

PSYCHOTIC



"A GIRL ON THE COVER, BY GUY.

WONDER WHAT PSYCHOTIC IS COMING TO?"

NUMBER FOUR

~~9/20/70~~

This time cost 10¢
(What a Loss. I'm Taking!!)

"Positively Revolutionary!"

In fact, why mess with a contents page at all?

This is the October issue. Volum--- ahhhhh!
To Hell with the volume number. That's just
affected imitation. This is number 4.

I'm Richard E. Geis
And I live (?) at
2631 N. Mississippi
Portland 12, Oregon.
Apartment 106.

Above the door is a sign saying:

"ABANDON HOPE ALL YE WHO ENTER HERE."

Drop in some time ...
(that's time)

I dunno, maybe it's better the other way

"A OVEL, SIPP?"
"Yes, I have given it 3 pages."



12 issues for \$1.00
(should be \$5.00)

whoop — better NOT FINISH That ONE

[Read MAD #8?]

The Leather Couch

WHERE THE EDITOR RAMBLES ON AND ON...AND ON....AND.....ON

THE CASE OF THE FRUSTRATED BOOK

Too long ago I bought a science fiction novel I had wanted to read for many years. I say "too long ago" because at least six months have passed without me even reading the first chapter. A deplorable state of affairs. I view with alarm my tendency to put off things like that. I point with pride to the fact that each and every morning I read the most educational of all the pages in the morning paper: the comics. Isn't it a shame about Daisy Mae? Will Rip Kirby? Did Buz Sawyer? Should Smilin' Jack? I don't know, but I'm dying to find out. Of course all this has nothing to do with the subject at hand.

This situation, as I said, is deplorable. I wish to show, as a sort of defense, how it all came about. I certainly want to read the book.

In my mind I have a science-fantasy reading priority chart. Since I always have a certain amount of science fiction or fantasy that is awaiting my attention, I allot all new material a place on this barely conscious priority chart. I don't do this purposely, it just seems to happen.

When I bought the book in question, I put it in a section of my bookcase which I now realize is my "Hold" area. After a while, perhaps in a slack week, the book was advanced to the "Current" shelf. This shelf is right beside my overstuffed. Any day I might have reached over and commenced reading it. Except for the interruptions.

People keep dropping in (I've long since given up repairing the ceiling.) and dragging me off to go bowling, or to a show, or wench hunting. One thing and another kept coming up (the floor is a wreck, too) and this book waited patiently on the "Current" shelf. I read a bit more, then happy day, the book was moved to the "At Once" position on the end-table. There it lay, virginal, eager to be...er...devoured by my avid eyes, when a catastrophe struck. An act of Ghu of the first water.

With little warning (a lucky glance out the window) a V.I.W.* visited my apartment. In a frenzy of sixty-second housecleaning the book was relegated to the "Hold" area once again.

Ordinarily it would have to work its slow, painful way to the end-table through the regular channels. But, I am a fair man. I have decided to make a special case of that book. I have it here beside me now as I type this. I am going to read it in just five minutes. I am determined that this time....

Whoops, there goes the buzzer.

* An abbreviation of Very Important Woman.

NO FEUD?

I have been asked to hereby state a public statement to the effect that there never has been a feud between Bob Stewart and Raleigh E. Walteg. No blood and gore all over the floor this time, eh boys?

Stay tuned to this fansine for feud news. What can you lose?

TV, RADIO, AND THE EDITOR

This Sunday, September 6th, I watched the tennis matches on television. It occurred to me at the time, that here was something that the medium of tv did better than any other. In the visual reporting of top amateur sporting events, television was at its best. You can imagine my thoughts when, one third of the way through the match between an amateur first-hand seeded player and Tony Trabert, the network cut off the telecast because of previous commercial commitments (that is: the sponsor of that particular program wouldn't consent to the cancelling or postponing of it).

Such things make me wonder if maybe the British haven't got something with their nationalized broadcasting. They enjoy the best in what our cultural level they seek. I won't go on about the evils of the current tv and radio entertainment level. Gilbert Seldes does it all too well in the current issue of The Saturday Review.

What really prompted me to grasp master from box and insert in my paper was the fine succession of programs I have just witnessed, and the realization that such sequences are all too few and far between. I saw "What's My Line?", a fine comedy show; "Studio One", which dramatized Kipling's The Light That Failed; and the "Philco Playhouse", which put on a somewhat digested version of Shakespeare's Othello.

Briefly, these programs, especially the dramas, were excellent because they presented versions of literature. And I mean literature. We were not subjected to yet another dose of the pap hack tv will always fondly force upon us. There should be MORE Shakespeare, there should be more Kipling, and there should be more ADULT fare on tv. Instead, we are given just a sip every now and again to keep us placated. The sponsors and advertising agencies who put on the shows and who determine the quality and character of them, seem to us as an occasional "cultural" piece as a show item; as proof positive that they are doing their duty to God and country and ethics and the FCC. Such shows should be the rule, not the exception.

I'm writing this now rather than view a cruddy murder show. That I am faced with after a fine program like "Nothing But The Best". I keep thinking what could be done with the television and radio mediums, and I see what has been done. It makes one wonder about the relative value of the "freedom" of commercial radio and tv. Private Enterprise, "the good old American way", has sadly fallen down in providing the best entertainment for the people. The business men and the ad agency men and all the rest who are currently in command seem unwilling in the extreme to take any kind of responsibility for what their shows are doing to the people's morals, ethics, and tastes. We deserve to be treated as more than a peevish mass of 12 year-olds. I resent it, and I am angry, and if ever I have a chance to vote for an improvement in the system, you can be sure I will.

ELSBERRY, ME, AND POLICY

In the September A LA SPACE, Richard Elsberry writes a "Farewell To Fandom." The most important reason for his leaving fandom, as I get it, is that fandom has nothing to offer him; he has outgrown it. He would like to write appreciations of Stravinsky, but feels compelled to write what he thought the faned would like. In short, that fanzines and fandom are too immature and juvenile. And, of course, he is right. I have written above a great deal about the responsibility of radio and tv to the people. And, just as inevitably, there is a responsibility of the faned to the fans. Thus, while the policy of PSYCHOTIC is accented on science fiction and fandom, it will whenever possible bring to you articles, stories, poems, in fact ANYTHING which is interesting to the editor. My likes and dislikes, after all, are the criterion for this zine. Submissions are requested.

PHILCON

BY CHARLES HARRIS

"This will be one convention where everything will start on time," declared Irvin C. Heyne, Chairman on the Philcon Arrangements Committee. Consequently, I missed most of it.

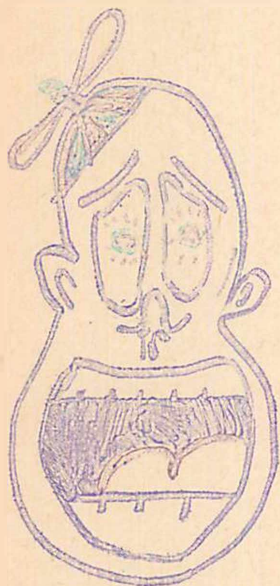
I traveled to Philly by train with Henry Ebel (co-editor of TYRANN), and arrived at 11:30 Friday morning. Both of us planned to devote the day to sightseeing, since the Con wasn't scheduled to begin til Saturday.

As soon as we entered the Bellevue-Stratford, a young man in a white shirt walked up to us. "You're fans," he announced. (This statement, along with its interrogative version: "Are you fans?", was the most frequently heard remark on Friday.) We admitted that we were, and he introduced himself as Ed Cox, former letter-hack from Maine. Henry and I spent most of the afternoon chatting with him and Wally Webber, one-time editor of ZORBLE, and then had dinner with Dave Van Arnham and Honey Wood and her bright yellow nail polish. Algis Budrys, having made a wrong turn while en-route to the barbershop, wandered in and Honey introduced him to us as Rich Elsberry. This was the first actual instance of Convention Standard-Operating-Procedure that I had witnessed.

At first I thought that it would be a normal convention--that is, that everything would start behind schedule. Registration for early arrivals (of which there were a surprisingly large number) was originally supposed to begin at 5:00 Friday afternoon. It was then postponed til 6:15, and actually got under way at 8:00.

After a brief wait in line, each member received an impressive 12 x 14 manilla envelope. Inside were a small leaflet describing Philadelphia landmarks, and a tiny identification badge. (Advice to next year's WorldCon Committee: have the names on the name-cards printed in half-inch tall letters. It was very embarrassing to grab a guy who looked important by the lapels, inspect his card with a magnifying glass, and discover that he was Homer O. Zilch from Gooseneck, Arizona. And if you use 12 x 14 envelopes, please put something in them.)

After registering, I spoke with Ted and Judy May Dikty, who had been right in front of me in the line. Dikty told me that in preparing the annual Best S-F Stories he and Everett Bleiler read all the prozines. "Yes," added Mrs. Dikty, "And I'm the one who picks them up off the floor."



"Are you fans?"

