miraculously appeared. But before leaving for good, I feel the unquenchable need to return once more below in order to ask one last question of my benefactor.

"And now," I catechize (for the religious sense of this affair is strong), "what will you do with your time?"

He smiles. "Now I get to smoke - and read."

I almost ask him something else, but he's already engrossed in that bound edition of A SENSE OF FAPA - the one with "Ah, Sweet Idiocy" in it - so I split. As I depart the desert, then, the last sounds I hear are the turning of pages, a derisive snort, and the purl of water through a glass bubble.

The alarm always goes off before I can enjoy my treasure, but as this dream indicates, I'm rather far gone.

□

I hope nobody was bugged by my using them in the above faanish dream sequence. 6

drivel:::

Actually, the whole thing came about after Jerry Kaufman told us about a sf-type dream he had. I was so intrigued by the idea, and dwelled upon it so much that pretty soon I started having faanish dreams. And since Terry Carr was at Arnie's house the night Jerry first told us about it, he wound up in the Rifleman dream pretty much as I wrote it. As for Ted White, well that part there was based on the fact that I so admired the copies of STELLAR I got recently.

Sweet dreams....

//

But at this point I have a Serious Complaint to make to our readership. In Modern Fandom, as in past fandoms, certain of us noble faneds have run up against the problem of the non-responsive mailing list. It seems unless you have pros and gore dripping from your pages it is virtually impossible to get the great mass of fans to write you a loc. Hell, folks, I got pros. Terry Carr and Ray Nelson are pros. And last time out I complained about LOCUS, so you've got Controversy. And I have even, I believe, managed to infuse a good bit of quality into this regularly appearing digest of informality, eh what? In fact, because we're monthly, it is all that much more important that the people to whom we send RATS! respond quickly.

I received two locs (well, I might have lost one or two others) and a few fmz in response to #8. So far (two and a half weeks after the fact) the sole response to #9 has been a fine letter from Jerry Kaufman. And that's it. Cripes, guys, you must be able to do better than that. At least write to me saying you don't want it any more. Or send me money. Or fanzines. But do something.

This is the last issue that I am going to send out to people who don't respond. Of course, there are quite a few people who will continue to get RATS! because I know that they are probably busy at the moment but will, in due time, respond. And a few of you will have to ask specifically to be removed. But it makes no sense for me to send issue after issue to most of you when I can see no hope of ever getting a response.

So this is a promise, after #3 (oops, that's #10) the mlg list will be overhauled. I advise you to check the number beside your name on the label, and if the number there reads "10" then you got to move.

//

MRAY NELSON concludes

the same well-worn path of the sword-and-spacesip story, the same tried-and-true plot, except that Delany innovates for the worse by making his ultimate bad guys a kind of paper tiger.

Otherwise it's all there, for those who love it... the juxtaposition of what seems like the First Century AD with the far, far future, the quest, the scientific magic, and above all, the swordplay. Some might say that Delany went too far when he added to the already heavily-spiced mixture the Creature from the Black Lagoon, but I don't mind. Actually stories like this, predictable though they may be, have a dream-like ritual quality to them, like ancient myths and folktales. One doesn't really expect novelty, only the proper observance of all the traditions.

What traditions? Why the traditions of Edgar Rice Burroughs, of course! There's another Burroughs who has tried his hand at science-fiction, but his voice has already faded, while the Burroughs of Tarzan and John Carter of Mars continues to be heard, loud and clear, and as long as Donald A. Wollheim remains editor at Ace Books, the tales of swords and spaceships will not lack for a publisher.

- Ray Nelson

PLOY EDITORIAL



TAKES FROM MY NOTEBOOK:

When I became an editor of the newly-resurrected RATS! one of the things I really looked forward to was getting fanzines in trade. I've been disappointed about this to some extent, though, since it seems that a good many of the zines RATS! gets in trade are sent to Bill only. This isn't true of every zine, but it seems that most (though not all) exceptions are those put out by people I've actually met. Bill and I aren't living together (the colophon gives our respective addresses) and I really think that this is reason enough for a separate copy to be sent to me. And anyway, zines sent only to Bill are invariably Bill's copy in that I'm not even included in the address! It isn't easy to tear Bill away from a newly-arrived zine of any quality, so usually some time passes before I'm able to read it, and in any case I really resent having to "borrow" a zine sent in trade for my own fanzine!

I think that the reason I get so few zines myself is pretty obvious - there's a common attitude that a female coeditor really doesn't do anything. Well, perhaps that's an extreme statement - probably it's felt that she collates, and maybe even sticks stamps. And in my case, since I'm Bill's fiancée and he was once sole editor (albeit a couple of years ago) it may also be felt that I'm just trying to share my man's interests, and while it's really sweet 'n' cute 'n' all, it just isn't worth a separate copy of a fanzine (after all, who's to say I can read, anyway?) Well, this is, I think, the time for an emphatic restatement of our policy (as stated in the colophon) in respect to trades: zines for trade should be sent to both editors, please. Those which are sent to one only will not be traded for. One of the things I do besides collating and sticking stamps is handle the mailing list.

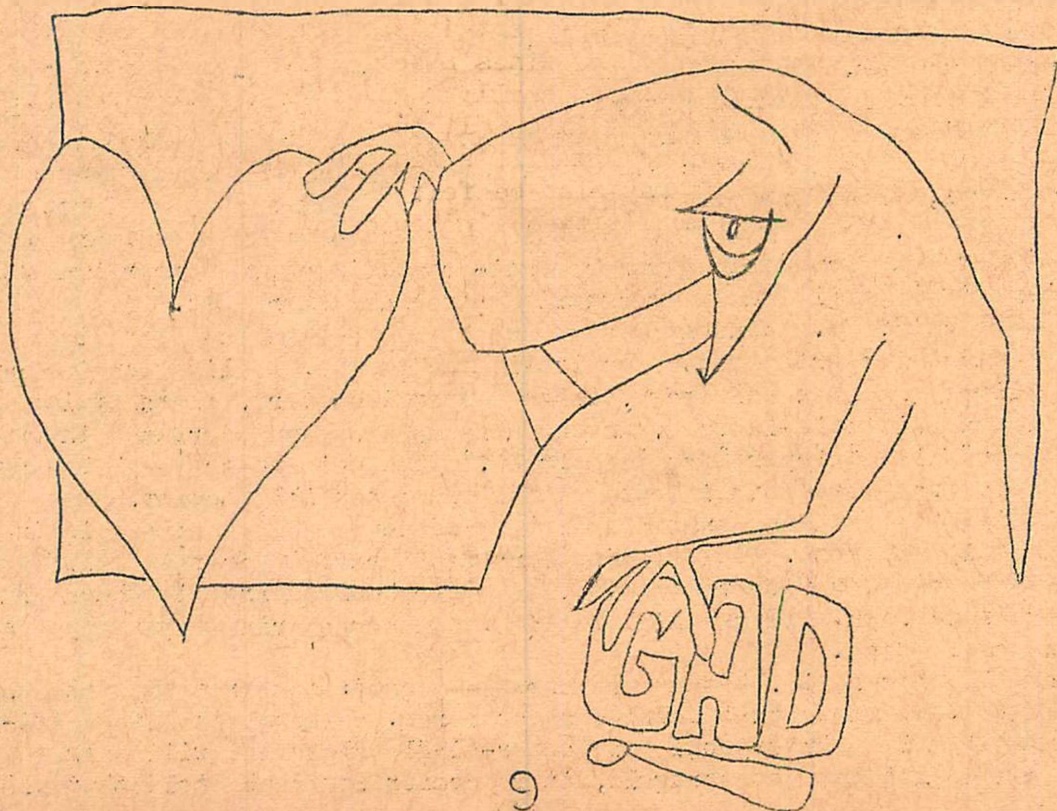
Last month I went away for a couple of days, and I flew to and from my destination. I had some very odd reactions, which were particularly strange since I've flown a half-a-dozen times before and it never bothered me at all. But this time I had some

