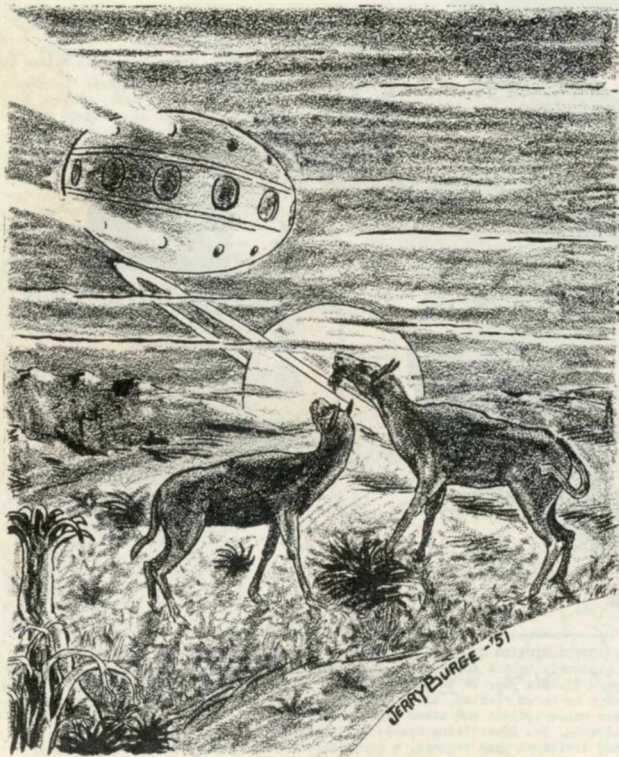


COSMAG SCIENCE FICTION DIGEST

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Science Fiction Digest

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SCIENCE FICTION DIGEST

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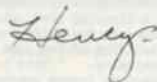
EDITORIAL ..

Just over six months ago, after seventeen years of sitting on the sidelines, content with reading etc and watching the antics of the "lunatic fringe," I decided to join in the fun and publish a fanzine of my own. Two months later, the first issue of SPD went out to an even hundred unsuspecting souls. I thought it was wonderful.....my own zine, ah, me..... I sat back and waited the paeans of praise that were sure to burden the postman, practiced patting myself on the back a few times.....and what do you think happened? Absolutely nothing, you're right. With the exception of a few hardy souls, notably Hoffman, Ranks, Silverberg, Fabun, Slater, Pickles and one or two others, no one even bothered to write and tell me what a crudsine I had given birth to. I put a sentence in the editorial asking anyone having old fanzines to please write, not even a price list from a dealer I'll thought I...boy, what a louse THAT issue was, I'll never make that mistake again. But, not losing heart, I plunged into preparation of #2, vowing to increase both contents and quality. But the best laid plans etc....in the middle of #2, the Atlanta club decided we could afford to put out an offset zine. So, I finished the Ranks article, wrote a hasty note to the effect that #2 was a very short issue, due to our change of plans, that it was being issued only one month after #1, instead of three as originally planned, that I knew it wasn't up to snuff, please forgive me, etc, and whaddya think happened? That's right, those paeans of praise, to my utter astonishment, came pouring in. I "Best second issue I ever saw" "Absolutely the neatest mimicing I ever saw in any fanzine" "Hoffman's article was tops" and so on into the nite...there's a moral in this somewhere. Henceforth I shall endeavor to consider each issue an absolute stinker, and I can't miss. Ha.

And so, here is #3. And please, this IS NOT a section of COSMAG. You will note that there are 16 pp in SPD, as in C'mag, next issue SPD will be on the cover. We could not decide on a feasible and mutually satisfactory method of combining completely, hence a separate section for each. The number of pp in SPD will NOT be limited to 16 in future issues, except for lack of suitable material. C'mon, you would be pros, let's hear from you. I would especially like to hear from anyone who is interested in doing black and white illos for the next issue. Again, anyone who has ANY old fanzines, please write me. I particularly want; Gorgon - Vortex - Futuria Fantasia - Spacewarp - Stardust - Time Traveller - Fantaste - Le Zombis - but you get the idea.....the GOOD ones. And, speaking of good zines, if you haven't already sent for a copy of QUANDRY 15, don't wait another day. This is the long awaited Quennish and, truly, a gigantic, stupendous & colossal fan publication. 100 pp, Kennedy, Willis, Oliver, Ridley, Shaw, Bradley, Lorraine, Boggs, etc.