Then I spotted Isaac Asimov. After some chatter about his stories, I asked if he had seen the take-off on his "Foundation" series in a fanzine called FANWARP. "My boy," he said, flinging his arm over my shoulder (we picked it up later), "Lead me to it!" While Asimov made the acquaintance of PSFS member Peggy Gordon, I hunted down Lyle "Let's-Have-A-Big-Con" Kessler. I told him there was a gentleman who'd like a copy of FANWARP. "That'll be 20¢," declared Kessler. Asimov handed him a quarter, pocketed the change, reluctantly left Peggy Gordon, and retired to another room to chuckle over the parody. It wasn't til later that evening that Kessler discovered the identity of the gentleman to whom he'd sold a copy of his fanzine.

I spent the rest of the evening up in the "Seventh Fandom" suite which was occupied by Bob Silverberg, Ian Macaulay, Norman G. Browne, Harlan Ellison, John Magnus, and about three dozen others. Finally I crawled down to my room and went to sleep. I hadn't done any sightseeing.

On Saturday the pros began to arrive, and I had a great time meeting them, talking with them, and snapping their photos.

Although the first Philcon Progress Report promised that there would be "no other convention going on in the hotel at that time", we were treated to the presence of the Eighth Annual Reunion of the 101st Airborne Division on Friday and Saturday, and the National Urban League arrived on Monday. This caused a terrific elevator tie-up, especially since two of the six elevators were out of order.

At 2:00--promptly at 2:00--the scheduled program began. Milton Rothman gave the address of welcome, and L. Sprague De Camp, Chairman of the Rules Committee, was introduced. Contrary to what I had been led to

except by certain grumblings in the fan press, no dictatorial or high-pressure methods were used to get the Convention Rules adopted. De read the rules aloud several times, explained them, then had them voted on one by one. All were passed except the one dealing with the choosing of the next convention site; this was amended to prevent the entry of a "dark horse" bid after the first ballot.

Bob Madle, columnist for Future and SFQ, handled the introductions. There were the usual applause, neck craning, and shouts of "He's at the bar!" Madle avoided mentioning most of the dozens of faneds present (or, hand, I remember only Bob Silverberg's name announced), but he apparently tried to make up for this by introducing Wilson Tucker, Dave Kyle, Algis Budrys, and Sam Moskowitz twice, while Joe Gibson was, if I remember correctly, introduced no less than three times! After two telegrams of congratulations from Irish and Australian fandom were read, there was a short recess. I wandered across the street to have supper (or was it lunch?), get a shoeshine, and buy some more flashbulbs, returned in time to hear part of Guest-of-Honor Willy Ley's talk.

His subject was the familiar Our-Coal-Will-Be-Gone-In-A-Hundred-Years-And-What'll-We-Do-Then? He listed the three alternative sources of power as: 1. the Earth's heat, 2. solar energy, and 3. the breeder reactor (which uses non fissionable uranium to produce fissionable uranium and energy), and then gave facts and figures as to their efficiency. Mr. Ley based his predictions only on known facts; he made few extrapolations and assumed no future inventions not already backed up by a considerable amount of practical demonstration. This attitude, while properly scientific, is frustrating to an SF fan. Heck, fifty years ago who would have imagined that there could ever be such a thing as a breeder reactor?



"You mean you're
not Heinlein?"

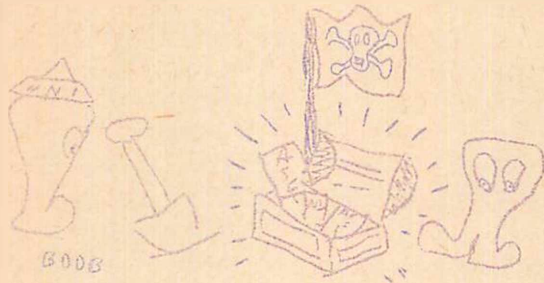
That afternoon I happened to notice in one of the doorways a sign reading: "Art Exhibit". Stepping inside, I found some fans gazing at the most beautiful interplanetary paintings I have ever seen. The artist, Mel Hunter, was there and patiently answered queries about how he did the painting, how long they took, where he got his ideas, and various other matters. The paintings were exquisite! In addition to a half-dozen prozine cover paintings, there were several unpublished planetary panoramas. It's too bad that this exhibit was given no publicity at all, thus causing many fans to miss it. In my opinion, that was the high point of the convention.

Saturday evening the first auction was held with Sam Moskowitz, of course, as auctioneer. Prices were above average, the highest being \$25 for a Bergey Ccover. A Finlay illo for "The Conditioned Captain" brought \$13.50, two others by the same artist sold for \$7.50 and \$7.00, but for some reason the one for "The White Widows" went for only four dollars. Highest price paid for a manuscript was \$10.00, which secured the author's outline for "The Demolished Man" for Harlan Ellison.

That night I wandered around the rooftop party for awhile (the bar obligingly sold Pepsi-Cola at 20¢ a bottle), and then went down to the

...quite where Dave Mason, Sheldon Beretson, Leany and Mary ... were working on a one shot zine entitled IMPROMPTU. The thing was ... stencilled, and mimeo'd in one night. A typical sample of the contents is ... entitled "Gumery Lesson":

Zap bems and bugs and robots too,
But spare a dish that's chaffey.
Blast pros, neos, (shucks, Birdbathe too,
But never beam Ahaffey!



Finally I crawled back to my room and went to sleep.

I awoke the next morning in time to ... the discussion of "Science Fiction ... by Japanese fan Tetsu Yano and British editor Bert Campbell. I did catch the tail end of Irvin Hayne's "The Future of ("a non-scientific fiction"), and Philip Jose Farmer's "SF and the ... Report", which I was told was his first public speech. Farmer revealed that he had been interviewed by Dr. K. (for the first report, naturally), and was now a statistic on one of the left-hand pages (he didn't remember which). He wound up his talk by remarking, "Since it's approaching noon, some of you might like to eat lunch now, and some of you would like breakfast. This got a big laugh.

I wandered across the street and had my breakfast.

I returned just in time to miss the first few stages of George O. Smith's "The Seven Stages of the SF Writer." It seems that each time he advances to the next stage, the writer is approached by a ~~sumat~~-young-thing who gushes, "With your great experience in such matters, Mr. Zilch, tell me what are the flying saucers?"

The Philadelphia Science Fiction Society presented a skit entitled "The Game From Outer Space." It was a take-off on the TV show "What's My Line?" The sponsor being "Drop 'Im...the lady's disintegrator ray gun. One pouf, and he's gone!" COSmith had a walk-on role demonstrating how an s-f author gets ideas for stories. A young lady handed him a bouquet, and as he walked offstage he muttered, "Hell, flowers!"

After a brief recess, the symposium on "Science Fiction as a Career" was presented, with L. Sprague de Camp speaking on writing, Lester del Rey on editing and agenting, and Lloyd Eshbach on publishing. Their final answer as to whether S-F should be taken up as a career: "Positively NO!"

As a follow-up, Bob Tucker introduced three fans who-have-become-pros: E.E. Evans, Frank M. Robinson, and surprisingly, Harlan Ellison! It seems that Harlan just sold a short story to no less a mag than F&SF. Each of the three told a little about their fan and pro careers, and Frank Robinson mentioned that while working as an editorial assistant at Ziff-Davis he finally managed to complete his collection of Amazing. The Z-D file is no longer complete.

Emcee Robert Bloch announced the next panel as "Women in Science Fiction, or Why Monsters Get Bug-Eyed." The panel consisted of Bea Mahaffey, Katherine MacLean, Pat Jones, and Evelyn Harrison, with Ted Sturgeon as moderator. Pat Jones revealed that over 50% of the letters received at

Standard Publications come from women, tho the only ones ever printed are those from gals named either Marian, or Marion. But although Ted struggled manfully to keep the discussion alive, nothing else of much interest or importance was brought out.

I didn't attend the banquet held Sunday evening, but I hear that Ike Asio handled the job as Toastmaster quite well. At the banquet, the First Annual Science Fiction Achievement Awards (unofficially referred to as "Hugos" were presented. The awards, determined by vote of the convention members, went to The Demolished Man as the best novel of the year, Philip Jose Farmer as the most promising new discovery, Ed Emsh and Hannes Bok tied as best cover artists, Virgil Finlay as best interior illustrator, Forrest J. Ackerman as favorite fan, and Astounding and Galaxy tied as best promags. (Rumor has it that ASF was definitely ahead in the balloting, but the Convention officials didn't want to alienate the affections of GSF readers.) Because votes were too scattered to give any single item any sizable lead, no awards were made for the best short story or the best fanzine.

The traditional masquerade party was held that night from 11 to 12. Working feverishly (the heat wave which had plagued the East during the preceding week broke on Saturday, and I caught a cold) I managed to complete a "costume" by 12:05. Three prizes were awarded: best science fiction costume award went to two Detroit fan dressed as Buck Rogers and Wilma; an unnamed fan disguised as a huge stomached bemb was declared most unusual; and Mrs. Richard Wilson won on general principles.