CHARLENE KOMAR

strange feelings about the plane ride. I had a feeling that we were going to crash, for one thing, and I even almost took out life insurance, figuring that \$7,500. for each quarter I happened to have on me wasn't too bad. The only thing that stopped me was acute embarrassment at the thought. Then, while waiting on the runway for takeoff (we were delayed there for an hour and a half - almost as long as the scheduled flying time) I had another strange feeling that repeated itself later while I was watching planes take off during a delay in coming home. I suddenly seemed to see everything very clearly, like tripping, and I realized that everyone around me was absolutely insane and what was I, a normal person, doing in this deathtrap of a nuthouse?!? These things can't fly, don't be absurd! It's totally ridiculous! I had a vision of a large group of men running toward the edge of a cliff only to meet their inevitable fates, falling to the ground far below them, ignored by their compatriots who would stoutly deny their existence if asked. The odds on these contraptions flying seemed about the same as on those fellows rising into the air. I still don't know the cause, but the feeling was panicky - I felt that all but myself were quietly but severely disturbed, and here I was, trapped among them and about to be killed in this ridiculous machine!

□ □ □

Since becoming an editor of RATS! I find that more and more of my time is being taken up by fanac - strangely enough, almost the exact same amount of time that I've stopped spending on my studies (I'm also going to college summers in order to graduate a year early). And in just a couple of weeks now will come my baptism, as it were, when I'll become completely immersed in fandom for a period of some three-and-a-half days - the Worldcon, of course. This is not only my first Worldcon, but (blush!) my first con ever. I'm really looking forward to meeting all those faceless (but hardly personality-less) fans whom I know only through the printed page. So, I'll leave you now to pack my bag and buy my ticket, and I hope to see you all there!



Ray Nelson's Comic Circle (Part III)

KPFA - script 2-A

If I seem like a neo-Victorian, so much the better. H.G. Wells was a Victorian; Arthur Conan Doyle was a Victorian; Jules Verne was a Victorian. It is an Honor to be associated with such writers, men who wrote before the hero had been banished from intellectual society. Whatever else may be said of the reign of good Queen Victoria, her era was a golden age of literary achievement -- a golden age for all the arts -- and it often seems as if it is we, not the Victorians, who live cramped, repressed and joyless lives.

It is not hard to see when the golden age ended. It ended in 1914, with the shock of the First World War. The First World War hit the creative-intellectual class very hard. They have not, in fact, recovered to this day. Their reaction was primarily emotional, and remains emotional now, but, insofar as it can be verbalized, here is how I think their reasoning runs: If all the knowledge and culture of Europe could not prevent Great War, then European civilization must be worthless and European man completely helpless. It is from this despair that anti-art was born, and as long as there are suckers and foundation grants, anti-art will continue to reign supreme among the beautiful people in the cocktail party and culture set.

Is the hero dead? No. Abandoned by the aesthetes, he continues to live a life of challenge and adventure right under their elevated noses. He lives on in popular fiction. He lives on in the sf story, in the detective story, in the tales of sword & sorcery, in the historical novel, and now and then he even surfaces in an occasional "best-seller" like "Airport" or "The Prize." When Epic poetry sank beneath the waves, the hero broke free of his bonds at the last possible moment, just as he always does, sprang into the sea and swam to safety, and now he sets sail again in a new vessel...the pulp magazine. When the dinosaur of opera fell over the cliff and plunged to his doom, never to rise again, the hero bounded from its back and clutched a protruding branch, just in the nick of time, and now he rides forth upon a new beast... the comic book.

The hero will never die, because he knows a secret; a secret that the anti-artist will never guess. He knows that mankind needs heroes. He knows that the anti-artist's vision of humanity is a luxury only the upper-middle class few will ever be able to afford. If you do not have to struggle, it is comforting to be told that all

Ray Nelson:::

struggle is futile. If you never have to make any important decisions, it is comforting to be told that all decisions are either arbitrary or meaningless. But if you do not live in a protected environment, you know that you must struggle every day just to make ends meet, and you know that the choices you make are a life and death matter, not only for you, but for all those whose lives are intermingled with yours. You have to believe in heroes because you know that, in your own small way, you must be a hero yourself.

Vincent Starrett, writing about Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson, has said, "They still live for all that love them well: in a romantic chamber of the heart, in a nostalgic country of the mind, where it is always 1895." This is the secret of the hero's immortality. In the arts there has been no progress in the twentieth century, only decay, but the hero, by means of his supernatural powers, has made time stand still. For the hero the Victorian Era never ended. For the hero, whether he lives in the worlds of science-fiction, the detective story or the historical novel, Victoria still sits upon the throne of the mind, frowning down on the barbarians of anti-art and announcing, "We are not amused." The hero lives in the bright noonday light of the nineteenth century, in the wild old west, in the scientific romances of later-day followers of H. G. Wells, in the rationalist sermonettes of Hercule Poirot. The anti-hero lives in a self-made wasteland, in the shadow-world of self-pity, helplessness, drugs, passivity and suicide, able to protest but not to build, able to whine but not to command, his only creativity consisting of mockery and satire, his politics consisting of random acts of vandalism, and this anti-hero calls himself the voice of the twentieth century. The anti-hero has recreated the world in his own image, but we look at this shabby, junk-sculpture world and say, with our Queen, "We are not amused."

There is a group here in the Bay Area that calls itself The Society for Creative Anachronism. It is devoted to bringing into our own age some of the spirit of the Middle Ages, but I believe the idea of Creative Anachronism has a wider application. The Dark Ages are not the only ones worthy of being brought back into our consciousness. What about the Ages of Light? What about the Victorian Era, when Western Civilization rose to a peak that it may never again surpass?

