

REVIEW #10

Vol. 2, #4

R E V I E W R E V I E W R E V I E W R E V I E W R E V I E W R E V I E W R E V I E W R E V I E W R E V I E W

Vol. 2

#4

Hey, I just noticed the last issue was misnumbered as Volume 1. Am I in my second childhood ?

REVIEW is published occasionally for reasons I've never completely figured out. Edited and published by

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Box 876

Kellogg, Idaho

Mimeographed by that patient individual, Charles Wells.

Available by exchange only.

All letter considered for publication unless I am served with an injunction.

It must be sherry,

Cause gin don't slake like that.

Anybody in a hurry, skip this editorial....I hardly think it's worth your time. I haven't the least idea what it will say but I hardly think it's apt to be earth-shaking. Usually I use this space apologizing for the delay in production and explaining changes in editorial policy or reproduction. No delays this time and no changes. How dull. So I'll have to fall back upon that old reliable standby of fan editors which has led to more wasted mimeograph paper than Claude Degler and Jeff Banks laid end to end, namely whatever trivia happens to pop into my mind. Not being a Lee Hoffman or an Art Rapp, such past experiences as I have had with this method of writing have led to traumatic experiences and, like I said before, why don't you just skip this section and go on to the ~~next~~ letter section? You won't be missing anything. Still with me? Damn, that's what I was afraid of. Why do you do this to me when you know I find it embarrassing and will later want to forget the whole thing and that anybody ever read this? You're apt to drive me right out of fandom and into the cold, cruel world with your lack of tact. Of course I could make a miniature column out of this but I'm utterly without ideas and anyway it's getting rather late in the page for that. Besides I never wrote a miniature column in my life. Elephantine is the word for me, in more ways than one, some unkind persons have been so merciless as to say. It's all a plot, that's what it is. You're all in it to gether, trying to drive me out of fandom. The whole world's against me. There. If Tony Boucher says all fans are paranoid I'll retaliate by proving him right in this case. That'll show him he can't push me around. How? I dunno, but at least I'm down to the bottom of the page, anyway. Skool!

READER'S INDIGESTION

(The cleverest letter received this time was from Richard Geis, in which Seventh Fandom was skewered as never before. A must for reproduction in this department, naturally. So what happens? In an overdiligent burst of apartment-cleaning, apparently, it got mixed in with some of my omnipresent junk and was thrown out before it could be reproduced. At least it isn't in the envelope it arrived in and a search fails to unearth it. Pardon my tears.)

ROBERT BLOCH--Weyauwega, Wis.

Writing is not a career for the physically unfit: not fulltime professional writing, on a typewriter. Marquette University in Milwaukee at one time conducted an experiment which demonstrated that a typist in 8 hours expends as many foot-pounds of energy as a ditchdigger in 14. And the typing was mere copy-work...the accompanying expenditure of nervous energy entailed in creative work would add materially to the consequent exhaustion.

That is why most of the prolific writers often resemble truck-drivers...broad shoulders, thick necks, big chests, brawny arms. Robert Hardy Andrews, the radio hack; August Derleth, L. Ron Hubbard, Howard Browne, the late Otis Adelbert Kline: these men represent the ideal physique for the task. The little guys live on nervous energy: the skinny, underweight, weak-kneed specimens who never completed their Charles Atlas course usually collapse after a prolonged stint.

As to Leiber's book, I'm afraid at the time he was "forced" to let YOU'RE ALL ALONE go to "such obscure people." Just as his excellent new THE GREEN MILLENIUM had to go to Abelard and CONJURE WIFE to Twane. Not that Abelard or Twayne are bad houses: but they are small. And Leiber does write "fantasy" or "border-line fantasy", which is poison at the box-office these days, according to the Publishing Geniuses. (I refer, of course, to the Publishing Geniuses whose brilliant acument and knowhow has resulted in the folding of a dozen magazines in the past year, and the bimonthly or quarterly schedule of a dozen more, and whose unerring ability to detect just what the public wants has enabled them to establish a sales slump in the midst of a general boom). Forgive my sarcasm, but in a day when John Collier's FANCIES AND GOODNIGHTS (pure fantasy) and Bradbury's edited TIMELESS STORIES anthology of fantasy have rung up good sales, it irks me to find so many of the savants blandly ignoring fantasy and putting out a lot of inferior sf along with the admittedly good selections. But once the Powers That Be get a notion, it's hard to disabuse them of it...and as a result, men like Leiber must play second fiddle unless they manage to disguise their fantasy as "sf". Most of the top names in the field today started in fantasy and can still write better fantasy than they can "sf"...but they have to live. Or at least, they perversely think so.