I spent some time in the Seventh Fandom suite, then finally crawled back to my room to sleep.

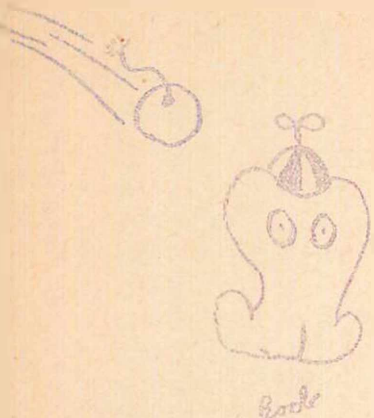
I awoke on Monday morning just in time to miss most of the discussion led by Dave Kyle on convention site rotation and the formation of a permanent organization to handle future conventions. The only action taken was to recommend to the next convention that some action be taken.

As it was already past twelve, I went across the street and had breakfast.

I returned just in time to miss the first part of Fletcher Pratt's talk on "Robots and Computing Machines." According to Pratt, electronic computers can't: react to unforeseen emergencies; determine their own procedure for solving a problem; leap to a conclusion and then look for evidence to support it. They can: play chess, translate from one language to another, and go insane.

Jimmy Taurasi gave a talk on the Fantasy Veterans Association, reminding us that the men in Korea now have more leisure time and consequently even more magazines than before are needed to keep them supplied.

"Is Science Catching Up With Science Fiction?" was the subject of a panel discussion moderated by E.E. Smith. The panel consisted of Drs. Clark, Cameron, Brauner, and Dank, each of whom stated the scientific field in which he specialized, and then proceeded to speak about some other field. The surprising conclusion was that in most scientific areas, science is already ahead of s-f! During the question and answer period which followed, a member of the audience asked one of the scientists about an article from Astounding. For a few minutes the two battled questions and



"What are the flying saucers?"

counter-questions back and forth until Doc Smith interrupted and reminded, "The topic is whether science is catching up with science fiction, not whether science is catching up with scientific articles." That ended the discussion.

And then came the event about which everyone had been talking, arguing, and drinking about during the preceeding days: the selection of the next convention site. New York, Cleveland and San Francisco were three possibilities most often mentioned. The best arguments against San Fran came from a native of the city; the best arguments against Cleveland from a couple of Cleveland fans; the best arguments against New York from a couple of New Yorkers.

But now the moment had arrived. Three cities made bids: San Francisco, Cleveland, and-- quite unexpectedly--London. The Cleveland bid was based on facilities available; Bert Campbell urged us to live up to the title "World S-F Convention" and vote for London; Don Ford said there was a moral obligation to give the con to the West coast, which hadn't had a worldcon for four years. The first ballot gave San Francisco 130 votes, Cleveland 120, and London 64. San Francisco easily nosed out Cleveland on the second ballot, 187 to 157. So it's S.F. for S-F in '54!

The program scheduled for that evening fell apart. The Chicago S-F Society skit was called off, as was a performance by Bill Venable and the "Pittsburgh Sf Quartet." Jerry Bixby, who had been playing the piano at odd times and in odd places during the preceeding days, could not be persuaded to play in front of an audience. They almost "forgot" to award the prizes in the raffles! Of all the scheduled entertainment, only Gordon Dickson, his guitar and his s-f ballads actually turned up.

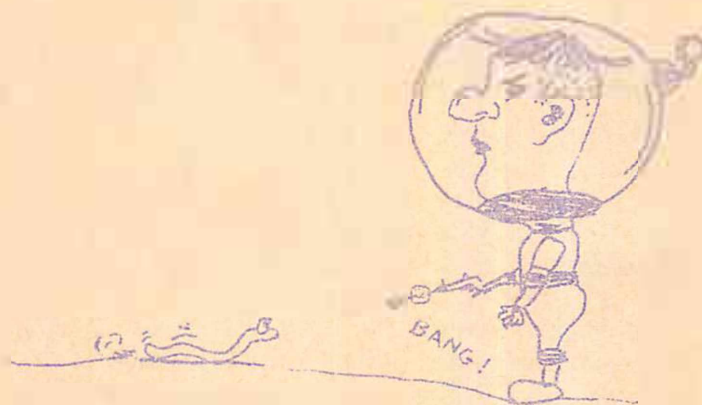
A close-out auction (with a half-dozen assorted auctioneers) brought prices just as high as in the Saturday session, with one tiny Eberle sketch bringing \$9.00. The auction was still going when I finally crawled onto the train back to Great Neck and fell asleep.

QUOTES FROM HERE AND THERE: Local newspaper accounts: "Their agenda... includes...addresses by such BNF (big name fen) as Willy Ley, Fletcher Pratt, and L. Sprague de Camp." "For the first time in SF history, awards will be given this year....The awards will be given to the fen who wrote the best novel, the fen who put out the best magazine, etc." - - - Norman G. Browne, planning for the masquerade party: "I'm going as a tendrillless Sian." - George O. Smith: "Mr. Ron Hubbard happened to hook an electric eel. Inside the eel he found an IBM typewriter with a sheet of paper in it, and typed on that sheet of paper were the first four sentences of Dianetics." - - - Unidentified Fan: "Tell me, Mr. Smith, what are the flying saucers?" - - - Sam Moskowitz, auctioneer: "Here's a beautiful Poulton in the style of Finley." - - - 101st Airborne Member, observing the extreme youth of many of the Philcon attendees: "It looks like a meeting of the Junior Chamber of Commerce." - - - George O. Smith: "Never let a few facts interfere with the telling of a story." - - - Fan, after waiting fifteen minutes for an elevator: "I wonder what's holding up that elevator?" Other Fan: "A cable."

Ed Cox, as two ten year olds pass by: "They're members of Eleventh E. on.
 E. Sbrague de Camp: "Voting on the next convention site gives some people
 the thrill of a horse race." - - - Unidentified Fan: "Tell me, Mr. de Camp,
 what are the flying saucers?" - - - Doc Smith: "The three most common de-
 grees are B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. Of course you all know what B.S. stands for;
 well, M.S. is 'More of the Same' and Ph.D. means 'Piled Higher & Deeper.'" -
 - - Ted Sturgeon: "Women are the only kind of s-f fans who supply us with
 more s-f fans." - - - Fred Chappell, seeing Jack Harness in a man-eating
 plant costume: "That's what comes from using too much chlorophyll toothpaste."
 - - - From the PSFS skit: "...a novel about the future when the bopsters take
 over: Groovy Planet." - - - Fan, questioning de Camp: "You said that the
 average s-f writer makes \$3,000 a year. Does that mean that a guy with
 twenty pen-names, like Henry Kuttner, makes \$60,000?" de Camp: "No."
 Isaac Asimov, on being told that the scientific passages in Currents of
Space are double-talk: "Yes, but it's 4¢ a word double-talk." - - - George
 O. Smith: "the old idea that the aim of every fan is to become a writer and
 the aim of every writer is to become an editor, isn't exactly true. The aim
 of every writer is to become filthy rich." - - - Willy Ley: "Scientists fre-
 quently write 'for reasons hard to evaluate'. This really means 'I don't
 know!'" - - - Unidentified Fan: "Tell me, Mr. Ley, what are the flying
 saucers???" - - - Harlan Ellison: "That guy wouldn't appreciate my fanzine;
 look at the low forehead." - - - Larry T. Shaw, to a roomful of Seventh Fan-
 dom: "Fans have no respect for the pros any more."

Charles Harris, summing up his trip to the Philcon: "I had a terrific
 time!"

-the end.



"All right BEM, I know your kind..."

-Dignin

Stapling The Fanzine

By Raleigh Evans Maltog

I wonder if anyone has ever really noticed how the fanzines have been stapled together and what effect that has on the poor fan who is trying to open the fanzine.

First of all there are the rusty type of staples which when one starts to use them to staple with usually sticks the stapler and causes a flow of words from the mouth of the stapler which the Bible could use but which it has to have a different meaning.

Then there are the too shiny staples by which a fan is blinded for life when he takes his first look at the zine and so there is another lost fan.

Then when the fan tries to remove the staples from the fanzine he has a hard time in doing so. And nowadays it is easy to recognize a fan. All one has to do is look for broken fingernails and there he is.

It has been known too that when a fan has trouble in tearing a rusty staple from a fanzine then that fanzine usually has one less fan on its mailing list because that fan has switched fanzines because he has happily discovered that another fanzine has better staples that are easier on the takeoff and thus saves the fingernails for more better uses such as biting them while watching a 3-D.

It seems that a lot of editors staple their zines together in such a way that when the fan does open the zine he takes out more staples than he should and thus the zine falls apart leaving the fan holding the pages.

Then there is the fan who grabs any kind of instrument handy which it usually has either been or hasn't been made for the task of taking a staple from a fanzine. The fan has used all kinds of gimmicks for removing said troublesome objects. Items like pen-knives, fingernails, razor blades, hair pins, kitchen knives, paper-openers, bottle openers, can openers, bits of metal, bottle caps, etc., have been used to pry a staple forth from its resting place.