Ken Slater, please note these even edges. The think, however, should be to my wife, Kay, who has spent many a weary hour, typing the final paste-ups for this issue & I hope, will do so in the future. Since undertaking this, I have noticed that many of the printed and offset zines do NOT adhere to even edges. Those of you who think it worth the extra effort, please speak up. I'm looking forward to meeting many of you at the Wolacon, and to those who won't be there, please bear with me, if I owe you letters. I'm cutting approximately 150,000 words of Sam Moskowitz, The Immortal Storm onto stenels, two fingers and thumb style, so you can see why my time is occupied.

Till November 1st...best regards.



—BY PETER RIDLEY—

A narrow path slashed its way, like a red snake, through the thick jungle. Only the wet red clay of the trunk, gave any contrast to the interminable green of the forest. Amongst the vegetation, the feathery branches of the magnificent ferns predominated, although the yellow cones of the giant club mosses were quite frequent. Except for the path, all the ground was covered by a slippery moss, of a particularly virulent green.

All at once, it began to rain, the violence of the downpour momentarily rending even the huge ferns nearly double. For a while the rustle and hiss of water on the leaves filled the forest, but as the shower passed, the customary silence once more enveloped the wilderness. On all sides stretched the forest, covering valley and hill with true impartiality. Only the many lakes escaped it's all-embracing clutches. Low scurrying clouds completed the sombre scene.

Suddenly, across the sky streaked a band of red flame, a deep scar swept over the ferns of the forest. Low over the jungle sped a shining silver craft, a scarlet plume trailing in its wake. For long miles it crossed the jungle, until at last a lake beside a clearing caught its view. The spherical ship swept round in a graceful curve and landed on the white concrete apron. Two biped creatures emerged and started towards the new building of the same substance as the landing place. As they walked, they conversed philosophically. "This is the only place in the Universe where I can obtain the excitement my system craves. This, Kor Lal, is the safety valve of our overburdened civilization." The one called Kor Lal replied, "It was indeed a lucky find, and, as yet, no similar to our home that there is no necessity for any haphazard armout, and, as yet, no

intelligent life." They continued to the building ahead, as they entered, they were greeted by their guide, "good hunting" he telepathed conventionally, "You, Harlon, have been here before, and know the rules of the hunt, but your friend Kor Lal must be told" "I am ready" Kor Lal returned.

"Hear and remember. You will go into the jungle armed only with a rocket gun, you will be accompanied by a guide, and not more than two friends. You must go on foot and live on the land. You may kill only as many animals as you have permits for. These are the rules of the Commission.".....

Later as they marched thru the dripping undergrowth, Kor Lal had time to converse with Edinal, the guide. "What sort of animals inhabit this place, Edinal?" "Oh, various kinds, reptiles, amphibians, insects, and a few mammals. The reptiles are the most dangerous of these. Quiet now, I hear an animal in the forest, you'll see soon enough." The foliage parted with a shower of water, revealing a large reptile. Kor Lal, as novice of the party, was accorded first shot. He raised his rocket gun and fired. The smoky trail of a tiny rocket snaked across the reptile's ribs and with a screech it turned and bounded off.

"After it!" pathed Edinal, and the three plunged into the jungle after the samurian.....

The velvet blackness of the jungle night was held back by the cheerful beams of a camp fire, built of ferns dried in a heat ray. The firelight shone redly on the faces of the three bipeds lounging around it. For Lal was asking the guide about the Planet of the Chase. Edimal replied, "The people of the Galactic Federation have been coming to this planet to hunt, for many centuries now. This planet has provided an outlet for our surplus energies, in the same way as the ancients went to a wild land to hunt and explore, as we come to the Planet of the Chase."

"How long will it be before the coming of intelligent life prevents our hunting here?" enquired Kor Lal. "As you know, the power requirements of time travel prevent us travelling more than three hundred million years into the future, and the farthest limits of our research on this planet indicate that intelligent life will not appear for at least two hundred and seventy-five million years."

Suddenly, the earth trembled, the three bipeds leapt to their feet. A gaping crack ran thru the forest, sulphurous fumes made them choke, then the ground opened beneath them, and they fell. A thunderous crash echoed across the forest. Then once again all was still and dark green, no longer did the firelight defy the night.....

• • • • •

The miner swung a heavy pick against the coal face. A thick slab of glistening black mineral fell, revealing something white. Fossils are sometimes valuable, so the miner reported his find to the Foreman.....

The phone in Professor Malcard's hall rang irritatingly. "Hello, Malcard here."

"This is the manager, Westlake Colliery," crackled a voice. "We've discovered some human skeletons in the Carboniferous layer, at least we think they're human, we thought you'd be interested. Like to come over?" "Very much so," replied the professor. "Thanks for calling."

"PLANET OF THE CHASE" is a Science Fiction Digest original story.