Science-fiction, a child of the nineteenth century, has the idea of creative anachronism at its very core. The science-fiction writer is no prisoner of his age. He can, in imagination, project himself into any time and place, past or future, and can even visit times and places that never were and never will be. This is true creative anachronism, because, as he returns from these distant times and places, he brings with him visions, not of things as they are, but of things as they might be. He brings us the visions that warn us of future dangers. He brings us the dreams that give us something to live for, to work for, to struggle towards. Above all he brings us the sad sweet knowledge that, as the Zen philosopher once said, "This, too, will pass."

He lifts us up to stand on a mountaintop beside the well-known gentleman and scholar of the Victorian Era, all the past spread out toward one horizon, and all the future spread out toward the other. This is what the science-fiction writer can do, and when I judge individual books and stories on this program, it will always be with some such vision in the back of my mind, with the question, "Does this writer bring us a vision, or doesn't he?"

And when I judge a book or story on this program, it will always be with a second question: "Does this story have a hero, and if so, is he a really elegant hero?"

Most literary critics insist that only the form is subject to criticism, never the content. I will unabashedly criticize the content first, and only discuss the form if time allows. Many good science-fiction stories are little parables intended to prove philosophical points. I will argue these philosophical points, and comment on the technique of the writing only in passing, if at all.

Has criticism of technique improved the level of writing in this decadent century? I

Ray Nelson:::

think not. It has only produced a timid, understated style that dares not use the powerful tools of Victorian prose; the rolling periodic sentences, the rich simile, metaphor, personification, apostrophe and antithesis the Victorian writer took for granted. It has not made the writer grow; only made him play it safe.

But most of all, when I judge a book or story, I will ask myself, "Does this story really move me?" That is the ultimate test of science-fiction, as it is of all fiction. This is the writer's first commandment:

Thou shalt not bore.

Cosmic Circle #3:

It's a decadent age, I'm afraid, but we get along, with a little help from our science-fiction. Speaking of science-fiction, you know what I've been reading? I've been reading sword and spaceship novels. A sword and spaceship novel is one that contains, somewhere along the line, a scene where the hero leaps from his spaceship and draws his trusty sword. They're sort of like sword and sorcery novels, except that some sort of science is used to replace the sorcery. The big challenge to the author is to figure out how to rationalize having the swords and the spaceships together in one story.

Here are the titles to the four books I've just finished reading. "Doomsday on Ajiat" by Neil R. Jones, "Envoy to New Worlds" by Keith Laumer, "City of the Chasch" by Jack Vance, and "The Jewels of Apor" by Samuel R. Delany. They're all Ace paperbacks, mainly because ACE publishing company specializes in this kind of book.

Here, from "Envoy to New Worlds", is a typical sword and spaceship scene. The hero, an interstellar diplomat named Retief, is at a banquet with his superior in the diplomatic service and a vast number of alien beings called Yills. The entertainment consists of a sword-dance by a Yill warrior. I quote: Suddenly the dancer was towering before Retief, sabre above his head. The music cut, and in the startling instantaneous silence, the heavy sabre whipped over and down with an explosive concussion that set dishes dancing on the table-top.

The Yill's eyes held on Retief's. In the silence Magnan tittered drunkenly. Retief pushed back his stool.

"Steady, my boy," Ambassador Spradly called. Retief stood, the Yill topping his six-foot-three by an inch. In a motion too quick to follow, Retief reached for the sabre, twitched it from the Yill's grasp, swung it in a whistling arc. The Yill ducked, sprang back and snatched up a sabre dropped by another dancer.

"Someone stop the madman!" Spradley howled.

Retief leaped across the table, sending fragile dishes spinning.

The other danced back, and only then did the orchestra spring to life with a screech and a mad tattoo of high-pitched drums.

Making no attempt to follow the weaving pattern of the Yill bolero, Retief pressed the Yill, fending off vicious cuts with the blunt weapon, chopping back relentlessly. Left hand on hip, Retief matched blow for blow, driving the other back.

Abruptly the Yill abandoned the double role. Dancing forgotten, he settled down in earnest, cutting, thrusting, parrying. Now the two stood toe to toe, sabres clashing in a lightning exchange. The Yill gave a step, two, then rallied, drove Retief back, back --

Retief feinted, laid a hearty whack across the grey skull. The Yill stumbled, his sabre clattered to the floor. Retief stepped aside as the Yill wavered past him and crashed to the floor.

The orchestra fell silent in a descending wail of reeds. Retief drew a deep breath and wiped his forehead.

"Come back here, you young fool!" Spradley called hoarsely.

Retief hefted the sabre, turned, eyed the brocade-draped table. He started across the floor. The Yill sat as if paralyzed.

"Retief, no!" Spradley yelled.

Retief walked directly to the Admirable F'Kau-Kau-Kau, stopped, raised the sabre.

RAY NELSON:::

"Not the Chief of State," someone in the Terrestrial Mission groaned.

Retief whipped the sabre down. The dull blade split the heavy brocade and cleaved the hardwood table. There was utter silence.

The Admirable F'Kau-Kau-Kau rose, seven feet of obese grey Yill. His broad face expressionless to the Terran eye, he raised a fist like a jewel-studded ham.

Retief stood rigid for a long moment. Then, gracefully, he inclined his head and placed his finger tips on his temples. Behind him there was a clatter as Ambassador Spradley collapsed. Then the Admirable F'Kau-Kau-Kau cried out, reached across the table to embrace the Terrestrial, and the orchestra went mad. Grey hands helped Retief across the table, stools were pushed aside to make room at F'Kau-Kau-Kau's side. Retief sat, took a tall flagon of coal-black brandy pressed on him by his neighbor, clashed glasses with The Admirable, and drank.....

How about that! Retief's display of swordsmanship, of course, saves the day, since otherwise the Yills would have taken the earth-people for pushovers, and Ambassador Spradley takes all the credit for the diplomatic coup.

"Envoy to New Worlds" is a collection of short stories, but all the stories follow the same general pattern, though not all contain an actual swordfight. Sometimes, for instance, Retief gouges eyes instead, but the principle is the same, the principle of Creative Anachronism, that is... the juxtaposition of one time on another, in this case the far past on the far future. The effect is always at least a little bit interesting, and I wonder what the field of science-fiction would do without it. There is a difference in degree, but not in kind, in Asimov's transplantation of the Roman Empire into the future of his Foundation series, and the Sword and Spaceship boys' transplantations. Creative Anachronism is one of those writing techniques that is so simple and effective it can't be worn out, and in "Envoy to New Worlds" Keith Laumer uses it with a dash and diplomatic grace that would do credit to his own suave hero, the ever-resourceful James Retief.

In "Doomsday on Ajiat" by Neil R. Jones we have another collection of science-fiction short stories all built around a single protagonist, this time a certain Professor Jameson. Here we have old-time science-fiction in the most literal sense of the term, since this book and the others in the same series contain nothing but stories written an awfully long time ago in the Golden Age of the Pulp for the early AMAZING STORIES and the long defunct SUPER SCIENCE, though some of the stories, through various tricks of fate, are only now seeing print for the first time.