To be safe the fanzine editor should enclose a first-aid kit with each issue. That would really make everybody happy.

This is the end.



STAPLE-IT IS

(The sign
of the
fan)

ABSTRACT PUBLICATIONS

Aberrant - Quis Custodiet - Absolutely Astonishing
Fandex - Fantasy Annual - Ha!

ABERRANT

Yes, it has absolutely flipped its lid, gone off its nut. Beware! It may drive you sane!

ABERRANT is an all new seventh fandom fanzine! The example set by the defunct REASON will certainly not be reflected upon this new and much better magazine.

ABERRANT will be mimeographed on plain white paper with black ink. To those who saw the second issue of REASON: there will absolutely not be any red ink on pink paper! Nothing but plain white!

The first issue will contain humorous fiction, serious fan fiction, fan articles and satire.

Represented in the first issue are: Jimmy Clemons, Terry Carr, Harlan Ellison, Don Howard Donnell, Robert E. Gilbert, Bobby Gene Warner, Bob Stewart, and many many more.

Look for loads of artwork by DEA, Fred Malz, Bob Stewart, Robert E. Gilbert, Ingram McCallum, and others.

editor and publisher:

Tom Piper
464 19th Street
Santa Monica, California

Sample copies of ABERRANT are available at ten cents an issue. Subscriptions: 12 for \$1.00 or 6 for 50¢. Send all subscriptions and material to Tom Piper. ABERRANT is published monthly.

Important Notice: ABERRANT must have the quota of 25 subscribers before the second issue is published! Send for the first issue today!

For information pertaining to Abstract Publications, write to the address above or to Jimmy Clemons, 1829 Tamarind Avenue, Hollywood 28, California.

The Observation Ward

A FANZINE REVIEW BY THE EDITOR

DAWN, Russell K. Watkins, 110 Brady Street, Savannah, Georgia. 10¢ per.

This is a fanzine that is "A Hangover From 6th Fandom." And it looks it. The reproduction is by spirit duplication, a thing I know something about, and is...well...fair. There are a few faint pages, but most of the issue is clear. DAWN is bi-monthly, which partially explains the justified edges. The layout is good. Nay...very good. Quite definitely the editor shows his experience with fanzines in this department, for this dawn...I mean, DAWN...is #17. Seems there has been a two year time lag between issues. The editor has been, and is, in the Air Force.

The material runs mostly to humor with a devil-may-care wotthehell, wotthehell slant that I found most enjoyable. "Sweets To The...." was the item that tickled my funny bone the most. Good satire. "The Real Witch", a story by Link Walters, makes me question the editorial acumen of editor Watkins. That is, unless he wrote it himself. That would explain it.

A mimeed cover by Charles Wells graces the front. A horribly botched (reproduction-wise) back cover left me with a low opinion of the machine Watkins uses. He bought it from Wells. What a Hukster.

Altogether a pleasant half-hour's entertainment. Worth the dime asked. Future issues should see an improvement in duplicating quality. Let us hope so. Otherwise the ax it is getting.

SATURDAY MORNING GAZETTE, John L. Magnus, jr., Federal 203-B, Oberlin, Ohio. This is number one of a weekly. No price listed. In this one page.... Hmmm. I dunno what to call it. I guess "Newszine" is the best piece of nomenclature for this effort. It has opinions, tho.... Sorta like a column..newsy, but nice., that John thunk up and decided should be run once a week. Then comes the horrible realization that there ain't no fanzine weeklies. Thus the SatMorGaz was born. Very readable, informative, and I wonder if there will be a second issue. All fans please note John's new address as listed above. Sounds like a prison and number, don't it?

FANTASTA, Larry Balint, 3255 Golden Ave., Long Beach, Cal. 2/5¢. No, I didn't make a mistake. The price is 2/5¢. Fanzines is getting cheaper. Run for the hills, the Great Depression is back.

Ah, Balint. Back you are to FANTASTA I see. ESCAPE get to hot for you? Couldn't take the howls about that column by Cantin? What's the name of your zine going to be next issue?

The material in this issue is "Gleep," an editorial; "Atlantis," a fanzine column; "Startling Secrets", a humorous item of 75 or so words by Cantin; "Oh Frabjous Day", a poem by Terry Carr; "STF And 3-D Films", a full page series of illustration depicting the various 3-d'ers; "What Fandom Needs", an article by Richard E. Geis.

The poem by Terry Carr was not good. I felt that it was labored

the last line, which contained the punch, was a bit far-fetched. I couldn't sustain the two long stanzas. The fillers in this zine are good: they are mostly humorous ads and poems by ES... Stewart. The "STF and 3-D Films" item, which was illustrated by Don Gartin, seemed nothing more than a glorified space waster. Since the zine is only 6 pages long, to use a full page piece of nothing like that is sheerly criminal. Published about six weekly.

But let not my hair splitting and quibbles detract from the overall worth of the zine. And at 2/ 5¢, how can you lose?

STAR ROCKETS #6, Raleigh E. Multog, 7 Greenwood Road, Pikesville 8, Md. Currently, sub rates are 10¢ per single, 12 for \$1.00. Adv.: 2¢ per word. Beginning at the first of next year they are: subs, 20¢ each, \$2.25 for 12 issues; adv., 2¢ per word. Published every 40 days.

In which editor Multog needs some lettering guides and a layout primer. Firstly because everything is done with the typer..story headings, article headings, poem titles..everything. Secondly because illustration seems never to have occurred to him. Nor has a more pleasing or diversified handling of space in his pages, apparently. The cover this issue was done by Multog himself, and it perhaps explains (or is reason enough) the lack of interior art. Raleigh, face it: you are no artist.

Curiously, the best item in this issue is a letter from Pvt. Claude R. Hall. He shows a good imagination, humorous style of writing, and a pleasing enthusiasm. It makes one want to meet him and have him for a friend. "The Green Dog" by Carol McKinney was the best written of the fiction offerings, and the best idea, I think. "The Collector" by Dave Bates was a pretty good bit of fan humor. The basic premise of the story, that of a man who conquers the world so that he may then have a complete collection of stf, is a bit too lumpy to swallow. The humor is good within this framework, however. "Prozine Review" by V. Paul Howell is an interesting column that offers some solid thinking and opinion. The poems are of the kind I don't like: impersonalized and cosmic in scope. Basically, of course, none are really well written. "Lost And Wed", a story by Pvt. Claude R. Hall, except for the dialogue at the end, was purple prose pure and simple.

This zine needs illustration, layout, better material. In short, better editing.

DESTINY, Spring 1953, Earl Kemp, 3477 North Clark St., Chicago 13, Ill., and Malcolm Willits, 11848 S.E. Powell Blvd., Portland 66, Oregon. \$1.00 for four issues, 25¢ per copy.

The cover on this amateur publication (I'm quite sure the editors would resent it being called a mere fanzine) is a collaboration by Willits, an editor, and Jim Bradley, a one time active fan in Portland. The work is a strange combination of background and detail rendering of the best kind, with a lamentable mis-handling of the human and near human figures. The result is effective, but upon closer examination reveals jarring deficiencies in drawing skill. The picture as a whole reminds me somewhat of the earlier work of Frank R. Paul.

"The Golden Key" a story by David H. Keller, his last to an amateur publication, was well written, but overly larded with deep symbolism. No, cancell that. It was not well written, at least by modern standards. The dialogue was stiff and unreal, the characters mere puppets, and the story idea, while good enough, was not handled as effectively as it might have been.

Fantasy Artist Ralph Rayburn Phillips is given an accolade, and deservedly so, by Manly Banister. It is true that Phillips is a good artist as Banister says, and he has developed a unique style; however his

...verges too close to cartooning to be generally recognized as side fandom as anything but that.

Mr...oops, I mean Dr. Fred L. Whipple answers the question: "Why Conquer Space?" with the usual answers. Dr. Whipple is chairman of the Dept. of Astronomy of Harvard University. What a coup de maître; imagining getting the one and only Whipple to write an article for a fan--er--er--er-- publication.

"The Fantasy Press Story" by the publisher, Lloyd Arthur Eshback, is an interesting recounting of how the Fantasy Press originated and prospered. It gives an absorbing glimpse of the inside of publishing.

"He Who Laughs Last" by Henry Ebel, was a neatly done story with a twist. Neat, because in the story the twist is inevitable. It was not very attractively layed-out, tho, and the illustration by Richard Bergeron was poor.

"A History of the Tarzan Films" by Vernel Coriell was perhaps the most interesting item in the issue. It featured photos of the various Tarzans who have played the character on the screen. Each athlete seemed to specialize in one physical activity.

"David H. Keller: in retrospect" by Sam Moskowitz depicted Keller's life as a writer and fan; his difficulties with the world and fandom. Reading this story, one receives the impression that he should never have started the whole adventure into fandom in the first place. He should have stayed in his ivory tower.

"Who Knocks at my Door?" by Elliot Rockmore is a nicely integrated summation of the flying saucer mystery. Interesting, informative, and well worth the reading.