WHY ARTISTS GO BUT GREY

BY HANNES BOK

Some years ago, a friend of mine ditched his current girl friend. He was an addict of Delius, Sostakovich, Bruckner and Mahler. "We were talking about music," he explained "and she told me that the most beautiful and profound music ever written was---- Victor Herbert's 'Ah, Sweet Mystery of Life'". I could see his point. But, because there was a time when I thought that "In The Hall of The Mountain King" was the most beautiful and profound music ever written, I could sympathize with the girl.

And so, when I read some of the gruesome slash sent into "Readers Letters" departments of fantasy magazines--and am tempted to go out and hang myself--I hark back to the days when I, too, didn't know any better. In fact, I'll go so far as to tell an embarrassing tale about myself: I flunked Public Speaking in High School because at the end of the term, I got up and brilliantly narrated how I had come to the conclusion that Norman Rockwell, and Maxfield Parrish, were better than Michelangelo, and Botticelli Rembrandt, Durer, and El Greco.

I just didn't know from nothing.

My ears burned in sympathy yesterday for some students of a radio school, who in a broadcast over station WLIR, told the world that they were potential disc jockeys. I don't think much of the school they attend. Such voices! Ascents from Lower Slabovia II! And, one of them said, in all seriousness (ah, echo!) that composers of such little bit as Mona Lisa, Sam's Song, and Stardust, are better than Mozart, Beethoven, Sibelius and Chaikovsky. He used the same reasons that I used in my public speaking nose-dive. We both had the idea, that since these moderns were equipped with the experience of their forbears, plus originality of their own, they just had to be better. Ah, the optimism of youth! We were saying that if an idiot studies under Da Vinci, his own talents plus Da Vinci's must result in work surpassing Da Vinci's.

We just didn't know from nothing.

And the fans who write in that fantasy illustrator Doakes is better than stodgy old Rembrandt and Rubens--they just don't know from nothing either. Let us hope that they will learn better as the years go tromping along.

In the first place, most art work appearing in pulp magazines bears small resemblance to the original drawings. Yes, I said drawings, because the method of reproducing art work

(except in cover pictures) rules out the use of painting. Interior illustrations in pulp magazines are what is known as "line cuts". Thus at the outset, the artist is bogged down with limitations. A line cut reproduces only pure black, whether a solid area or a fine hairline. Thus, the artist if he wishes to use greys in his pictures, must simulate them, by spreading out in a white area, a lot of tiny dots or hairlines--achieving a half and half mixture, which the eye blends into an approximate grey, and to achieve a uniform grey, or a subtle from black thru grey to white takes a lot of time and patient effort. If you don't believe me, get out a pen and try it. Only a superlative craftsman like Finlay can get a range of more than three greys. The average pulp illustrator rests well content with pure white, one grey, and pure black.

Therefore, knowing that he is limited to white, one grey, and black, the artist must confine himself. He can't be subtle with his use of tone and value--it won't reproduce. The most he can do, if he is a bona fide artist, is to stylize his picture, so that the lack of subtlety isn't missed. And so, his work is always "contrasty" thru no fault of his own. Now then, can it possibly compare with--say, Blake's "Brook By Moonlight"? It can't!!

Now there is a better method of reproduction known as halftones, whereby the engraver's magic can reproduce any grey that an artist can cook up. But, unfortunately halftones have a habit of darkening the effect of the original, so that areas intended to be pure white will come out a soft grey. This can be remedied by carefully detailed work on the part of the engraver--etching out portions of the metal plate. But, it's expensive and about expense, more later.

It's necessary to use "line cuts" in pulp magazines because of the quality of pulp paper, which is only a slight step above bathroom tissue and blotting paper. It's both too soft and coarse to take ink properly. Consequently, artist Doakes beautiful black areas generally print-up as grey ones, and spotty grey ones at that, not a bit like those in the original. So, you can see that pulp reproductions have little likeness to the original drawings. Now, then, can you tell if the original work was good or not??

Come now the question of time. The editor summons you to his office and says, "I have five pictures for you to do by next Monday. They've got to be sent to the engraver, then, so don't fail me." The poor artist may not have worked for months, because the magazine was a bi-monthly and didn't care to use his work in every issue. Here he is stuck with five drawings to be conceived and executed in two weeks time or less. Contrary to popular myth, artists do not turn a crank and thereby produce a picture. Covering a sheet of paper with pen or pencil takes time--and the more carefully and artfully covered, the more time it takes. Covered with what? With (let us hope) good draftsmanship and original conception.

I don't know about the other illustrators but I'll tell you about me. The editor's given me a story in which not a darn thing happens until the last paragraph, wherein Our Hero finds he isn't a man at all, he's a robot. How can I possibly get a good drawing from THAT? I read the fool manuscript four or five times, looking for a loophole. All thru the story, nothing has happened by way of dramatic action, except various conversations the hero has held with various characters. Should I show him arguing with the heroine, as described on page 10 of the manuscript? No, of course not--he LOOKS a human being, even if he isn't, and if I show two ordinary human beings arguing, where is the fantasy? It could illustrate any ordinary love story.