Professor Jameson is the result of a brain-transplant. That is, his brain has been transplanted into the head of a robot, thus giving him virtual immortality as he roams the universe with a band of other robots called the Machine-Men of Zor. Each story follows roughly the same pattern. First the hero's spaceship is trapped on some planet, then the hero meets the good natives, then the bad natives, is rescued, and leaves again on his spaceship. The planets represent a sort of checklist of pet science-fiction ideas, such as lost civilizations, superspeed, supersize, creative anachronisms and so forth. I'm happy to say that in this book, at least, the super-robots of the distant future do not fight with swords. No, they throw rocks.

These stories are so bad they're good. One could read them for their historical value, but I enjoyed them for their campy atmosphere of pure and unabashed corn.

The last two books I'm going to talk about today are of more modern vintage, yet baked to the same old family recipe as the oldest Professor Jameson story. The difference is in the surface technique. Samuel R. Delany, author of "The Jewels of Aptor", and Jack Vance, author of "City of the Charsh", both write in the style of modern literature, and Delany in particular is a skillful wordslinger, but under all the well-turned phrases we find

cont. on page 7

Terry Carr's Entropy Reprints[®]

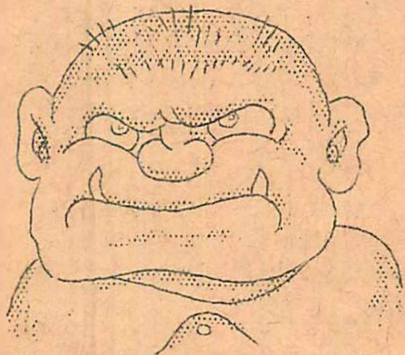
PATENT PENDING

I don't think there's ever been an "instant BNF" to compare with Bob Leman. To be sure, Leman published a Serious Science Fiction Article or two in the pages of Ron Smith's excellent serconzine INSIDE a couple of years before he began his fan career proper, but for all intents and purposes no one had ever heard of Bob Leman when in 1957 he published the first issue of THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF OCULENTERATOLOGY ("an etymologically imperfect coinage of mine, intended to mean 'the study of bug-eyed monsters'"). It hit fandom like a bolt from the blue -- completely editor-written under a variety of obvious pseudonyms like Oval Rheen and Craloteen Arliss, it was a first-rate fanzine from cover to cover. With the second issue Leman changed the title to THE VINEGAR WORM, and the fanzine went from strength to strength. Inevitably, some fans found it hard to believe Leman could be other than a hoax, but suspicions were dispelled when Leman attended the worldcon in 1958.

In the first FANAC Poll, conducted at the end of 1958, THE VINEGAR WORM after only three issues placed 12th -- ahead of SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES, Ron Bennett's PLOY and Harry Warner's HORIZONS, among others. Leman himself was a runaway winner in the Best New Fan category, and in the Fan Writer category he placed 8th, ahead of Ron Ellik and Bob Tucker. Not bad for what was effectively his first year in fandom.

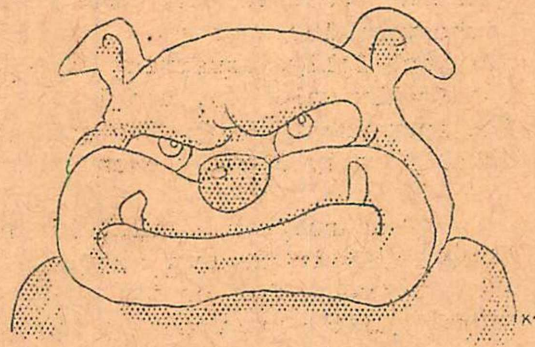
My Life with Dogs is actually two different pieces by Leman, both from THE VINEGAR WORM and both originally untitled. The first piece was in the 3rd issue in 1958, the second piece in the 5th issue, in 1960. When Leman entered FAPA in 1960 (that 5th issue was his first contribution to FAPA) he faded from the general-fandom scene, his free time being more and more taken up with family and job. He's retained his FAPA membership to the present, publishing THE VINEGAR WORM usually once a year, and it's always a treat. In the entire course of fanhistory, I believe only Walt Willis could surpass Leman for sheer writing ability, so it's good to have him still with us even once a year.

At the conclusion of Leman's article(s), for lagniappe I add a reprint from THE KNAVVE #3, April 1944. T. Bruce Yerke wrote it; his is a name which might not be familiar to you, but it's worth remembering, because Yerke was one of the first truly good writers in fandom, under both his own name and his pseudonym Carlton J. Fassbeinder. In terms of the grand mosaic formed by the overlapping patterns of fanhistory Yerke is an important name too, for he was a causative precursor of the slightly later Laney-Burbee Insurgents. In fact, the parallels between Yerke and Laney are striking: both were Los Angeles fans, LASFS members who got sick of the way that fanclub was run and who formed rival groups, in Yerke's case the Knaves. (The title came from a typo Yerke had once made in a lettering guide heading.) Like Laney after him, Yerke sat down to write his fan memoirs when he was ready to quit -- but unlike Laney's massive AH! SWEET IDIOCY, Yerke's MEMOIRS OF A SUPERFLUOUS FAN (24 pp., May, 1944) were never finished. T. Bruce Yerke may have thought he was superfluous to fandom, but I miss him.



MY LIFE WITH DOGS

BY BOB LEMAN



It happens that I am a member of a very select group. While this group is not in any sense formally organized, its members have a common bond in their survival of an experience that sent their souls through the fire. From this experience they have emerged purified, purged, and subtly different from other people. (This is called "The Far Look.") All this serves to bind them more closely together than could any formal organization.

The experience to which I allude is that of sleeping with a bulldog. That is not a common undertaking, and thus there are not many people in The Brotherhood -- indeed, it may be that Peggy and I are the only members. To tell the truth, I can't imagine anyone else being clothheaded enough to allow a bulldog to come into his bed -- because, God wot, once the dog is in, you'll never get it out.

Two years ago, when we lived in Illinois, Dolly (full name, Dolly Varden, a three-year-old bitch) very happily slept in the basement. She took it for granted that that was where dogs slept. Then I was transferred out here, and then began our trial by fire.

Dolly came out by Railway Express. She was three days on the way, and those three days must have been three days of horror for her. The bulldog is afflicted with a terrible need for affection; there is no creature afoot with such a slobbering well of love inside it. Your bulldog isn't very bright, and he's a pretty timid critter (despite his ferocious aspect), but he's the only really safe dog with strange children, and he loves all humans with an abject adoration. And in Dolly's great love lay our downfall.

When I fetched her home to our new house, she was in a dreadful state; her normally placid temperament had been replaced by a febrile nervousness; she was as jumpy as a cat. Unless the family was all together, she would go loping uneasily from room to room to make sure nobody had disappeared. Three days without her people had shaken her badly.