RON ELLIK--232 Santa Ana, Long Beach 3, California

7apa...there's a name for you. HELLison (cute, no?) and all the rest seem to think they're the very core, the foundation, the build-

ing block and "necessary good" for the plan of Seventh Fandom. Why? I know that I'm not necessary to 7f. (Thank Ghod for that; I wonder what Ellison would say if he were told suddenly he'd have to drop out of fandom? Probably throw fits yelling that 7f would drop dead without his little spark of life.)

Maybe I'm going of on Harlan a bit too much. Did I hear or didn't I that he has dropped out of the organization? Might be just a rumor, but I don't like to take chances.

But 7f isn't built up around 7apa. That is for sure. The original purpose, I think, was to give certain 7f'ers egoboo and assure that later on no pagan unbelievers could dig into the glory of 7f. And they blatantly admit that anybody can get in! That is to say, they have members such as Grennell, who is a sort of sixth fanner, isn't he? And they invite such as Silverberg and Boggs, according to Grennell in REVIEW #9.

I have nothing against Bob and Red, but they are 6f'ers, and this is a club proposed to help out 7f. . . .

Enough on that.

Thompson say "...Madge and Galaxy can(not) be compared in the same sentence." And in which sentences has he placed them? Send me a hand-carved Martian vvard for spotting the moot point. (Oh, Merwin. . .)

I read both Madge and Galaxy. I also read ASF and POGO. I find enjoyment in re-reading LANCE BIGGS and WORLD OF NULL-A. I guess it's just that I enjoy any kind of reading material. . . as long as it can claim some stf in its pages. Whether or not the space-opera in Madge is really stf I leave to such mature minds as Mr. Thompson. I like the stuff.

((Don't see how you can possibly categorize Grennell as a member of Sixth Fandom unless you're lumping everybody out of their teens into that classification. Grennell wasn't around at all until Seventh Fandom was already launched....or at least not around during Sixth Fandom....but let him tell his own history.....v.l.n.))

DEAN GRENNEL--402 Maple Avenue, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin

I read my first science fiction in 1929 at the age of six (my Dad taught me to read before I was 5) and was reading everything I could lay my hands on by the early 30s...WILD WEST WEEKLY, CLUES DETECTIVE, THE SHADOW, WEIRD TALES, WONDER STORIES, THE POPULAR and a host of others. I dabbled my toe in the shallow tidal pools around the fringe of fandom in 1940 but had no typer than and very little money either so I didn't get into it very deply. It is a damn good thing. I was an impossible juvenile in those days and I still wake up screaming of a night if I dream that I'd published a fannazine at that time and someone dug up a copy and reprinted from it now. Mercy upon all of us.

But sometimes I like to speculate upon what things might be like in some other continuum of probability when I look at an old copy of ASTONISHING STORIES from 1940 and see letters from Tucker and Lowndes and Ackerman. I might just as well have written to

to them instead of the people I did write to and who can say what might have happened then? Too, I'm frustrated when I think of all the time I spent on the Ground Gunnery Range at Tonopah, Nevada...pulling night CQ and cranking paper into the typewriter in the office and then sitting there and trying my damndest to think of something to write on it. I remember one time I copied Tony Boucher's MR. LUPESCU out of a copy of WEIRD, in hopes that, by actually typing a story that had sold, a little of the shining genius of the storyteller might rub off on me. But it never did. Sometime I must ask Silverberg what Fandoms were in force in 1940 and 1944 so that I might know in what era those Grennells of another spoke in the Wheel Of If have their roots.

Oddly enough, Boucher was one of the people who inveigled me into the deeper waters of fandom in the Spring and Summer of 1952, 13 years ((you mean 23, don't you, Dean? v.l.m.)) after I'd read my first sf story. The availability of a typer for a few months led to a correspondence with him which in turn led to my getting acquainted with Palmer which was to lead, nearly two years later, into my suddenly being confronted with my unexpected experience in UNIVERSE. It was Bixby's column in STARTLING that prompted me to send for my first fanzines. I picked out five of the 10¢ ones from the list he gave and mailed out the dimes. VEGA #3 was the first one to show up and VEGA #4, a month later, carried a faintly silly little squib about robots which was the first time anybody ever thought my words worthy of repeating in print. Do you still recall the thrill of seeing your stuff in print for ~~xxxx~~ the first time, Vernon?

7APA is plucking at the coverlets if one can judge from the 2nd mailing. Only 22 pages, I think---less than there were in Grue 19 and barely half as much as Grue/Bleen combined.

CHUCK HARRIS--"Carolyn" Lake Ave Rainham, Essex, England.

Huh. Just who does Mouldy Mort Morse think I am? A neofan? My veracity has been impugned, my character blackened, and my dirty linen confused with somebody else's.....