Well, I certainly can't show the heroine arguing with a robot--for one thing it will give the end of the story away, and besides the hero looks exactly like a human--readers will write in and complain that the artist has made a mistake. What would you do? Well, no matter what I finally do turn out, the readers write in and complain that Bok is slipping -- this illustration isn't very fantastic. As if Bok could help it. He might submit a fantastic picture which didn't illustrate the story, but in that case, both the readers and editor would object.

In which quandary, Bok thinks and thinks and thinks. Sometimes it takes days. Sometimes he pulls a rabbit out of the hat and does manage to turn out an illustration which is fantastic and yet fits the story. Sometimes. But, what can he do when he has five pictures to turn out in less than two weeks? And supposing he does have a brilliant idea--how much time can he devote to careful execution of it? If he just scribbles it on

paper, readers kick because his work is "crude". (They kick about his "crudeness" regardless, since the finest is often lousied-up by the ink not registering on the coarse pulp paper.

And, if this isn't enough, some editors think they're artists. They hire a guy on the strength of his past performance, and then proceed to dictate how he shall interpret the story (often they tell him to illustrate a certain paragraph on a certain page) and just how to draw--the girl must be so many inches high, her costume must consist of burlesque--theater breast--plates and panties rather than an imaginative conception of future fashions; the hero should be over there, and doing this or that, and the dragon shouldn't have heart-shaped scales, he should have triangular ones, etc., ad nauseam. Oh, and by the way, don't draw this in dry-brush--the medium you specialize in. Artist Joe Blow has some dry-brush work in the same issue, and we want variety in techniques--so instead of the medium you handle best, you must draw this picture in grease-pencil!!

Comes now the question of salary. Most fans who discuss pulp illustrating with me are flabbergasted at the price I get. Generally, the doorbell rings, and as I open the door, a youth or damsel says plaintively, "Oh, you're not Mr. Bok is?"

"I sure am," I say. "But I thought you were about sixty, and with lank yellow hair hanging over your eyes I had tall and stooped over I."

They come into my one room combination workshop and living quarters, and look very downcast. Eventually they confess why. Seems they figured I got \$500 per picture for after all, my work was published in a magazine and "everybody knows" that people whose work appears in magazines gets at least \$500 per picture. And if I get \$500 per picture, why am I living in this shabby old tenement and wearing rags?

The answer is simple. I don't get \$500 per picture. I DO get a heckuva lot more than I did in pre-war days. Back in 1940 and 41, I got \$5.00 per picture from nearly all magazines except Famous Fantastic. They paid me \$10 & 75¢ price! Now, the average payment per picture (obtained by adding up and dividing up what ten fantasy mags pay) is \$20 per picture. Covers average at less than \$75. If an artist were lucky enough to get six covers a year, he'd earn all of \$400 or less!

So you see, the average fantasy-pulp illustrator is forced to turn out as much work as possible, barely to keep alive. If he's real artist--that is, if he values quality above the necessities of life--he turns out less work, because it requires time and careful thought to produce high quality work. And even if he's a hack, and whaps out pictures as fast as he can, he'd have to make 20 covers per year, or 75 half-page interior drawings, to earn \$1500 per year. I suggest you start counting the works of artists in the magazine and figure up their yearly salaries.

And so, how can pulp illustrations even equal, let alone rival, the works of past masters? Many of whom were subsidised by kings, and could take years to turn out one picture? So Pete Fan writes in, "Doakes' illustration for THE GOZZLED OPSTERS is better than Van Gogh!!! Yes to one, Pete Fan never saw a Van Gogh, except in a lousy reproduction. (I hated Van Gogh myself until I saw his originals--wow, what a difference! Pete hasn't even seen Doakes' original for THE GOZZLED OPSTERS; he is judging from a cheesy reproduction on bad paper. I'll say one thing for pulp paper, often it makes a bad picture look better than it really is.)

Comes now--aesthetics. Pete Fan raves over Doakes' illustration, which shows a realistic woman (copied from a photo in BATHING BEAUTY MAGAZINE and "made fantastic" a snaky tail copied from YOUNG WILLIE MAGAZINE and further fancied up with a lot of bubbles and stars that have nothing to do with the story--they just look nice) This says Pete Fan is real art. Pete also writes that because the GOZZLED OPSTERS was a time travelling yarn, it's no good, because H.O. Wells wrote a time travelling yarn years ago.