So Peggy suggested that we put Dolly's bed in our room -- just until she returned to normal, of course. And I -- God help me -- I agreed. The dog bed was duly put in a corner of the bedroom, and Dolly dosed down there each night. But somehow we found her in our bed every morning, and, after a while, she acquired the notion that our bed was also hers. I made fitful efforts to eject her -- every time she came sneaking up onto the bed I'd eject her -- but in the end I'd always fall asleep, and next morning, there she'd be.

I gave up, eventually; and from that time to this, when bedtime has come, three of us have gone to bed. And I haven't had a good night's sleep since.

The initial problem is leg position. Forty pounds of sleeping bulldog comprise a dead weight not easily dislodged from its place. Now people move in their sleep, shifting about to allow the various muscles to rest and relax -- or at any rate, people without bulldogs do so. Not so with me: when I try to move my legs, they encounter our good Dolly, squatting like a toad atop the covers. The frustration thus engendered eventually wakes me, and I give her a mighty kick. But since the covers lie between the foot and the dog, the main result of my spleen-venting is that I uncover myself. Usually Dolly doesn't even wake up.

Of course, as a rule, I'm not very well covered, anyhow; a blanket is so proportioned that it is just adequate to cover two people. When a great lump of a dog is lying between them on top of the blanket, it becomes entirely inadequate. I have by now become quite accustomed to sleeping with the right side of my body in a deep-freeze.

The bulldog's ancestors, as you may know, were, by profession, fighters of bulls; their technique was to seize the bull by the nose, and to hang on until the bull fell exhausted. For the dog to keep his grip for that long a time, it was necessary that he breathe, and to make that possible, the dogs were bred for shortness of nose. This selective breeding resulted in the "sourmug" bulldog we know today; it also resulted in a twisting and displacement of the various pipes, tubes and conduits that comprise the dog's breathing apparatus. And the effect of this is that he wheezes and snores:

There is no noise on earth better calculated to prevent slumber than the snoring of a bulldog. It is an ululation of infinite variety and magnificent irregularity, full of surprises and startling non-sequiturs. It will drone along for a time with the regularity of a phlegmy metronome -- cunningly drawing the unwary into its web -- and then, just as the wretched insomniac is about to cross the line into sleep, it abruptly degenerates into a coarse symphony of snorts, hawkings, moans, gasps and gurglings, raising our sleepy subject some three inches off his bed and driving Morpheus to a distance of several leagues. This can go on all night.

There is a further pitfall in sleeping with a bulldog, but it is one which delicacy prompts me not to mention in mixed company. Still, since integrity demands that I place all the facts before you, I will mention, but not elaborate upon, this final refinement of the torture. Not to put too fine a point upon it, the bulldog is by nature flatulent; and while an artful adjustment of feeding times can schedule most of the offensive outbreaks for the daylight hours, there are times when the night is made hideous.

It is said that in every love affair there is one party who is the lover, and another who is the beloved; and that the loved one has the more difficult role. Something of the sort appears to apply here. It is, I suppose, flattering to have a dog which will go to any length to avoid separation from its master; but how much pleasanter life would be if I could disregard Dolly's suffocating affection and send her to the basement where she belongs.

After six glorious months of dogless bliss we have acquired a new pup. When our old bulldog died last fall, we found ourselves, for the first time in years, without a dog, and I thought it was wonderful. I missed the old girl, of course, but it was pleasant to be able to go away for a weekend without having to take the dog to a boarding kennel, and it was a relief to be able to cross the lawn without the necessity for watching very carefully where you put your feet, and it was great to sleep without a dog in the bed.

I enjoyed it so much that I firmly laid down a ukase to my family: No More Dogs. That was my decree, as immutable as the Law of the Medes and the Persians.

The decree stood for almost five months. But its demise was preordained from the day, six weeks or two months earlier, when my eight-year-old burst in with the electrifying news that Lady Had A Little Of Puppies!

Nine tailors of warning bells sounded in my mind. I didn't stop to enquire who Lady was, or whom she belonged to, or even what kind of dog she was. With the uneasy firmness of a man who is licked before he starts, but who must put up a fight to preserve his honor, I said loudly, "No puppies!"

She gave me the veiled look of a female who is faced with male recalcitrance, but is confident that in the end she will prevail, and she went away.

Next time it was both of them. I was relaxing in my chair after a hard day's toil, engaged in restoring my flagging energies with a vessel of bourbon, when the two entered the room and seated themselves in a decorous manner on the sofa. This was unusual enough to make me look up from my paper: most commonly they dive upon stuffed furniture in a manner calculated to drive the springs through the toughest upholstery fabric in a matter of weeks. It was apparent that I was being cozened.

The elder had been elected spokesman: "Daddy, guess what? Their eyes are open!"

I am a little proud of how nimbly my mind worked on that occasion; if I had said, "Whose eyes?" I would instantly have placed myself at a disadvantage. But in the split second before I said it I comprehended what she was talking about, and I seized the offensive. Fixing them with a basilisk glare, I said, in a manner which I flatter myself would have done credit to Captain Queeg, "No puppies!"

They crept away, giving one of their very best performances as homeless waifs going sadly off to the poorhouse through a snowstorm. A few minutes later I heard, from another room: "Mommy, guess what? Their eyes are open!" The campaign had opened a second front.

The sniping tactics continued for quite some time, but I valiantly held my position. Oh, there was an occasional strategic withdrawal, but no real retreat. Then the heavy artillery was brought to bear.

The timing was perfect. I was taking my ease after an excellent dinner, absorbing a medicinal drop of cognac as a digestif, and I was feeling, in a word, mellow. My Frau's practiced eye discerned this, and she remarked, in a conversational way, "I went over to see the puppies today."

Through long experience I have become as cunning as a weasel when confronted with these gambits. "Puppies?" I said. "What puppies?"

"The Todes' Lady has a litter. Eight. They're -- "

"Tode's bitch has a litter? Say, that's too bad."

I scored with that one. "Why?" she said. "Why 'too bad'?"

"I've known that old dog for a long time, and I figure Fenwick Tode's going to have a

hard time getting rid of any of her pups. That's as treacherous a dog as there is in town. Those pups'll never make safe pets. Who's the sire?"

Notice the way I stayed right in there, keeping her off balance. Lady is a promiscuous old strumpet, and determining the paternity of her get is a matter which will have to await further developments in medical science.

"Well," said Wife, "I don't think they actually know who the father was."

"There you are," I said. "Probably some insanely vicious sheep-killer who wandered into town one night and ravished poor Lady whilst still dripping with the gore of his innocent victims. No Sir, I don't envy Tode the job of finding homes for those pups."

She looked thoughtful, and I had difficulty in restraining an urge to grin like a catfish. By George, I might pull it off after all!

She spoke: "You know, they're the cutest things."

My sand-castle collapsed about my ears. There was no doubt about it, the battle was lost. I said, with the desperation of a cornered rat, "A Bengal tiger cub is cute, too. The trouble with pups and cubs is that they grow up."

She hadn't heard a word. "Just like little balls of fluff," she said dreamily. Oh, I was a goner."

"We're not getting a puppy, and that's final," I said. She smiled and said, "I think I'd like a black-and-white one."