A long time ago, I think it was Tucker who wrote an article about keeping copies of all your fannish correspondence. That was the best advice I have ever had from anybody, --- with the possible exception of Dr. Marie Stopes.

Having a dirty suspicious mind, the first thing I did on reading Bill Morse's letter in Review 8 was to drag out my "M" file and check on his quotes. I had horrible visions of people thinking of me as a "Hehehehehefan" (whereas I always say "Yuk Yuk") or, worse still, thinking of me as someone who undulates around the saloon bar calling Air Force sergeants "Dear".

Ghod. And this is supposed to be an olive branch? I can almost see Towner noting my name down in his little black book, and momentarily expect sheaves of letters from people wanting to share rooms with me at the SuperManCon.

Honestly, I hardly ever say "Heheheheh", and my S-x drive is perfectly normal. And, if necessary, I will produce references to prove it.

Friends, is nothing sacred to this fiend Morse? I HAVE BEEN DELIBERATELY MISQUOTED. Words have been forced willy-nilly into my mouth, and hallowed quotation marks surround a figment of Morse's imagination. I quote Morse quoting me: "That fat babe with the pony haircut, she tried to seduce -----, and she'll do the same for you". And in inverted commas too!

I've a damn good mind to report this to Eva Firestone and the N3F Directorate.

Is it possible that I, Chuck Harris, "Hyphen" Columnist, President and Founder of The Rainham Society for the Advancement of Science Fiction and Imaginative Literature, and almost a Professional Author, would cast vile aspersions at the flower of Anglofandom? Would I, with my reputation for honesty and unbiased reported, sully the fair name of a member of the British Interplanetary Society? In a word, NO, 0----- and especially not on paper.

The actual quote was something entirely different. I mentioned the fact that ***** (please don't confuse her with -----), once dragged Bhub Shaw into a corner and told him about all the times she'd been raped. There is, as you will notice, a big difference. I was not suggesting that the young lady was a wanton seductress or a danger to all clean-living young fans. Rather, I was warning Bill that her main conversational topic was tedious, uninteresting, and not half as interesting as rain on Venus, or what does it push against Up There. Never, positively never, did I say, suggest, or insinuate that "she tried to seduce -----," (whoever he is), or "and she'll do the same for you." Morse's virginity is no concern of mine whatsoever.

Shame! Shame on you Bill Morse. Even Ken Beale would never sink so low. And I hope that Hoffman reads this and cancels your Honorary Swamp Critter Certificate. So there.

WALT WILLIS--170 Upper N'Ards, Belfast, NORTHERN IRELAND

I know this sort of complex is endemic in British fandom, but that blank cover annoys me. All that paper wasted. Since R doesn't need a cover anyway, and this one wouldn't be much use even if it did, why not start straight off like a newspaper?

I do think it's unfair for Morse to quote from my handwritten letters. I haven't a carbon to contradict him and he can show the letter to anyone else without them being able to guess that it says anything different from what he claims.

Of course if you were a newspaper you would have printed that sentence about Tucker reviving LE ZOMBIE right across the front page in red ink. (Red ink because it's ink-redible.). Why, I ~~thought~~ thought of this in a wild moment when SFNL was announced to be folding, but I never suggested it even to Bob because I never dared to hope he'd do it. Well, this teaches me a lesson. I shall write now to Forry Ackerman suggesting that he revive VOM.

I appreciate your compliments on Hyphen, but what's this about puns? I don't think that entire issue contained more than two or three of them and they were far outnumbered by other types of humour. We've been trying to get away from the pun here partly because they come too easily and tend to lead to purely mechanical

humorous writing, whereas to have the proper effect a pun should be unexpected. And I hotly deny the foul imputation that I take great joy in making puns on the name White. I DO NOT. I steadfastly resist the temptation and I think I've succumbed to it only once in my entire career, when once in Slant I said something about that if I die it would come to you with a black border and a White editor..and that was less a pun than a sort of euphuism. Puns on White are far too obvious and not genuine puns at all. They're on a mental level with Piper's "There's a reason for REASON" which is not even a joke but a piece of ultimate fuggheadedness.

Slightly surprised you didn't care much for the Coroncon report. I thought it wasn't bad. But then I'm always finding that people don't like the things I expect them too. I think up wonderfully clever things (like 'bouquet of neuroses' and so on) and put them in giggling to myself. Then maybe when I'm stenciling the thing I put in a couple of throwaways on the spur of the moment, hesitating whether or not to use the correction fluid on them. And of course everyone ignores the one I thought was good and fall over themselves to praise me for the throwaways. I don't get it. The Chicon report was a case in point. I didn't care for it much when I'd written it, but having worked and worked at it for weeks I let it go. Whereupon Chuck and Vince write praising all the passages I'd sworn to myself to cut out when I got round to rewriting it for that memorial volume I still have in mind.