What Pete really likes is the subject matter of the picture. Or the technique. He thinks he likes the drawing--only artistically speaking, there ain't no drawing. Art is essentially interpretation, making a cat seem catlier. You don't interpret a woman by drawing her as the BATHING BEAUTY MAGAZINE camera sees her, you interpret her by making her softer, flashier, more feminine--or by making her attenuated, more ethereal. Not of this world--or by accentuating the length of her nails, the slant of her eyes the sinister simosity of her curves.

The fact that the picture may be entirely without pattern doesn't fase Pete. He'd analyze a house built without blueprints and in varying styles of architecture; but he hasn't the sense to realize that a good picture, like a good building, must follow definite laws of structure. Often when I try to explain composition to Pete Fan and his ilk, I'm greeted with, "Composition? What's composition?" and yet, Pete with no knowledge of aesthetics whatever, thinks Doakes is better than Rubens, who draws ugly fat old floozies. He's like editors who think that "action in a picture" consists of 17 fist-fights going on at once. Whereas a good artist can convey an exciting feeling of action, altho the drawing contains just the head of a girl sailing, by the use of a dynamic line. Pete and the editor aren't really talking about action, they're talking about subject matter, human interest, association of ideas. To hear me talk, you'd think that all pulp fantasy illustration is lousy. And yet, I know a lot of it isn't. A great deal of it is far too good for pulp magazines--worth far more than \$20 a throw. Some of it belongs in expensive books. A very little of it belongs in Museums.

Let's talk about technique. Artist Smith can't draw worth beans. He can trace nice pretty girls out of movie stills, however, and swipe Artist Jones' rookship from an old issue of OORY SPACE STORIES. He pretties them up with a super-fancy technique--all kinds of tricky stipple work, delicate cross hatch, brilliant scratch-board exercises--all derived from other pen-artists who in turn derived them from eighteenth century engravings on metal, and medieval woodcuts.

Pete Fan may agree that the girl and the rookship aren't very good, but the "picture" is superb, he maintains, because of the wonderful technique. Technique in itself is nothing. Nobody in his right mind would applaud a pianist who, at a concert, gives forth with a half-hour rendition of finger exercises in brilliant technique.

Technique is HOW you say a thing--the language in which it's couched--and if the artist isn't saying anything (that is, offering creative, interpretive subject-matter) he is simply saying nothing in a very brilliant language. And if a speaker got up on a platform and delivered a lot of double talk with an Oxford accent and all sorts of marvelous modulation--it would still be double talk, signifying nothing--except that the speaker thought that he could "put one over" on his listeners.

Every fantasy artist I've talked to says he has received a letter of this sort:

"Dear Mr. Jones: I liked your picture for SCROBBLE MY OWLPS in the May 1872 issue of GROSCHME STORIES. Would you please send it to me? Thank You. Yours sincerely, Pete Fan

Altho Pete Fan doesn't usually close with "yours sincerely"--usually it's FAN-atically yours, or "The Watcher by the Walling Well, Pete Fan," or "The Bug-eyed Fantasist, Pete Fan."--something real cute and individual, letting Jones know that Pete is a real character, Pete is different, Pete is somebody.

Mr. Jones, at the outset of his career, makes the mistake of sending the drawing, photographed, for Pete's collection. Does he receive a thank you note? Of course not. Jones could have sold that drawing to a private collector, thereby maybe augmenting his pitiful fantasy-illustration wages. In other words, he gave Pete Fan a drawing worth money. Did Pete ever give Jones anything? As a matter of fact, Pete wrote three letters to editors praising Jones work. But Pete wanted to impress his fellow--fans by having an original Jones, something none of them have, and nymaah to you, I'm Pete Fan, I am, I've got something you ain't got, nymaah to you, I'm better than you are.

Jomey later discovers this drawing in the possession of John Pulp-reader. John paid Pete Fan ten bucks for it. Did Jomey get anything out of it? Of course not, but Pete Fan got ten bucks for it without any work. And yet, Pete tells everybody he's crazy about fantasy and fantasy art. Seems to the various Jomeyses concerned, that Pete is making a racket out of it.

Worse still is this letter, common to all illustrators:

"Dear Mr. Jones: I just adore your gorgeous work. Will you please make me a cover for my fan magazine, HROUSTING? I'll need it by June tenth. (The letter is postmarked June fifth) Thank you. Yours STWMP-atically, Pete Fan.