A delightful poem, "Welcome Martians" by Norman R. Jaffray, makes a welcome interlude on page 25. Illustrations by Shelby Vick are apt. The poem is of professional quality; excellent phrasing.

"Who's Who In Science Fiction" by Earl Kemp, gives a short autobiographic article by Walter M. Miller, jr., and a bibliography of his works. This is seemingly a continuation of the series "Author, Author" that ran so long in The Fanscient so these many years ago. A good idea.

A book review by George Wetzel of--you guessed it--"A Lovecraft Bibliography".

An esoteric type poem, "The Gateway Of Vrooms" by Lilith Lorraine graces the back cover. Illustrated by RRP. I didn't like it.

Altogether a good fan publication, and well worth the money, this DESTINY nevertheless is lacking in top-notch illustrations. Then too, the absence of material of a fannish nature and the lack of any references to other fan magazines seems to point up a certain snobbish undertone. Like many prozines today, DESTINY must ignore the fannish in order to be "mature".

STARFARER #3, Henry Oden, 2317 Myrtle Street, Alexandria, La. 25¢ a copy, five for \$1.00.

It is a hard thing to review a zine like DESTINY, and then turn to a zine like STARFARER. One is inevitably plagued by the question: "Can, or should, I judge this zine by the same standards as the other?" I know for a fact that the editors of many zines are older and more experienced than newer, younger ones. Should one allow for that and give certain zines a few mental strokes as a handicap?

I don't think so. The reviewer has a responsibility to the reader that has to come first. Too, it isn't fair to the fanned in the long run to have a constantly changing set of criteria.

STARFARER, therefore, gets a panning. The issue is best summed up by Henry Oden himself on page 36 where he says:

"Readers of the World: Awake

You are being taken in!

This is a **startling expose'**: it is now available to the general public through the sheer kindness of the ~~gracious~~ editor of STARFARER. Through a careful survey of this issue, the editors have found out that it contains not the full number of pages that it purports to have. At last the reader knows he is being gipped.

On the next to last page there is a number 39, supposed by all to be the number of the page. But, ha, is it

No, never. The reader is merely getting gipped. You see, we have the cover first. It is counted in the page numbers. Actually, it is not a page. It is merely to add a little bit of beauty to the magazine, and to give the book a substantial binding.

Then we have the contents page. It contains absolutely nothing. Merely a list of articles, of which there are few.

The editorial has no article meat in it what-so-ever. It is only the editor's poor excuses for being three years late this issue, and a few stupid remarks to get you to read his excuses. There are three pages of that.

Wetzel's article lasts one and a half pages.

Then an ad, which is nothing.

Mosher's article could be cut to a page.

Another ad.

The poem, as is, could have been put in half a page, or a few of the verses left out making a quarter page.

The book add is nothing, and the duplicator story, when all the un-necessary padding is taken out, would last three quarters of a page.

In other words, this issue had but four pages in it.

And do you know what? This expose' could have been left out too."

And all the above is literally true.

The cover is a very poor amateurish drawing satirizing "The Beast From 20,000 Fathoms." All other illustration is of the same low calibre. Reproduction is pretty bad. It couldn't get much worse. Beyond this low printing standard they wouldn't DARE mail out the zine; it would be unreadable. Even these editors must have some sense of obligation to their readers.

There were some good points, however. The bit in the editorial about the editor's tussle with the mailing clerk was very good. I have noticed in the two issues I have seen of this zine, that the editorials were invariably the best things in the issue. There is hope after all. But to charge 25¢ for this thing...OH, NO!

GREMLIN #2, Gary Curto, 724 Huron Avenue, San Francisco 25, Cal. A bi-monthly, it retails for 15¢ a single, 75¢ per year.

The front and back covers show a rocketship taking off and landed on a desert; nothing to lament, but nothing to cheer. Illustration inside is very good. Especially liked the illo on page 10 by "Pois" which is a neat pic of a slavering bug-eyed thing who is eagerly anticipating a big meal of some sort. Bob Stewart's boobs are much in evidence, and nicely too. The editor is a good artist in his own right, and has T. Carr and Steve Brady to help.

The editorial is interesting if only as a case study in sophomoric writing. This really not that bad, I just couldn't resist that phrase, "The Big House", a fanzine review column by Larry Balint, is good, in fact one of the best I've seen. Larry has a discerning eye and pulls no punches in his candid remarks.

"With Violet Teeth", a story by George Manning, is written rather well, mechanically speaking, but comes a cropper in plot and narrative method. He avoids the high spots of the story by having a radio announcer report it third hand in the form of news flashes. A major fault that inherently rendered the story no good.

The editor, on page 19, rates the top ten fanzines. PSYCHOTIC rated fourth. Of course, this is not coloring this review. Much.

The letter section is interesting, notably a letter from G. E. Benicucci. This boy is unabashedly juvenile.

Generally, the level of material is rather low. However, the zine has an aura, and just might go places. It has that intangible something; that faint hint of inherent quality. As is, the mag is just not barely worth 15¢.

FANTASIAS #7, David English, 63 W. 2nd Street, Dunkirk, N.Y. 15¢ per copy, and worth every penny of it.

For here is a zine that is long... very long... on good writing with thought behind it. The headings are nothing, however, and layout is handled as if the editor thought it superfluous, which is probably the best guess I'll make in a year.

The cover is by DEA, is multilithed, and does not impress me in the least. Interior art is, on the other hand, terrific. This English is a cartoonist-illustrator par excellence. Intelligence, humor, wonderful simplicity of line, all are instantly apparent in these illos.

"The Success of Sweet", by Bill Warren, is professionally written. This is a delightful little story, and I found myself wishing it didn't have to end. This is a case where a story was printed in a fanzine whose quality is higher than that of most pro stories. Yet, almost certainly, no prozine would touch it. This, then, is the proper function of the fanzine; providing an outlet for just such high quality "it ain't commercial" fiction.

There is an article by Roger Dard titled "The Weird Art of Rosaleen Norton." Very good, but somewhat lessened in effect for me because of the excellent article by Hal Shapiro in the last issue of SPACESHIP.

Fred Chappell's "The Goldfish Bowl", a column of thoughts about faneds, fan-writers, and the injustice of it all. Good, as is all the material. I should say "very good."

"A Writer of 'Jumbee' Stories", by George Wetzel, concerned itself with Henry S. Whitehead, and very nicely provided an insight into the Whitehead personality, his stories, and provided a rundown of the uncollected short stories of this writer. This is by its very nature a rather specialized article of interest to only a few. However, it was written so well, that it was well worth the reading if for no other reason than the average fan knows very little about this Whitehead.

"The Vain Pursuit", by Dick Ryan, continues the line-up of adult comment by smarter than average fans. Ryan asks: "...a pertinent question for any future fan polls which might be taken would be 'How many mags do you buy and not read?' To be followed up while the enquiree is still dazed, with 'Why do you buy them?'" Well.... I buy them because I think this stf boom is gonna bust and I want a complete collection of the "Years of Abundance".

This zine is urged upon one and all. It is a delight to read.

Run For The Hills

OH DAMN.....I was misled! I was fouled! That dirty newsdealer down here in Long Beach told me MAD isn't distributed anywhere in California. And I writ that in the last installment of this column. Now I discover that it is merely Long Beach that MAD isn't distributed to. Bah!

POETRY CORNER.....Below here I have a rather odorous poem by a pseudonym. I'd rather die a sparrow

Than
Die a rhea!

-Fontaine

THE CESSPOOL...Congratulations are in store for Terry Carr and his Fanzine Material Pool which is, at last, nationalized. The pool will furnish material of any kind to faneds free of charge. Also a place for fan writers to distribute their material through. All interested persons are asked to contact Terry Carr at 134 California Street, San Francisco, California.

PREDICTION!.....Startling Stories will soon combine with the new popular magazine - SUNBATHING AND HEALTH (The Official Organ ((watch your language, Balint)) of the National Nudist Association)

OH ZORCH!.....San Francisco got the world convention in '54. By the time this is read by you slobos out there, this won't be new anymore, but it is now. WHOOOOOOPIE!

ZE FLYINK ZAUCERZ IZ BAK!.....How many of you saw the YOU ASKED FOR IT tv show when Criswell predicted that on December 10th of this year the government would issue a statement that the flying saucers actually exist? I would suggest that we circle that date on the calender and see just how much his predictions are worth.

SHIFTY MISTAKES DEPT.....In a letter from a neophan I received the other day, the chap (I shall omit his name out of pity for the fellow) referred to Ted Carnell, British pro, as TED CARNAL! Yip-eeeeeeeeee!

LA GASOLINA DE RICHFIELD!.....Has anyone noticed the posters up along the highways for Richf'eld Gasoline? They all depict some phase of space travel. There have been about five different posters to date. Also you can obtain comic books at the individual stations on space travel. Probably inspired by the Collier's articles, eh what?

WHOOOPS!...Peter Graham tells me that the San Francisco Con next year will not be called the Friscon (anconvention of pick-pockets) nor will their campaign slogan be "Let's bring home the Paycon." All fen please take notice.