About which, by the way, I didn't know it was quite so obvious that I didn't care much for Palmer. Tch tch. I didn't, but I hoped to have it come over as a vague feeling rather than a definite emotion. And also by the way I thought I'd made it clear that I thought American manners were generally excellent. Even in New York people..shop assistants etc..were very friendly and affable. The only really badmannered people I met were two fans (and one was a Canadian) at the Convention whom I'd never heard of before and a drunk sailor in a plane in LA.

PAUL MITTELBUSCHER--c/o George Werneke, Sweet Springs, Mo.

Despite Dean Grennell's learned discourse on "Why" 7apa I am unable to conceive of a logical excuse for it. A bit of patience would seem to have been the order of the day for all the eager juveniles, I see no reason why this group should wish to enter either of the established APA's en masse. Furthermore I must quarrel with DAG's statement that SAPS has a more "distinctive atmosphere" than FAPA, tho my acquaintance with both is limited. I rather doubt that FAPAians would be inclined to greet the majority of the screaming adolescents with anything akin to open arms as it does possess a "distinctive atmosphere" of its own. It all boils down to the fact that two APA's are enough (in fact I'd say one would be sufficient) and that "each in his turn" should be the motto; get your name on the waiting list and relax.

Personally, Dean, I would vote against this young fan Redd Boggs..obviously he hasn't been around fandom long enough to "know the score" - so to speak a mere beardless youth.

FANZINES AT MIDNIGHT

CANADIAN FANDOM--Gerald Steward, 166 McRoberts Ave., Toronto 10, Ontario, Canada 20¢, #20

This venerable fanzine has changed publishers, schedules, format, material....just about everything but it's title often in the last 11 years. Having seen representatives of each era, I'm afraid I must say they have all shared an inability to rank with the top fanzines. The current CAN FAN is one of those beautifully mimeographed things Canadians seem to be currently specializing in.... and as usual in the case of such superb appearance all energy and ingenuity seems to have been expended in this end, leaving none for the material. There is a well-selected ~~editorial column~~ letter column which makes good reading. But I don't really think this magazine is worth the 20¢ asking price and I'm at a loss to understand why one Canadian after another has labored to keep the title of this always mediocre magazine alive.

CONFAB--Bob Pentrowsky, Box 634, Norfolk Nebr., #2.

The first issue of this magazine was nothing special with its first appearance but ~~like~~ its second is fastly entertaining and gives promise of rapidly becoming a favorite among fandom's inner circle (the rest simply won't dig it). Chiefly letters this time and very entertaining ones, broken up with the most consistently amusing interlineations of any current mag. CONFAB is available only by trade or if you're in Pentrowsky's special good graces, I believe but since an almost identical statement is true of REVIEW, chances are if you're reading this you can manage to get CONFAB. My advice is do so, immediately!

COSMIC FRONTIER--March 1954, 10¢, Stuart K. Nock, R.F.D. #3, Castleton, N.Y.

It is said Nock wants to make this one of fandom's top 20 zines. He has a long way to go. Beautifully dittoed, the illos are not worth the space and the too brief articles and features are little better. Best thing in the issue (as in so many fanzines) is the four pages of letters. Apparently any fanzine can draw interesting letters.

DAWN--May 1954, 10¢, Russell K. Watkins, 110 Brady St., Savannah, Ga.

This magazine is more legible and somewhat neater than the last time this column reviewed it. The material remains on the same level, however. A particularly peculiar inclusion is an article on "Medea", a play which appeared on Broadway five years ago (and the article concerns that production....not the classic itself) which has very little connection with fantasy and none with sf. Not even the letter column helps much with this magazine.

DEVIANT--March 1954, 15¢, Carol McKinney, 377 East 1st North, Provo, Utah.

Ah, what memories this magazine recalls. This first issue is the ideal almost every neofan has in mind when he sets out on his first appearance. A truly impressive performance totalling 34 pages, every one of them flawlessly mimeed with a tremendous amount of variety and many features not found in any other fanzine. Most fans editing their first issue, however, lack this editors persistence and equipment. I imagine she accomplished precisely what she set out to do and for that she deserves 100% in the effort column. Few fans can so sustain an effort, especially when it involves issuing 250 copies, none of them to subscribers. However, fans tend to learn with succeeding issues that certain items just don't fit very well in fanzines and some of the most cherished 'differences' they've thot up must go....and, oddly, they find they don't mind scuttling them at all. More appropriate and entertaining material comes in (and with such an impressive first issue Carol should be particularly favored in this respect) and by the third or fourth issue the magazine is approaching its true form and that first issue which was so exciting is now just an amusing curiosity. I can't really recommend this first issue. I'm sure the editor will eventually delete her puzzles, "Believe it or Not" column, etc....just about everything except the Fanistory, in fact, but I do recommend the magazine. Unless she has burned herself out with this first ambitious effort this editor is likely to make fan history.