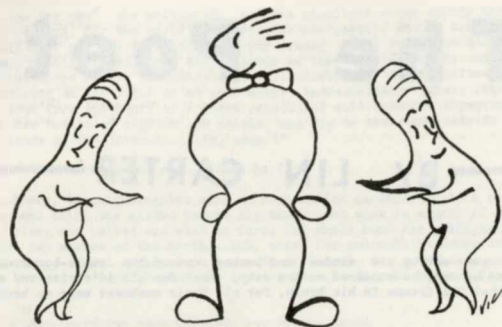
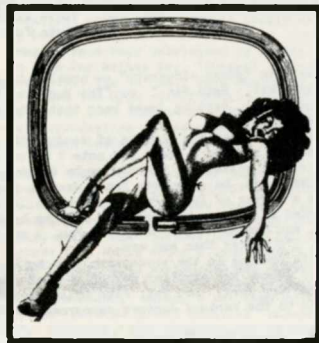
Jonesy, earning just enough to pay the rent, is supposed to drop everything and spend a week or two, doing something for nothing. Even if he could turn out the drawing in one day (and I don't know one illustrator who can) it's still a loss of time and money. Do you think Pete Fan would give Jonesy a days wages if Jonesy wrote in to Pete and asked, "Dear Pete: I adore your fannishness, please send me a days or a week wages." Not on your life!! And supposing Jones does send Pete a specially drawn cover. What happens? Pete doesn't frame it--he rams tacks thru it, hangs it on the wall til its smoked-up and fly-specked, and has to be thrown away. Or sold to some other fan.

So finally, when Jonesy in self defense asks for payment of any drawings that Pete Fan requests, Pete denounced him as a money-mad louse to all and sundry. Cute, too is the editor, who has received a letter from Pete Fan requesting a Jones original. Jonesy has to fork over if he wants to continue working for that editor. It doesn't cost the editor anything to be nice to Pete.

It's a great life. And yet people wonder why I'm trying to quit fantasy, and get into some other field of art.

HANNES BOK

The preceding article, "Why Artists Go But Grey" originally appeared in "THE BIG O", edited by Lee and Pe Cole, 614 Norwell St., El Cerrito 8, California. No price listed.



IS BEING LEE HOFFMAN

Shortly before Labor Day, the celebrated QUANDRY came out -- the anniversary issue of QUANDRY, flagrantly publicising the successful conclusion of its first year in fandom -- and, incidentally, yed Lee Hoffman's 19th Birthday.

Q #1 was suffered forth from the ailing womb of Armstrong College's ancient micrograph, which has faithfully turned out every issue since. At first, the issues were only laughingly referred to as readable, and more than one fan pointed out the illiteracy of yed in leaving out one A of QUANDRY. Now, the A -- if thot of at all -- is considered an entirely useless and unnecessary accessory.

Asked the reason for such spelling, replied Lee to wit: "it's like the guy who named his inn the "Eight Bells" but painted only seven bells on his sign." Lee's eyes twinkled. "You'd be suprised how many people went in to point out his mistake -- and came out his best customers!"

QUANDRY rapidly gained in popularity and legibility -- in fact, you can now read it! Of course, it helps if you subscribe. Q is about the closest thing to a monthly ever to hit Fannisia, and is 10¢ per, or one buck for the year.

But most of you are familiar with QUANDRY. Many have been lucky enough to have direct correspondence with yed, or to have read some of the fannish material by - lined: Lee Hoffman. They are familiar with Lee's intriguing and highly contagious sense of humor, much of which you see reflected in Lee's justly famed li'l peepnl.

So this space is a short tribute from the staff, the editor, and myself to one swell peoples -- one of the weaker sex's greatest contributions to fandom -- Miss Lee Hoffman!

-- Shelby Vick

The Poet

BY LIN CARTER

The Poet sat by his window and looked out on the smoke-besmirched city of London. And as he sat, he wondered on the city, that for all its size and richness was so ugly, and that the dreams in his brain, for all their weakness were so beautiful. And he was sad.

As he sat in his dreary garret, and pondered on beauty and man's futility, the Moon rose up from her palace of white marble beyond the world's rim and flooded the city with her milky light. And lo! the drabness and weary ugliness of London vanished, and a new city sprang there, loved and gilded by moonfire. The great, awkward towers loomed against the stars like silver pyramids from some lost Atlantean metropolis, and the city was transformed into a wonderland. The Poet smiled sadly, and fondled the thought that for a time, the world was beautiful again.

But then a cloud of soot, from the roaring factories, smudged across the sky and hid the Moon. The sea of whiteness melted into the night once more, and the city was London again, and again ugly—and the Poet wept at the transformation.

As he sat there weeping, a miracle happened. One dim ray of moonlight filtered down from the smoky heights, and bathed him in its cold beauty. From the dirty fogs that choked London's cramped ways, a wisp of mist drifted past and caught the radiance and was transformed into a web of floating fire. And as the Poet watched, spellbound, out of the mist and firestorm, a Woman was born. A woman...lovelier than Trojan Helen...born from the moon, like Ishtar....