And so a black-and-white ball of fluff duly came to live with us. But by the time he was old enough to be weaned and taken from his mother he was considerably more than a ball of fluff; he was, in fact, showing signs of becoming a creature of exceptional size. Just what kind of creature, it was impossible to tell at that point, but there was every indication that he wouldn't be small. I was prepared to predict with moderate confidence that he'd grow up to be some sort of dog, but his ultimate size was a total mystery.

It still is. He's still growing. He might stop growing tomorrow, in which case he'll be the size of a small collie, or he may continue to grow for months more, a possibility which I refuse to think about. And he is, indubitably, a dog.

No particular brand, of course. Just dog. I have occasionally occupied myself by attempting to prepare a genealogical table which would account for a dog that looks like this one, but so far I have been unsuccessful. If it were possible to work in a paternal great-grandfather who was a panda, and an anteater on the distaff side four or five generations back, the thing might be done, but since nature decrees that all of his forebears had to be dogs, the precise composition of his ancestry must remain forever unknown. Only this much is certain: they were a highly variegated lot.

Now that in itself is quite all right. A variety of strains can blend to produce a handsome pup. But somehow in this case they didn't quite blend, and Tater appears to have been assembled by a near-sighted worker from odd bits out of some canine salvage yard. Examined individually his various features are presentable, if not of classic beauty; but in combination they present a somewhat unsettling picture.

Take his neck, for example. It is of quite extraordinary length, and is entirely out of proportion to the rest of his body. Normally it is projected horizontally before him, after the fashion of a tired old horse; but occasionally, when something engages his attention, he stands erect and gives his impersonation of the alert sagacious dog, man's best friend, and at such times his great length of neck gives him something of the appearance of a stunted giraffe. Atop this neck is perched a head which has a bulging cranium, à la Sirius, and a long thin nose. From the sides of the head sprout limp ears of generous proportions. These ears are a veritable tropical rainforest of tangled and luxuriant hair, and they have the apparent effect of doubling the size of the head. Viewed from the rear, Tater resembled a critter out of Dr. Seuss -- the Tufty-Topped-Tifft, or some such.

So exotic a creature quite naturally arouses a certain amount of curiosity and comment. I have lately been in the habit of exercising him on choke-chain and leash, attempting to teach him the rudiments of dog-manners, and this sometimes takes us out of our own neighborhood, where the neighbors have become habituated to the sight of Dr. Giraffe. There in the outlands I am not infrequently approached by strangers wearing a somewhat stunned expression who ask, "What kind of a dog is that, anyhow?" For a long time I used to reply to this question in what I hoped was a facetious manner. I would say, "Well, his mother's a mongrel, but we don't know who his father is, so I guess you'd have to call him a mixture ha ha." Or something of the sort. But after a while I got tired of my stale little jokes about Heinz 57 varieties and Curb Setters etcetera, and one day when one of the dumfounded on-lookers put the usual question I said, "He's a Vesuvian Goat-Dog."

My interrogator nodded sagely. Evidently he was some sort of expert on dogs. "Looks like a good one," he said, after staring at Tater in a critical way for a time. "A little long in the legs, maybe. Get 'im in Denver?"

"Phoenix," I said.

"Yeah, sure," he said. "There's a kennel down there that breeds Vesuvians, isn't there?"

"I've got the address. You want a pup?"

"Well, no," he said, "I've already got a boxer. But that's a fine Vesuvian you have there."

"Thanks," I said. I meant it sincerely. The name "Vesuvian Goat-Dog" had somehow sprung out of my subconscious as an irritated reply to a tedious question, but this fellow's ready acceptance of the name suggested that I'd found a useful answer to all such inquiries. And ever since then I've told all inquirers that Tater is a Vesuvian Goat-Dog.

As time has passed, I have bit by bit developed a fairly elaborate mythos of the Vesuvian Goat-Dog. They were first bred in Italy by goatherds who pastured their flocks on the slopes of Mt. Vesuvius, and the dogs were deliberately bred for the astonishing hairiness they now possess. Their hair has a peculiarly fire-resistant quality. This is of course a necessity since they work on the ash- and lava-sprinkled slopes of volcanic Mt. Vesuvius. The curious timbre of their bark (Tater has a voice like no creature known in historical time) is readily comprehensible to goats, and a well-trained Vesuvian can lure a large herd of hysterical goats into a dark cave by the sound of his voice alone. They are still rare in this country, but there is a growing demand for

them by municipal fire departments, who prize their ability to pass unharmed through furious conflagrations. A Vesuvian belonging to the Fire Department of Passaic, N.J., for example, has thus far rescued from incineration \$24,500 worth of negotiable securities, four infant children, a valuable painting purported to be by Rembrandt, and an elderly lady who was so grateful that she bequeathed a large sum of money to The American Vesuvian Goat-Dog Breeders Association.

Most of the people to whom I've told these preposterous yarns seem to take me quite seriously. You never know, though. It may be that they've got me tagged as That Nut Who Tells Lies About His Mongrel. That's why I'm recounting all this for FAPA. I know that all of you will accept everything I say as simple fact (I see it as a reciprocal matter -- you believe me and I'll believe you) and it gives me a feeling of security to know that there's somebody who has faith in my narrations. And if there are any of you who are of such coarse grain as to doubt me, to you I make this simple rejoinder: My old man can lick your old man.

We have done considerable work on our idea for the Postwar Convention. Realizing that many fans will be slightly on the bankrupt side apres la guerre, our happy little group offers for the field's consideration the "Perpetual Travelling Convention." In essence, you fans will sit at home and the convention will come to your home town; to your house, for that matter. In exchange for this entertainment, the ten or fifteen members of the Perpetual Convention will naturally subsist on the countryside, i.e., your side!

The ideal length for a convention should be about, say, a week. Naturally the convention members will be a bit tired upon arrival. It will be necessary for the group to lounge about for at least two days, availing themselves of your lawn, shower, and hammock. The convention proper will begin on a Wednesday, and should last two days unless the liquor supply runs out early. Scientifiction will often be discussed, but in the main the members of the troupe will be their usually funny selves while the victims can sit along the wall and watch Bronson, Laney, Brown, Fern, Yerke, et autres in action. After convalescing over the weekend the Perpetual Convention will depart for some other city, bid farewell by the thoroughly amused and thrilled onlookers, who may then start building their houses again.

We suspect that the Convention will have a generally slow but consistent turnover in personnel, so that other fans may become members of the select body. Old Conventioneers will drop out due to kidney trouble, cirrhosis of the liver, intestinal strangulation and related elements, and provisions should be made for stand-ins, as one or more members of the cast will usually be laid up from botulism, trichinosis, ptomaine poisoning, or just too much 3.2.

Fandom should welcome the Perpetual Travelling Convention as a solution to the gripes that the convention is always on the wrong side of the continent. It will save the expensive obligation of protracted trips once a year, and of course, it will lessen the national employment problem by fifteen or so.