ECLIPSE*--#8, Ray Thompson, 410 South 4th St., 25¢ for 3.

The editor having just publicly exited this group he is going to hate me for the following statement, but to me this is the typical 7th Fandom fanzine. However, let me hasten to add that to me the word 'typical' is not synonomous with 'average'. ECLIPSE typifies the sort of article, the sort of persiflage, the general atmosphere which I have come to associate with 7th Fandom. However, ECLIPSE is considerably better than the average 7th Fandom zine....most of which don't outlast two issues, while EEK is on its 8th. This is definitely more amusing than most 7th Fandom fanzines. Unfortunately there are certain drawbacks inextricably entwined with 7th Fandom and ECLIPSE partakes of them, so it is still definitely a second-rate zine.

THE ENCHANGED DUPLICATOR--Walt Willis & Bob Shaw...a one-shot, no price listed.

An absolutely delightful production! There's been nothing like this since Manly Banister's 1950 booklet "Egoboo" and this is far superior to that. A fannish takeoff on "Pilgrim's Progress" it has to be read to be believed. Hints have been dropped about this for some time so apparently it has been in preparation for some time but it was worth every minute. This appears in the third month of the year but you needn't wait to pass out the Laureate Award. This is, without a doubt, the finest ajay publication of the year. Only 200 copies so chances of getting one are slight. I know I'm treasuring mine....and I don't save fanzines.

FANTASTIC STORY MAG--#4, Ron Ellick, 232 Santa Ana, Long Beach 3, California., 10¢

This magazine continues an unchanged course....hampered by the difficulties of finding reprintable fiction. They're tending to switch to articles but haven't had very good luck with the ones they've picked so far. This issue has little to recommend it except a reprint of an early Sam Spade takeoff from 1945 by F. Lee Baldwin.

FIENDETTA--#5, Charles Wells, 405 E. 62 St, Savannah, Ga.

An article and a slew of letters on #6. The paper and mimeoing both look very QUANDRYish.

GREY--#5, same address as above.

This one sheeter has switched over more or less to publishing news and while still interesting, has far less to recommend it than the very attractive first issue.

HENCE' --January 1954, John G. Fletcher, 347 Oak Road, Glenside, Penn.

The best I can say about this magazine is that it could improve. It is legible throughout, but with that exception I can't recall any first issue that has puzzled me more or seemed to offer less promise. The cover has an indecipherable title (I had to look inside to find the magazine's name) over an indecipherable cover picture. Inside in unattractive layout we have mostly fiction.... after my reactions to the rest I couldn't even try to read this fiction....but of course, that's not too unusual for me when it comes to fan-fiction. I did try to read the one article and the features but I'm damned if I could get anything out of them. This magazine's just gotta improve, unless they fold. Nothing else is possible. I can't believe they could produce two issues like this. Oh yes, the contents page says "Free lance material accepted".

HYPHEN--#6, January 1954, Walt Willis, 170 Upper Newtownards Rd., Belfast, N.Ireland.

I don't know if REVIEW comes out as frequently as HYPHEN or if HYPHEN comes out as infrequently as REVIEW but this is the third issue in a row of HYPHEN which has been reviewed in successive issues of REVIEW. I know for sure REVIEW isn't monthly despite HYPHEN's supposed schedule. This is below average issue but HYPHEN can afford an occasional offday, since it is the wittiest zine around currently.

NITE CRY--Don Chappell, 5921 East 4th Pl., Tulsa, Okla., March 1954. 10¢

A good letter column, fair review column by Lee Riddle, lotsa fiction, inconvenient size, and nothing really commentable in this issue.

OOPSLA--#12, Gregg Calkins, 2817 11th St., Santa Monica, Calif.
15¢

As long as OOPSLA is around Sixth Fandom is still around and Seventh Fandomers can see why this Sixth Fandom-bred individual fails to give their fanzines good reviews. Calkins has a very amusing editorial....the first time he has evidenced as much talent at writing as editing. (That's the front editorial I'm speaking of, naturally. He disagrees with me in the back one so of course it isn't very well written.) You'll find the fabulous Walt Willis present, and the even fabulouser Bob Bloch. Not an awfully fat magazine and made up almost completely of columns but here is an editor who knows what he is doing and does it almost instinctively. Seventh Fandomers take notes, please.

ORION--#2, Pete Campbell, 60 Calgarth Road, Windermere, West'lan
(ENGLAND?)