"Who are you?" he whispered.

She smiled and it was like the moon breaking thru the clouds. She stood there before him, naked and unashamed and holy, with her hair floating about her like a net of little crystal flames, and an aura of moonlight glimmering on her pallid skin. When she spoke, her voice was soft as a breath of clouds.

"My name is Romance," she said.

He went slowly to his knees before her. "Then you are not dead," he whispered. "I was sure you were, for the earth is no longer beautiful. Already is no more, and the mermaids are gone from the placid seas, and the souls of men are dead."

She stretched out one hand, and touched his hair with a caress as light as the stroke of a dove's wing. "No, I am not dead. I can never dream so long as men shall dream and men shall always dream....."

There was a silence. He knelt adoringly at her feet, and worshipped her wordlessly. "Why have you come?" he asked.

"I come for you," she whispered, and the moonlight shone softly thru her sable hair. "I come for you, for the world has forgotten her poets, and no longer needs them. Come, and I will show you the lands of which you dream; Come, and we shall sit by marble fountains in the moonlight and watch the uniforms as they come to drink; and I will take you to the cities where Beauty is enthroned.....Kooribaal, the Magnificent, with her Jasper domes shining in the light of an opal moon; Andro-Sathka, where Utha, Kad rules from a throne hewn from the heart of a giant ruby.....I will show you Rhyngyrin, and Kesh and Ith, with her towers of scarlet and purple, and fly to the stars astride hippogriffs, and visit the lands of far Ukanos.....oh, come!"

God, he whispered, can such things be?

"Listen.....there, the nightingales sing in high walled gardens, while a princess waits for her lover; and still the gilded barges ply the Orient seas in search of Dariabab, and the Isles of Spice; and belted and clad in furs, you shall hunt for griffins with a young princess in the icy wastes of the North.....Oh, come, for amarantins Homer still sings in the pensive evening, and I shall weave a wreath of laurel for your hair, and you shall sit on golden thrones in lands beyond the evening star, and dwell in Paradise forever and ever....."

He said no word but rose and took her by the hand.

When they found him in the morning, in the small alley beyond his shattered window, he was quite dead, and altho he must have suffered intense pain, his lips were curved in a smile, and his eyes were the eyes of one who gazed on Paradise.....

The End

"THE POET" By Lin Carter, originally appeared in "GORGON", Volume Two, Number Four.

SLANT TELLS ALL

Some time ago, we began secretly to circulate new fans, getting their names from the prozine letter columns. "You too can be a BNP!" we said. "You want egoboo? We can supply it. For modest fees we will do your fanning for you. We undertake all the duties of an actifan, letters in your name to prosines, fanzines and fellowfans, and publication on your behalf of any type of fanzine. Why work your brain to the bone when you can make use of our specialized services? Write at once to Proxypro, Ltd..."

The project was an immediate success, and the time has come for us to make a startling disclosure. WE ARE PANTON! Daily for some years fleets of vans have brought us sacks of letters to be answered on our battery of typewriters, and taken away great stacks of Fanscients, Gorgons, Operation Fantast, Slants, Spearheads, etc. for distribution by our customers, with countless letters, articles, columns, stories, poems, artwork, editorials, etc., carrying the names of Ackerman, Boggs, Laney, Grossman, Sneary, Riddle and dozens of others, each of whom thinks he is our only client.

But all this must stop. After today we regret to announce that there will be no more fandom, except for some poor wretches who were unable to keep up with their payments. We are sorry not to be able to finish off our various controversies, like Laney-Methathe and Banister-Boggs (especially when the bidding was getting so high) but pressure of work has forced us to close the fandom department. Our prozine commitments are getting far too heavy.

(From SLANT #4, Walter A. Willis, 170 Upper Newtownards Rd, Belfast, No. Ireland)

LETTERS

Hoffman Kothing, Inc.
101 Wagner St.
Savannah, Ga.

Dear Henry:

It is only with the utmost self-control that I refrain from replying to R.J. Banks reply to my article with an article. (How ya like that sentence?) Little did I realize until I read Mr. Banks' EN GARDE that you are an incompetent editor. Unfortunately, I had taken SPD to be a fair measure of your ability but now I am informed by Mr. Banks in EN GARDE that you are not a very good editor, otherwise you would not have printed my article, Bob Silverberg's article, or EN GARDE itself. And, now, I realize that it was sheer incompetence on your part to print OVER POPULATION in your first issue. Sir, according to that eminent fanzine editor, who has published 6 whole issues of his notable UTOPIAN, at a loss of merely \$27 per issue, you waste the space in SPD. That is incompetence. I quote Mr. Banks, "If Messrs Silverberg and Hoffman had read my article carefully before flying off the handle, all this wasted space could have been devoted to good reprints." WASTED SPACE, mind you! What right have you, Mr. Burwell, to waste space with such trash? Just because your readers might enjoy it as much as you did is no reason to print it. After all, SPD is a reprint magazine! The mere fact that material is entertaining is no excuse for you to use it. Bear me, sir, this is the word of R.J. Banks, who replies with scholarly wasted space to blathering space.