WHAT WAS THAT AGAIN?.....Heard a tune on the Perry Como tv show the other evening called IMAGINATION.. Could this possibly be Bill Ham-
lings theme song? Mayhap we can get him to sing it at the next Con,
huh?

AFPS PROGRESS.....I'm sure you all would like to know the progress
made by the ANTI FAN-FICTION SOCIETY thus far. Well, I'll tell you
..... I am still the sole member holding all offices. Doesn't
ANYONE want to join? Pleeeeez!

HOAX??.....News has reached me that Richard Shaver is to lead an
expedition into the unexplored sections of Mammoth Caves. Can any-
one confirm this information? It might very well be possible that
Shaver is hearing from the deros again.

GAMBLER UTOPIA - The Garden Of Eden was a pair o' dice! (paradise)
((another item like that, Balint, and your column is past tense))

BOOOOOOOOO!.....WEIRD TALES has issued its second digest-sized
periodical. This confirms the fact that the editor meant it when he
said they would go digest. Never can tell about them eds. The
letter columns still contains letters from anti-sciencefictionists
and the stories are still scaring the wits out of strong hearted
readers. I recommend this magazine to any fantasy fan.

FINALLY.....ABBOTT AND COSTELLO, after their latest picture was
shown, ABBOTT AND COSTELLO GO TO MARS, were recommended to do a
picture called ABBOTT AND COSTELLO GO TO HELL.

RED-FACED FAN DEPT.....Someone suggested that Dr. Kinsey team up
with Mickey Spillane to do a semi-fiction book. The title wasn't
mentioned, but it probably couldn't be repeated here anyways.

RECOMMENDED.....is Norman Brown's FILLER. Or is it Art Wesley's
FILLER? It's somebody's FILLER! Anyhoo, it is a quarter for the
more than 40 pages and more than 500 items, each a belly-laugh in
itself. Order from ART WESLEY at 402 Maple Ave., Fond du Lac, Wis.

IGTOBLU! This is where we part for another month. But I shan't let
you go without one more poem from that wit, Fontaine-----

Tisn't Peter Graham
Tisn't Bob Stewart
Dysentary Carr.

-- Fontaine

And with that I go

the end

Obviously, the easiest way to use up space is by putting something
utterly inconsequential in it. As I am sucessfully doing at the
present moment. Whether I'll succeed in using ALL the space is
another matter entirely. The attempt, however, ideative as it most
certainly is, is concequently neither doomed to certain failure,
nor assured of ultimate success. It would appear, though, that the
ultimate objective has all but been achieved. I will expect con-
gratulations in the mail one week from today. Are you still there?

FAN FICTION: *An Opinion*

BY V. PAUL NOWELL

My original reaction to Larry Balint's blast, daintily titled "Down with Fan-Fiction", which appeared in P-2, was to direct a guided missile to 3255 Golden Avenue in 'lil ol' Long Beach, which is within range of my secret testing grounds. But then I sat down and thought the whole thing over, and I am forced to agree with Larry...almost. He says of it is slop! I believe in constructive criticism, though, and after a verbal blasting like Balint's it's no wonder that few people write the stuff. Those that do, then, don't do it very well. I write fan-fiction, and I'm not ashamed to admit it, though I'm no professional. What I know of writing I learned in Journalism from a teacher who was a professional writer herself. However, she didn't write, nor did she read science fiction, and her criticism of my stf efforts left me cold. Nonetheless, I believe good fan-fiction would be written if: (1) BNF's would try it, since they have the most experience and know best the faults of fan-fiction; (2) neofans and stf readers would stop trying to become a Bradbury or Heinlein with one attempt, and; (3) if everyone who writes would stop trying to end all their stories with those DAMNED SHOCK ENDINGS. Shock endings are the hardest type story to write (and I used to write everything with shock endings). A shock ending means that you build the reader up to a point of suspense, or down to a point of contentment, and then throw the whole thing in their face. You have to have an almost professional experience and plot to make a good shock ending. It can and has been done by fan writers...but rarely. As Larry says, fan writers haven't the necessary know-how to be good fiction writers. If they had, they wouldn't be giving away their words to a fanzine. There is some good fan-fiction. The trick is to find it.

Most depressing to me is for an editor, fan or professional, to build up a story (Rap style) only to find that it's stinking or worse. It would be much better for the editor to say: here's a story...maybe it's maybe not. Big build-ups can ruin many a good story.

But I want to know: is it easier to write an article than a story? I've written both, in fact more articles than stories, yet I can't say which is more difficult. A story needs a plot, setting, characterizations...an article needs facts or experiences, hardly anything more. But a good article can be ruined, too, by build-ups, poor writing, or false facts. Nevertheless, more articles than fiction pieces are printed in fanzines. It seems to set up so: promags print the fiction, fanmags print the articles. But there is still a difference. If a promag should run articles about the little cons, or some stf party, or about fan clubs in Canada, etc. the stf readers who aren't fans would flip; they'd cancell subs and everything else. Likewise, should PSYCHOTIC run an article entitled, "Locum Tenens" or "Oil, Secret Agents, and Woolly Bears", it would probably lose 50-65% of its readers and be called "snobbish" for trying to go "high-hat". In ASTOUNDING, those articles are in place, right at home. Obviously, there

is a major difference in the articles published in a pro-mag and a fan-mag. What about "fiction"? Should the difference there be so great? It has to be, because if a fan would run a story with the greatness of "Blind Sky" or "In Hiding" in a fanzine when he could sell it and make a million? Hence, it is only natural that fanfiction will not live through the ages. It can't be done for free. BUT, and here is the whole point of fan-fiction, we CAN write fan-fiction that, although not good enough for the pro-mags, is high enough in quality, and smooth enough in plot and characterization to be accepted by the fan reader.

If a would-be fan writer would take his plot, work it smooth, make acceptable characters, and present his science in a plausible way, but not via "gadgetry", and would then proceed to write the story, he would have a tale that would fit into the 1% of fan-fiction called good. But, you may ask, if one goes to all that trouble, why not just write with a professional goal in sight for the story? Obviously the inexperienced writer, the fan writer, needs practice, and plenty of it. The only way to write is to write. And if the fan writes, and has his stories in a fanzine, he has a chance to see the reader reaction and learn where his mistakes lie, provided the criticism offered by the readers is constructive. For instance, in reviewing a particularly horrid piece of fan-fiction, instead of saying: "What a stinking piece of junk!" one could very well say: "His story wasn't very good. The plot was weak and confused, characters weren't life-like, and he went into too much detail about the gadgets used." This way the fan writer reads, and corrects his mistakes in the next story. It may take twenty or thirty fan-published stories before he is praised by fandom as a "rare exception". This fan then becomes a professional, adding to the enjoyment of all. A new writer is born. But a person isn't, just like that, a born writer. He needs practice, constructive criticism, help, and more practice; by reading professional stories and then slowly getting the idea, the technique, of putting words, situations, and characters together to make a well liked story.

The hardest parts of a story, they say, are the beginning and the end. I believe this is true. One can lose a reader at the beginning much quicker than anywhere else in the story. If a writer starts out by describing in minute detail the planet whereupon the story takes place, the reader will flip by with a casual, "Oh Hell." And I wouldn't blame him. However, by starting with action, the writer holds the reader by making him want to know what happens next. Say that you have the reader in your grip, he's read the beginning and curiosity takes over from there; he may be willing to accept boredom halfway through the story, providing it doesn't last too long before action, or suspense, or what-have-you takes over again. All action, or all description, or all gadgetry, or anything else that's all something...won't go in science fiction, or in any type of fiction. You have to mix them all correctly, and especially know how to serve them.

The ending is hard, too. Perhaps harder than the beginning. Many neo-fans turned writer end all their works with a would-be shock ending. I know of one person in particular who tries to end all stories with a twist. But too much twisting can make you dizzy. Twists are few and far apart in good stories. I read a copy of The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction where I would say 30% of the stories had twists to them. It didn't go over at all. Many stories that try to end differently don't really end at all; they leave the reader stuck out on a limb somewhere with no ladder to get down; the story ends before the true ending. Other stories go too far past the end, babbling on and on about nothing.

Over-description is the worst mistake a writer can make. He can bore his readers to death with too much of it. A reader doesn't give a

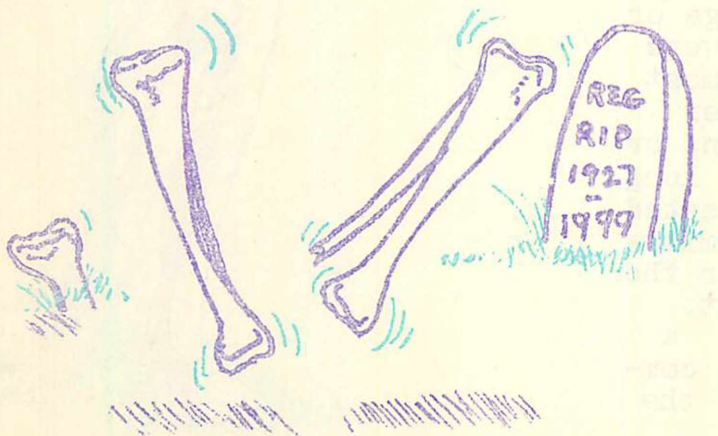
whether there's a table with a lamp, a chair, purple wallpaper, and a large framed picture of Aunt Minnie from Maine in a room...as much as he does about the story; is the hero killing the villain, is the villain killing the heroine, or are they all killing each other? Description that is necessary to the story should be included. However, long periods of philosophy, when the hero is trying to figure the facts of life in his mind, are boring; logic is okay, but not page long paragraphs of it. This is sometimes quite often done in promags.