So don't be alarmed if, some day in 1949, you receive a card way up there in Hagerstown, Maryland, gaily announcing: "Dear Harry: The Convention will arrive next Monday. Hope you have a swell time!"

-- T. Bruce Yerke, in THE KNANVE #3,
April 1944

LOSmith

•words of wisdom•

TED PAULS 821 East 33 St., Balt., Md. 21218

Voices out of the past, carried on the nostalgic wind...or something like that. I trust that you and Charlene are well and happy and all of that.

For your information and for the benefit of such future analysts as may devote themselves to examining these esoteric papers, let me inform you that I remembered Bill Kunkel and Genook for two and a half months after the last whisper of your existence susurated in my mailbox, thus proving that people and fanzines are 150% more memorable than dead turtles. Charlene Komar, the Flower of Kew Gardens, I remembered for substantially longer. [Charmer!]

By the time you read this, you'll probably have returned from your trip to Montreal. I suspect you both will have enjoyed the experience. Montreal is a groovy city, with quiet, pleasant vibes and (not to be considered on the same plane, but still...) a subway operation that humiliates every American city with an underground transit system. Also a fantastic number of nubile chicks wandering around without guys, though of course you'd be too occupied with the aforementioned Flower to take other than an academic interest in this attraction. [Damn, it sure sounds like a swell place, Ted. Unfortunately, we didn't make it as planned. Charlene's father - a TWA employee - applied for her almost free ticket and we intended to split the cost of my fare. But the guy in charge of tickets there screwed everything up and Charl's never came through. And they were very sorry, and if she cared to wait a few weeks why they could, etc. So, for the time being, we cashed in our chips in favor of a few lesser jaunts. Perhaps that weird Victorian hotel out in Cape May. And of course Noreascon. And I'm sure Lovely Montreal will still be there in the months to come and we plan to take it in then.]

To answer your question, Kipple expired in May, 1970, after ten years of exemplary service, and was buried with full anti-military honors, wrapped in an old shirt of Dr. Spock's, in a vacant lot along side Black Panther headquarters in Silo, Nebraska.

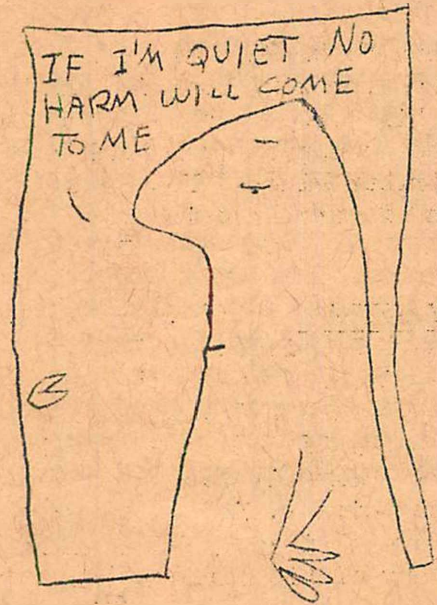
Peace, love, etc., and hope to see you both at Worldcon. [Right on.]

RAY NELSON 333 Ramona, El Cerrito, California 94530

I have become bored with the Twentieth Century and have decided to revive the Nineteenth, and as a proper Neovictorian I must say that I am "not amused" by your fanzine, and, if I may be so bold, I very much doubt if Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, (God res her noble soul!) would have found it particularly amusing either.

I am not amused by your boast that you stole your copy of "The Aesthetics of Rock." A gentleman, sir, does not steal his books. Even books on such questionable subjects as drugs and rock music are the result of honest toil on the part of authors, workers, and editors, and your act of theft deprives them of the fruits of their toil. As an author myself, I must protest!

Theft is perhaps understandable if not condonable in the case of genuine need. A starving man, for instance, who steals a loaf of bread, is more to be pitied than blamed. But I cannot believe that anyone really needs a book on Rock Music. There are



locsmith:::

so many books on Rock Music, and there will be so many more. I'm sure that someone who was throwing out his surplus rock books would have allowed you to salvage a few from his garbage can. If you must steal, why don't you steal something of value? Why not a copy of the collected works of Henry Arthur Jones or a first edition of Sir Arthur Pinero? You could thus have shown yourself to be a man of taste, if not a man of moral rectitude.

[I stand corrected.]

JERRY KAUFMAN 417 W. 118th St., Apt. 63, NYC 10027

As I mentioned to Charl, I wrote a review of RATS! for Locus, but don't expect to see it, if you didn't send a copy to Charlie. [I sent him a copy. And thank you for the good review. Now let's just see if it gets printed.]

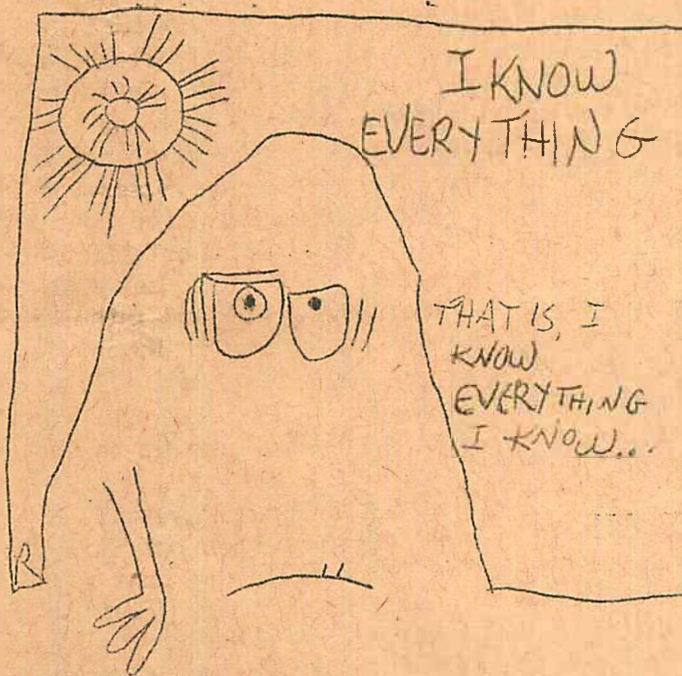
Anyway, I did enjoy RATS! especially after forty fanzines, thirty five of which were totally without value to anyone or interest to me, and the remaining five not so good either. You had no Osterman art and no offutt writing, a welcome change. You did have a piece by Ray Nelson, whose work appears in so few places. Have you ever seen any of his cartoons? He does some remarkably paranoid things.