A British fanzine with an amazingly free-and-easy American air about it. Most British fanzines are rather pedestrian or so brilliant (chiefly the Willis publications) as to give us tendrillless type fans inferiority complexes. ORION has a trifle more fiction than I care for, but that can be remedied and otherwise it is a very amusing and enjoyable zine for such a youthful one.

PEON--March 1954, Charles Lee Riddle, 108 Dunham Street, Norwich, Conn., 10¢

Old faithful just keeps rolling along. Flawlessly mimeod (yes I know I've used that adjective before in this column, but it's appropriate), good material, regular appearance, what more can you ask for? Special bonus this issue: a Bob Tucker book review in which he allows his personality to ooze through more than in most SFNKE reviews.

PSYCHOTIC--#9, Richard E. Geis, 2631 N. Mississippi, Portland 12, Oregon., 10¢

This is an embarrassing review to write. I've consistently given this zine good reviews from the first issue and now, with VEGA and CONFUSION retired from the fray (as regular appearees, anyway) and PSY matured into a more or less permanent form, it now has no real competition for the muchly overused term 'fandom's focal point'. The reason this is a trifle embarrassing is because PSYx has, with the exception of some of my own zines, printed more McCain stuff in recent issues than any other fanzine in history. But I contribute heavily to PSYCHOTIC because I am enthusiastic about it, not vice versa. PSYCHOTIC has it! Ofx all the fanzines I've seen only SPACEWARP and QUANDRY ever had that comfortable, homy, 'right' feeling I get from PSY. VEGA gave promise of developing it but never matured into it. PSYCHOTIC has done it already. And I'm happy to advise Geis seems to be immune to amnshititis, the disease which laid low VEGA and which kept QUANDRY from ever being the same again. And for you fan-writers, may I say I've found Dick Geis to be the most satisfactory editor to work with of any I know.

RENAISSANCE--January, 1954, Joseph Semenovitch, 155-07 71st Ave., Flushing 67, N.Y.

This magazine is turning 'weird' with its next issue and shows signs of developing in that direction already. Not being a devotee of this type literature my enthusiasm is tempered.

SCIENCE-FICTION NEWS SHEET--Lyle Kessler, 2450-76 Avenue, Philadelphia 38, Penn.

No price given...perhaps a one-shot. Very amusing all around. Chock full of news items you'll find no place else. But don't take them too seriously. Among the news items are "Ackerman to Bring Headhunter to next Con", "A La Space Receives Award for High Standards of Amateur Journalism", and "Brévizine Adventures to go Pro".

SCIENTIFICTION STORIES--#1, John Walston, Vashon, Wash.

Not much in this first issue but he shows enthusiasm and that's what's important.

SCINTILLA--#14, Larry Anderson, 2716 Smoky Lane, Billings, Mont. 10;

Mimeod to dittoed to mimeod to offset and back to dittoed, this magazine has had more format changes than COSMAG-SFD and a once-promising fanzine has dwindled into a single sheet full of microscopio print and while he squeezes a surprising amount in with that trick typewriter it still isn't much of a zine. This issue is only 5¢ so apparently he intends to make it bigger later.

SF--John Magnus, Federal 203-B, Oberlin, Ohio, #8, \$1 per year.

Some good material but this magazine just doesn't spark, perhaps because of the too fussy cover which can't overcome the crudities of amateur technique.. At any rate, the magazine lacks personality. Most of the material is a bit out of date and Magnus apologizes for cutting one item because of lack of space...and it turns out to be easily the best thing in the magazine! Magnus would be wise to stick to his less pretentious magazines. They're far better.

SPIRAL--#6, Denis Moreen, 214 Ninth St., Wilmette, Ill. 10¢

Much better than earlier issues but still has quite a ways to go. Nice Geis column, even if I do manage to disagree with about everything he says in this issue. Good letter column, too.

UMBRÄ--John Hitchcock, 15 Arbutus Ave., Baltimore 28, Md.

A successor to RENEW. I never thot I'd see something more incoherent than Wells' early editorials in fta but the editorial portions of this mag surpass them. These are neatly mimeod and switch to absolutely unreadable dittography just as the magazine gets interesting.

ZIP--#3, Ted E. White, 1014 N. Tuckahoe St., Falls Church, Vir. 6/25¢
Why waste all this space on Freiberg who admittedly wants just that?

PRO'S PROSE

AMAZING STORIES -- May

Browne has his shorts written by unknowns who turn out rather routine items, and hires big names like Murray Leinster for the novelets ("Fugitive from Space" in this particular case) and these also prove routine. Maybe the writers figure why bother exerting themselves when they know Browne saves all his enthusiasm for the hours he spends reading detective stories. Oddly, since such stories usually stink to high heaven, Browne has been having quite good luck with stories written around the cover paintings. Brightest spot in this drab issue is one such, "Little Tin Soldier" by Bill Peters.

ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION -- March

Isaac Asimov's "Sucker Bait", which ends abruptly after a short second installment, proves to be merely a long short story, which is a pity, since the mnemonic, Mark Annuncio, would have made an excellent hero for one of the complex studies of cultural interaction such as Asimov used to write in his 'Foundation' days. A shame to waste such high quality writing and such a fascinating character on a mere gimmick story. Walter Miller produces probably the worst story of his career, "I Made YOU". Some of this loss is recouped by a satisfactory novelet "Final Exam" by someone named Arthur Zirul. But the big news this issue is made by the featured short novel by Clifford Simak, "Immigrant". This is one of those grand and glorious 'problem' stories where the solution is hidden through sheer obviousness, the sort of story one always thinks of as 'typically ASF' but which has been all too rare in that magazine (or any others, for that matter) during the last several years.

GALAXY -- April

Frederik Pohl, who went to one economic extreme in "Gravy Planet" veers to the other in "The Midas Plague". This story is a trifle more logical but still fails to be convincing since Pohl throws in a completely unexplained taboo against waste, which is completely at variance with what one would expect in such a society, and what can be seen on every side in our own country as contrasted with the customs in less prosperous ones. But of course without that taboo Pohl would have had no story. Methinks Pohl should steer clear of economics and perhaps of sociology also since he can't seem to avoid stubbing his toe every time he wanders into such fields. There is also a satisfying, though minor, novelet by Robert Sheckley entitled "Hands Off". Rest of the issue illustrates GALAXY's faults.

IF -- April

Monthly now, IF is a hard magazine to assess. It prints such a lot of unmitigated crap and hack-work, and interlaces it with a regular percentage of stories which rank right up with the top efforts of the year. There is no other quite so paradoxical publication in the field. The outstanding story this time is a wondrous little

suspense story in a world where psi powers are fully exploited. It's only fair to warn that the ending doesn't live up to the rest of the story but it is still well worth reading. The rest of the issue isn't very worthwhile but I imagine if you had a few spare hours with nothing better to do none of the other stories in this issue would really disgust you, as is the case with some other magazines, such as

IMAGINATION -- April 1954

and how this magazine stays monthly, even with a page-cut is beyond me. They usually manage to produce about one readable story per issue. This time it is "Pariah" by Milton Lesser. There is only one slight drawback; a GALAXY story, whose title eludes me at the moment, used precisely the same plot, the only difference being that in that case it was a fiancée who brushed the hero off for the good of interplanetary progress, rather than a wife.

MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION -- April

"Every story new!" shrieks the cover. Personally I like reprints... but I must admit MOF has tended to run to dull ones more often than not. This is easily the best issue of any magazine reviewed herein. Of most interest to fandom will be the long Marion Bradley novelet; this is far more smoothly written than anything she has previously done and gives promise that she could develop into a major talent. The writing still isn't quite up to MOF standards but the thoroughly worked out plot compensates for any slight lack along other lines. Mrs. Bradley appears to have made pregnancy and motherhood her special province in stfwriting, which should find no carpers. C.M. Kornbluth has a hilarious piece in "I Never Ask No Favors" and the tremendously talented Bruce Elliot (three bulls eyes and one wild miss out of four published stories) has the best piece in the issue with his fresh and moving slant on lycanthropy in "Wolves Don't Cry". Editor Boucher is too modest, however, in omitting mention of his own "The Compleat Werewolf" along with "Darker Than You Think" and "There Shall Be No Darkness" as classics of the genre. However, the story I found most thought-provoking was one of the poorest in the issue, Fritz Leiber's "The Silence Game". I find the idea of large groups of people who make it a convention never to speak an intriguing one with tremendous possibilities. I personally believe it would do away with a great deal of unpleasantness, disagreement, and boredom, promote valuable self-discipline and tend to make life richer and fuller. Personally I am a compulsive talker (it might be said I'm the same way on paper but I actually am considerably briefer on paper and the idea content per thousand words is far higher). I rather dislike talking...in fact I may sit for 20 or 25 minutes just grunting when people talk to me....especially if they are people I feel do not share or understand my interests....but sooner or later they chance one something I can't resist and I am holding a lengthy and rapid-fire monologue which bores the pants off both of us....but I can't give it up until I've set matters as straight as possible. I invariably feel like a damned fool afterwards and decide I'll be sphinx-like next time. What a relief it would be to have a social convention which allowed one to be quiet at all times and express one's ideas

only in the proper place.....on paper. And how much more of a relief to be spared the ceaseless prattle of the bores in our midst. Falling into both categories, I am doubly aware of the advantages. In fact, it is partially because I am conscious of the disadvantages of too much conversation that I both live and work alone. A trifle lonely at times, but certainly rewarding in the way it cuts down on needless conversation, especially on those occasions when one later bitterly regrets saying something without sufficient prior thought. Silence, anyone?