"Leave - outs" for science fiction are: gadgetry, excessive sex, melodrama, excessive philosophy, and over description. Fan-fiction has its place in fandom to fill, but it'll take time and good writers to do it. Editors are very important, since poor fan-fiction is largely the result of poor editing; too often an editor will accept a story that is poorly written because he wants to fill up a gap in his zine so that the next issue can go to press.

Fan-fiction needs writers, editors, readers, and people who can offer constructive criticism. Fandom should have fan-fiction. After all, fandom was formed around science fiction and fantasy; why should it reject a simpler form of its favorite literature, providing it's well written?

-----the end.

Unquiet Bones



The olive trees are stunted
The grass is brown and sere,
No chirp of bird or cricket,
No life is here.

The graves are old and sunken
And headstones cracked in two
And here and there a shin bone
Comes into view.

These bones will not lie quiet,
They gambol about a bit,
They like to see what goes on
Above their pit.

They do not like the darkness,
Wearied of endless night
They wander down the dusty road
In the moonlight.

If you dare to venture out
Along that fearsome way,
The sight of dancing shin bones
Will turn you grey.

Then stay in close, out of sight
And never take a peek,
While the haunting bones gambol
At hide and seek.

--Isabelle E. Dinwiddie

Progress

a story by
william l freeman

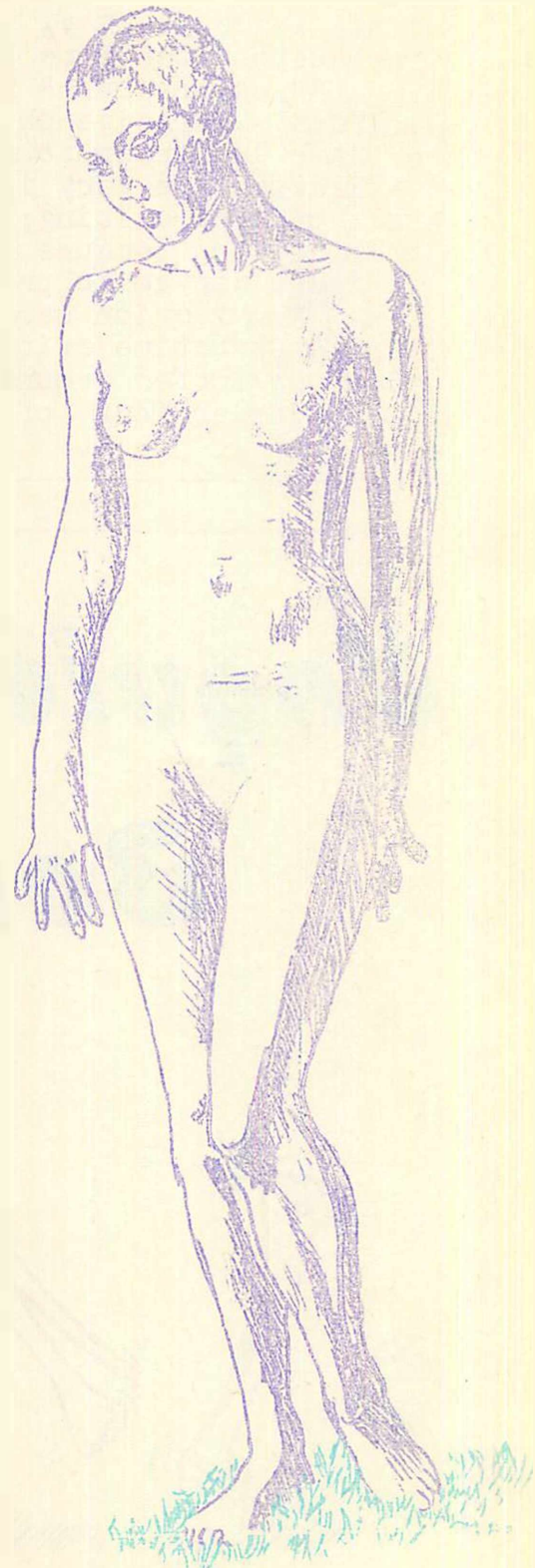
He was working. The sweat beaded on his forehead. The sun was invisible above the silver white clouds that caught its rays and diffused a pure light, leaving no shadows.

His tall muscled body swung to the rhythm of falling pick.

He stopped to survey the other men. Jackson, lesley, and Foley were laying pipe for a sewage or water line. Fifty other men were working on the bunkhouses, almost finished. The rest were either working on the smelter, building or carrying equipment from the long needle of a rocket ship that rested like a god at the edge of a mile-wide clearing, or resting under the trees of the surrounding forrest.

They had been on Venus a month and the base was almost completed. Another two weeks at the most.

Then--the rocket ships like



locusts, sowing a few at first, then hundreds, bringing Earth a little more, transplanting its tiny seeds. Then--the mining of Uranium and Platinum and the packing of Venusian fruits and peaches, and then shipping them back to Earth. Export, Import--wealth for Earth, growth for Venus.

The government on Earth had sent him to do a job, and it was almost completed. A good job it looked like. He raised the pick again, and down.

They worked on into the day toward darkness, which came suddenly with no twilight, and then stopped...to stare. Out of the trees at one edge of the forrest came, timidly, a Venusian!

It came slowly across the clearing toward the group of men working on the bunkhouses. It was short, very short, and white. It looked almost human, but different. Two deep brown lovely eyes peered, frightened, at the workers. A tiny "o" shaped mouth twitched nervously.

Donald Tarlson moved toward the same group. He watched its movements carefully, and he stood at the head of the group as the Venusian came close. It was naked. And it was female! A female, alien, delicately beautiful, hairless, except for a fuzzy growth on the top of her head. And humanoid!

She stooped about twenty yards in front of the watching group of workers. Stood there, afraid and quiet, her body shaking, her large round eyes lit with fire.

Don took a step toward her; she did not move. She drew back as he approached, but did not run.

"Who are you?" he said.

"A-Aaaaa ooo aeeau o UUUI." She looked at him--small, frightened, lovely in an unexplainable, alien way--gibbering in a way he could never understand.

They looked at each other, and as they did, she lost a part of her fear, and he stood spellbound. He reached out with his hand and she retreated. Then, with a strange look on her face, she took it. They moved through the assembled workers, who stood agape, unbelieving, and as they passed, the whispers began. And grew, and spread through the camp in the way new and mysterious things do. A Venusian! Could it be? Life on Venus, a Venusian!

Don led the alien nymph to his private quarters--a rude shelter built mostly of canvass--built to do until the base was completed. They stood in the tent, looking at each other for a long time. Not saying anything--there was nothing that could be said.

Her fear was gone now, and in its place a strange kind of curiosity. A wonder at these strange creatures, and why they hadn't killed her, and how she could tell them what she wanted them to do--leave. Leave the home of her people; her quiet, timid people. Her people who hated violence and understood the thought only vaguely, but who understood in all its finality...death. Strangeness meant death. And these were strangers!

"Please go!" she wanted to say, to make him understand. But the creature couldn't understand her, anymore than she him. And death wasn't in his eyes. A strange thing was there--tenderness? What manner of creature?

She stood a little over four feet, and Don towered a foot and a half over her small frame. He found himself searching her eyes, seeking her mind hidden there in deep darkness. Mind? She must have one. And a soul, too.

Lovely.

So very lovely. And because of her, a strange constricting feeling inside him. Despite the feeling, an unrealness. He and an alien

They were standing alone, gazing into eyes they did not understand.

"Yes, little flower, I love you! That do you understand? Love? You must!"

Suddenly his arms were filled with her softness. Held close against him she was so very small, but he could think of her only as a woman. More wonderful than any other. He held her, and she was no longer afraid for herself, or for her people. She recognized her equivalent for love in his soft, warm embrace. Recognized it and welcomed it. This was more than she had hoped from a member of a race she thought had threatened destruction!

He sat with her all through the night. They tried to talk some, but it was impossible. The best they could do was a few half understood ideas grasped by signs. But even without language they understood one another, and so they just sat, silence echoing from one to the other.

Two weeks passed swiftly, and by that time Tarlson knew what the strange nymph had come to tell, and the base was finished. He explained, as best he could without words, that there was no danger to her people, but that his people could not leave Venus. It was both their homes now. And they would both live in peace. She understood, and she and her people were no longer afraid.