It is hereby suggested that Mr. Banks, who says that almost any young fan who set himself to the task, could produce another SPACSWARP or LE Z, be given the opportunity to do so. Unfortunately, I do not have a complete file of either of these magazines, but I will gladly lend Mr. Banks my complete file of NEKROMANTICON, if after a few weeks of study, he will produce a magazine of equal quality. Or, if an incomplete file will do, I'll lend him my collection of VAMPIRE (which lacks two issues) on the condition that within one year, after reading and studying them, he will produce five more issues of that size, all of which uphold the quality standards set by Joe Kennedy with issue #9.

As to my own "arty little sine", which doesn't seem to suffer from the fact that I have an interest in the stage as well as in fandom, yes, I would keep it going, but just what prompted Mr. Banks to say so, is beyond my feeble imagination. Here is his statement: "Lee says if my plan went into effect, all fan would be able to buy the big ten. If this happened, there would be no need for SPD. Lee is correct as far as his logic goes, yet Lee would be in the forefront." What other kind of front is there? "He would keep 'NUANTRY going, and most of those from whom Bob says I'd be wiping my gobos would keep their sines." How far does my logic go, Mr. Banks? And what system of logic do you use? If you are making some obscure comparison to suggest that the incompetent editor of SPD would continue his publication, although there would be no demand for a reprint sine, I see what you mean. Burwell would no doubt be so foolish and incompetent as to continue publishing, when no one would buy or read his sine. But, there is some possibility that his sheer incompetence would save his sine, for he just might print some more spacewasting original articles out of utter stupidity and consequently, he would have something interesting to offer readers who had already read everything in the leading sines, from which he'd be reprinting.

The prosecution rests.....

Dear Henry:

I got the copy of SPD this morning, and am more favorably impressed than by any new magazine I've seen in some time. I have recently been afflicted by the disease of blaséness, which sooner or later strikes all fans. It is getting next to impossible to pry subscriptions from me for new fanzines, and almost as difficult to get me to take the time to write a letter. I found considerable merit in your sine and a few things to pan. All in all, much better than the 2nd issue of most mags. And, knowing that every fan editor delights in detailed criticism, I'm going to dissect the issue for you.

Firstly, the mimeography is superb. Some of the finest I have ever seen in any fanzine.....you showed good taste in using blue ink.....I have yet to see a mag use blue ink which didn't look good. Moral: All mimeoed fanzines should turn blue.

.....also a digest, or reprint, magazine ideally should be better looking, and feature superior reproduction to the mags whose material it uses.....going off set will bring a bunch more magazines into acceptable hunting grounds.....as for new articles, if you can get good ones like Lee Hoffman's (if anyone doesn't already know it, I adore Lee's work) print 'em. A GOOD new article is always better than a good OLD article....I didn't read the Burks article over.....however, I am glad to see that it is now available in legible form.....a letter column adds much to a magazine, keep it, but limit it to two or three pages.....and please, no letters reading "Read your magazine today. It's wonderful." or "ditto. It stinks." These interest an editor but no-one else. The rest of the space could be better devoted to reprinting something by Walt Willis or Hoffman.....

Sincerely,
Vernon McCain.

Editors note: Vernon assured me his letter was the exact type that I shouldn't use, but I just had to get in that part about the blue ink. One fan (a contributor to this issue) wrote "I don't care much for the blue ink (for no logical reason whatsoever) black seems to me somehow better." Self-justification and all that.....

NO COMMENT -

FIRST CALF FROM TRANSPLANTED EGG IS BORN

Up in a dairy barn near Madison, Wisconsin there 's a spindly-legged Holstein calf that was born nine months after its mother died.

This calf is the first living proof that fertilized eggs from one cow can be successfully transplanted into another.

In the Wisconsin experiment, conducted by the American Foundation for the Study of Genetics, the calf's mother was slaughtered a few days after she was bred. The fertilized egg was transplanted into the reproductive tract of a "foster mother," where it grew naturally.

Eventually, scientists believe, it will be possible to take many eggs at a time from high-producing LIVING mothers, transplant them into lower-producing foster mothers, and thus step up many times the number of calves our best cows can "have."

--FARM JOURNAL

in '52

THE ATLANCON

Atlanta Science Fiction Organization