NEBULA -- December

With Carnell absent from the field Hamilton seems to be moving into the #1 British spot. This* issue is chiefly notable for the two novelets. "Sustained Pressure" is so realistic that many writers would find it embarrassing. It deals with the touchiest of subjects, religion, and, for the first time in my memory, does so sympathetically, without advocating any of the ideas that religion holds. J.T.M. Intosh story, like most of his, manages to be delightful despite the fact that in this case I never did get the details of the confusing plot uncomplicated. But the characterization and dialogue was enough to carry the story. There are also three short and one of those dreadful F.G. Rayer space operas that all British magazines publish periodically. Rayer did write one good story once. It appeared first in NEW WORLDS and later in the last issue of MARVEL, although the name escapes me. How this man manages to sell his stories.....and such long ones, too.....is completely beyond me.

PLANET -- May

I don't know why I even bother reviewing issues of this magazine. It continues to dish out poorly written space opera with each issue. There are three readable stories (by Alan Mourse, J.W. Groves, and Philip Dick) but not a thing in the entire issue merits comment.

SCIENCE FICTION QUARTERLY -- May

An above-average issue despite a story by Frederick Gosche which is one of the worst stinkers I've encountered since a story about a boy with wings on his wrists which appeared in an earlier Lowndes-edited magazine (SFO, again, I believe) which was one of the first sf mags I ever bought, ten years ago. And Charles Beaumont (who is hypnotized by the idea of rebellion against too perfect a society) makes no contribution. But Jerome Bixby's "Small War", and the two novelets, Gallun's "The Guthrie Method" and Morton Klass' odd "The Adaptable One" are all well worth reading.

SCIENCE STORIES -- April

An issue worth purchasing because the highly talented Frank M. Robinson is given more than half of it for a long novelet. This... is one of those spaceship-civilization after Heinlein things, but well-done. The rest of the magazine? Ray Palmer is the editor, you know.

SPACEWAY -- April

Notice to all writers of fan-fiction. This magazine pays for material. They've also reprinted a good novelet from a prozine, Britain's NEW WORLDS. It's "Unwanted Heritage" by British fan Ted Tubb. Worth reading if you can burn a copy but hardly enough to justify 35¢ expenditure in itself.

STARTLING STORIES -- Spring

Judith Merrill is a spotty writer but "Peeping Tom" is one of her bright spots. Rest of the fiction is routine or sub-standard. The non-fiction (supposedly) article "The Seetee Mind" is an odd thing. The writer, Gotthard Gunther, carefully documents a theory as to why we have two-valued minds due to the two-valued nature of matter. Very convincing, so far. Then he leaps to the completely unwarranted (as far as I'm concerned, although I may be a mere unlettered slob) conclusion that people living on matter which is contra-terrene and thus opposite ours would have minds which, while also two-valued, would work precisely opposite ours. That's oversimplified, of course, and if you want to really dig this character read the article. I don't know whether it's a tremendous spoof a la J.W.C.Jr or if the guy is one of these mystic crackpots who believes because something is theoretically possible and he'd like it to be true, therefore it is true; it do*question Sam Mines printing this as a non-fiction article, however. Such flights of fancy are fine in fiction but a bit out of place in something supposedly factual since so many people, including readers of science-fiction, accept anything in print which is worded in an authoritative manner as being fully documented and incontrovertible fact.

THRILLING WONDER STORIES -- Spring

Sam Mines must have an awfully naive attitude toward racial matters. He prints such earnest and ridiculous stories. There was that Ken Crossen story a year ago and now Jan Smith's "One More Chance", an ingenious little yarn with a last line which is so completely out of character as to ruin the whole story. Doesn't Mines realize Southern aristocrats bend over so far backwards to treat negroes with respect that they meet themselves coming back again. They simply feel the "negro is happier with his own race". Hypocrisy, sure, but so thoroughly inbred that they believe it themselves. You might catch the group known as 'poor white trash' expressing the sentiments these writers put in their mouths, in unguarded moments....but never, never the proud and decaying aristocracy depicted in these two stories. The three novelets are all readable. A better issue than the SS reviewed above.

RECOMMENDED STORIES

*What was that again? - cw

Bruce Elliott -- "Wolves Don't Cry" -- MOF
C.M.Kornbluth -- "I Never Ask No Favors" -- MOF
Judith Merrill -- "Peeping Tom" -- STARTLING
Robert Sheckley -- "Carrier" -- IF
Clifford D. Simak -- "Immigrant" -- ASF

Several on that list, especially the first, might carry a VHR rating but I'm in a critical mood today.