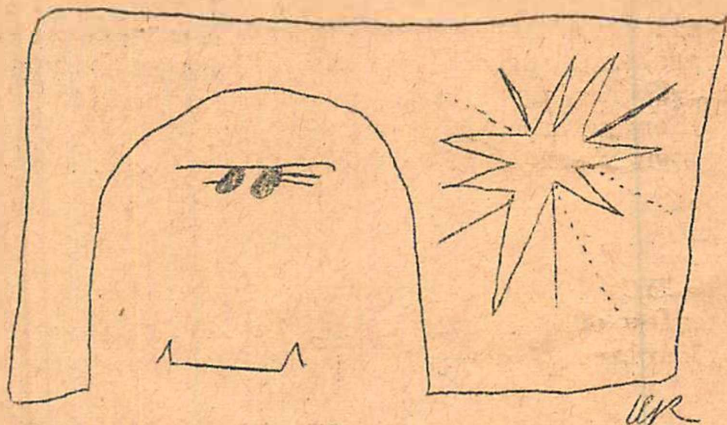
[I'm an old fan of Nelson cartoons, which were plentiful in the old INNUENDOS I got]

You attack Charlie once more. I think him not so villainous as pictured, much maligned out of emotions of other than artistic ones, but I won't try to defend him. All he does when accused of making money is smile. He just finds all the carping amusing. So...but on one point I might say a word, on the point of "lame" with the quote of the review of Firesign. The drug references mostly are in the record to be fashionable (unlike Waiting for the Electrician or Someone Like Him, in which the drug references were the satire, and quite cutting). And to realize that there were drug references in Dwarf is pretty sharp. Jon Singer had to explain the title to Steve Stiles and me....I ain't so much, but Steve's been Around. [I should think that anyone's who heard the record would realize that your statement regarding the use of drug references in order to be "fashionable" is nonsense. Pretty sharp to realize there were drug references tho? Ghod! With lines like: "Got any pot?" "Any uppers?" "Any downers?" "I'm high alright, but not on false drugs..." etc. etc. ??

The title gambit is pretty easy to figure out, once you realize it is a reference to smoking practices, but, man, if you can hear, you know that drugs are being mentioned in that album, Jerry. Really.]

Rather obvious satire? Well, the tv religion stuff, is, and so is the TV game show, and the high school movie stuff. And how do you know that the rest of it isn't obvious too, to Charlie? [That's right. I forgot how sharp he was.] I really myself don't see much under the Tirebiter life cycle. Except the fascination with food and shit. I do think it's sf, which Charlie doesn't. And I do think it deserves the Hugo,





as it is more interesting, ambitious, and successful than the other things nominated, though I find the first and second records they did to be more on-target, and funnier.

Now I admit I may be missing a point -- the record sounds like one of those things with a point, so how about writing a little something about it. You sound like you know more than me on the subject. I will, just as soon as I finish my ten page, in-depth review of 2001.

Charl, I do have permanent scars from the Hideous Sun Demon, I just hide them well. I saw it about half-a-year ago in Cleveland, on vacation from school. I couldn't bear sitting through it again. The only thing I found interesting about it was that I found myself re-directing it. For instance, there is a scene in which the little girl is running. She might have been running to the monster, since she was trying to help him for awhile, or she might have been running from him, I forget. The shot was taken from very high to show the girl running. A very static shot, done because it was the cheapest shot to take. How much more effective would it have been to have the camera dolly along side! I think the sense of motion, of hurry and of suspense would have been increased. Such musings are the only good I got from that dog. I liked the scene where the thugs are beating him up and he turns into the beast, I thought it was done beautifully.

Harry's letter is fabulous (oft-referred-to in fables). The implications of the paragraph about the ideal fanzine are far-flung. Not only is there an ideal fanzine, and an ideal Post Office. The existence of the Post Office in the Absolute suggests that there also is a postage stamp up there, and correspondingly a price rise, then there must be the law of price rises...service decreases in direct proportion to the size of price rise. And so there must be the absolute, ideal bad postman. Now, going back to the Post Office, as we all must, if there exists primordially this vestige of an official government, must there not exist the entire spectrum of Government in all its glory? I become fearful and rather tired of the whole affair, because sooner or later I'd have come up with Nixon. [...and Charlie Brown?]

I found Ubik pretty confusing, too. All I could make of the last chapter was that the boss was really dead, and had dreamed the entirety of the book in an effort to convince himself he was alive and his employees were the ones dead. Did you see it that way?

I haven't read it yet.... but before tipping, I'd like to sort of straighten out this whole Locus thing. Essentially what I griped about last issue was the fact that C.D. bought the worldcon mailing list in order to send all those people Locus, which he assumed - him being a sharp and all - would be the only fmz the majority of them would see. And he's right.

Now this seems corrupt on the part of the concon as well, but you really didn't respond to this argument, which is the thing that set me off. True, I don't like Locus, and his "personality" within it comes off badly, I think, but what's wrong with Locus, is what's

wrong with the concon, is what's wrong with a certain section of fandom, and you said you wouldn't defend him anyway, I forgot. So let's forget it. But I think we should all acknowledge that the Hugo is a con. And I don't mean worldcon.

locsmith:::

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Sections of "Drivel" had me glancing back over my shoulder apprehensively in anticipation of another wave of godawful articles exposing various members of local fannish fandom as Evil Manipulators or High Priestesses or whatever else the writers dream up.

I'm sure at least one beknighted fan will rush forward and try to save you. He will tell you that you have been spoiled -- though perhaps not irretrievably -- by your contact with the forces of fannish fandom. He will rhapsodize about what simple, kindly, unaffected souls you used to be until you took up with those scruffy faanish fans. [Charl, were we ever..?]7

When he thinks he has you nicely oiled, he'll swing into his pitch. "Put all this by," he will exhort, "and fan nirvana may yet be thine!" Before you can protest, he will launch into an earnest lecture on the Importance of SF and True Salvation through the reviewing of books.

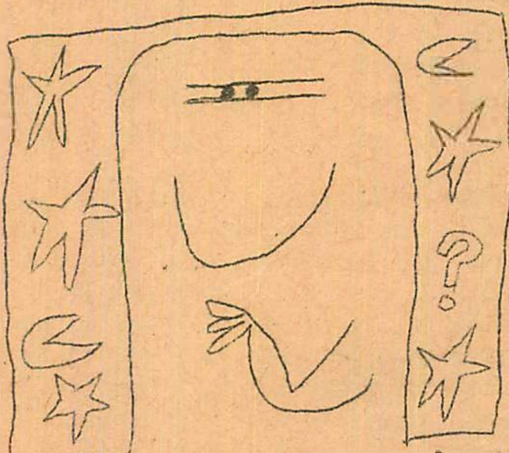
At that point, if you will but beat him about the head and shoulders with a couple of rolled up copies of The Enchanted Dupliactor, he will go away.

I, too, found Charlie Brown's comments on the Firesign Theater painful. The Firesign Theater can hardly be said to rely on drug references in their humor. The references are there because, in today's society, grass and acid are a fact of life. It would be remarkable if a group such as the Firesign Theater didn't mention drugs in the course of their surrealistic comedy. [Exactly, exactly.]7

It will certainly be a wonderful thing if Firesign Theater does win a Hugo. I'd say it would be one of the classier winners of the Drama award.

[Out Of Room! More letters next issue. Till then..]7

((Additional art credit to Jay Kinney, who did the "Entropy Reprints" headings))



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