The rockets came, and the Venusians ventured out of the forests. The two life forms met and talked, and were satisfied with one another. Death was undesirable. There would be no trouble.

The two loved each other, and it was a month after the first rockets. They would never be able to speak to one another, or bear children, but they loved each other in that funny way you can, unselfishly, devotedly.

It was night and they were in their house. There was a commotion outside, a scuffling sound, and then shouting.

"Chief!" a hoarse voice yelled.

Tarlson appeared at the door to the house. There, in the light from the night lamps, stood a group of men. Grim faced men, and in the center of them, held tight by rigid arms, was a drunken man.

"What's happened?"

"Jackson, here," one of them said, "Chief...well...he...."

"What the hell is going on? Out with it!"

"Jackson's killed a man...a Venusian."

"A WHAT?" He came running down the steps and stood glaring at the killer. "God no! Why did you do it? Why?"

The man was almost senseless, but he said, "The damn runt got in my way, thass all! Say, wass all the fuss about, anyway? It wass only a Venusie."

Tarlson's black fist smashed hard into the drunk's face. Then, the tall Negro said, painfully, "I should have known." He turned and walked slowly back to the lighted doorway. "One...it just took one." The tears streamed down his face as he re-entered the house.

The group of dark men, puzzled and confused, disbanded. The drunken man laughed and weaved away into the darkness.

It was hard, but she forgave him his promise, though she never understood why it had happened.

-----the end.

ALIENS -- is your skin green? Don't be laughed at any longer. Buy Dr. Zotz's skin coloring and be purple like the rest of us.

UNCA STEWART SAYS:

a fanzine column by bob stewart

WHISPERING SPACE, free, ditto'd 8½ x 11, Val Walker, 6438 E. 4th Place, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

At the present, I can't imagine what kind of reception the last installment had. I'm sure Menicucci didn't enjoy it too much. And by the time I'm through with WHISPERING SPACE I know I'm going to have at least a letter or three from Val Walker. Any way, on we go into the review....

I'm at a loss to find a word to describe the cover. The closest I can come is "sickening". Terry Carr shares my opinion of the cover "artist"; as he said in the Fanzine Art Review last issue, "The artist can't even draw a straight line." I won't dally on the cover anymore, since Terry said all that can be said about it.

One thing that really gripes me is that the editor can't even spell right, doesn't use punctuation, and doesn't bother to correct or go over typos (surely a strikeover looks much better than leaving a typo the way it is). Example: "Have all the Okklafans heard of the oklacon to be held in Okla. Cnty Seppt. 5, ~~1953~~ 1953 for full details write Kent Corey Box 64 Enid Okla." Anyway, you get the idea.

His editorial is the most neofannish thing I've ever read. Take this paragraph, f'r instance: "A word about Shadowland. We are not afflicted /that's what it said--afflicted/ with this mag in anyways. Out side of saying it is a pro fan mag and a darn good one. Our advise to you is to write..."

The interlineations he throws on every other page are apparently supposed to be funny. Like this one: I LIKE PEOPLE--ITS JUST THAT THEY AREN'T HUMAN. Or this one: THE REJECTION SLIP LOOKED HURT. What are we supposed to do, roll on the floor?

Skipping through a story by the editor, I find that he writes a hell of a lot better than what he showed in his editorial. Of course, I can't say much for the story. It's just written much better than the editorial.

"The Truth About The Flying Saucers" by Frederick B. Christoff is supposed to be an informative article. O yeah? Come to think of it, that article was supposed to be an informative story. Yes, Chris ole man...?

The only thing that budged a smile from me in the whole mag wwas this in the "Passing Thots" dept.: "Flip Phillips breaking the sonar barrier with his tenor sax."

Then there's still more: "The Man From Crud; a sickening "article" by Robert Laurence on Palmer and his Man From Tomorrow; and "Stf Highlings" by Al Graupman is a mess of book reviews copied from bacover blurbs.

I say, we can do without some of these fanzines....no?

Section

8

"DIG THIS CRAZY LETTER COLUMN."

Bill Reynolds
P.O. Box 688
Hamilton A.F.B., Cal.

Dear Richard,

Weren't the letter columns in stf considered one of the institutions in stf fandom? These extinct departments gave the reader and the fan a hope that their opinions and ideas were worth something to the editor of a prozine. At least you might amuse the editor and amaze your friends if it saw print. Now the editor is entrenched in the oracle of the editorial. He scatters his wisdom as accepted fact that will evolve into a shining tradition of dogma. These editors see their rags as an epoch in the history of stf; they have matured and put aside childish things. The toys that were fan and letter columns are things to be treasured as a memory; scorned as useless today.

There's too much historical research into stf. They're breaking stf into categories, and eventually one of these rascals will be deified as "The Gibbon of Science Fiction" who saw a dim golden age of ARGOSIES and GOLDEN FLEECE, of the early Weirds and Amazings. And then the dark ages of the late thirties and early forties, the only Constantinople was ASTOUNDING, which experienced a gradual decay. Then the middle ages of the late forties in which all the prozines became aware of a vast, uninitiated audience aware of the potentialities of science, but lacking the imagination or experience to adapt themselves to the old, remote standards. Fervid activity characterized this period, but it was undirected; it had no strong, centralized government to direct its faltering steps downward and its profits upward. Then the Renaissance and Reformation with the appearance of GALAXY and its banner of Gold and brass. Small, unobtrusive, the commuter could read it with ease, the shopper could slip it in to her purse; its presence would not offend the dignity of the family bathroom or the community library. The trimmed edges and pretentious editorials satisfied the public and fandom. Here was a representative introduction for the masses, here was that long awaited and very much heralded intro to stf for the public, fandom exclaimed. Later, the novitiates could pass on to the less attractive prozines to meet fandom in their departments. A brand new world! And remember, today is only the late Reformation; the Modern Era is dawning over a horizon of slick paper, patterned by pompous editorials and insipid stories. You won't be able to see the old letter and fan departments; they'll be deeply buried and thankfully forgotten.

((Amen, brother Bill, amen. And as go the prozines, so goes the imitative photo-offset "serious" fanzines. OOps... I meant "amateur publications devoted to science fiction and fantasy". It seems that as soon as a zine goes photo-offset, or some similar high class type of reproduction, it is felt by the editors that such expensive space should not be wasted on matters fannish.))

Art E. Menicucci
275 Delano Ave.
San Francisco 12, Cal.

Dear Richard:

Hey, that article by Peter Graham was good. I LIKED IT! Although Keith Joseph tells me it isn't quite true that he didn't say anything, and that nobody would listen to him. He said that anytime he said anything he received their undivided attention, since he would always have something of great import to say: "The radiator cap isn't on..." "We're out of gas..." and Keith says he and Terry were the adventurous ones that crossed the highway.... So Carr ain't supposed to hitch-hike...hmmmm...

And now all about Boob Stewart:

I think that Bob took rather unfair advantage of me. As anyone can see the article was a "grudge-killing", and was not prompted by any great interest in fandom. Also I'd like to clear myself of Stewart's remark that I copied my contents page design from SCIENCE FICTION Plus. When I made the master for the contents page I had never seen a copy of SCIENCE FICTION Plus.

Poor Stewart, doesn't even know that OMEGA isn't folded... He should subscribe to FAN-NEWS, he'd learn a bit about what's going on in fandom...

Truthfully, tho, I wouldn't put too much stock in what Stewart says, and I ain't even mad. (Stewart can always claim temporary sanity. You see, Boob is a self-confessed escapist. I suppose something happened to him in/throughout his childhood. He feels that the world is against him, and at one time went so far as to publish a little one page paper called the ARLINGTON SMEAR (I'm not too sure about the last word of the name, but I am sure that the first word was ARLINGTON) which he scattered around Mission Street (one of the main streets of San Francisco, for you out-of-towners), which contained most libelous talk, and was one of the most important factors in Terry Carr's dismissal as editor of OMEGA. This was also the cause of another fanzine being published in rebuttal and in self-defence by another San Francisco fan who shall remain unnamed and who was the main target of Bob Stewart's remarks in his own little smear-zine.

I realize that in saying what I have said in the above paragraph I have layed bare a bit of San Francisco Fandom's bad side, which, as far as I know, has, up until this time, been safely kept a secret. But I have done it for a reason; I have done it to back up my statement that Bob Stewart's column was done as a grudge against me, and that although TERRA was not all that could be desired, Mr. Robert Stewart went out of his way to smear me, and me alone. And I also submit that Bob Stewart's remarks were caused by the fact that our relations have not been all that could be desired, and that the "Review" was written to discredit my name in fandom.

((I find myself in a rather awkward editorial position. Not too long ago I wrote Joel Nydahl of VEGA that I thought he shouldn't have run a piece by Ellison that poured gasoline on a feud between Semenovich and Ellison, and here I've gone and done the same damned thing myself.

A pox on both your houses, Bob and Gilbert. Have your feuds, but after this not in PSYCHOTIC. It was only fair that I print this letter from Menicucci. And I might add that Bob admitted that it was a grudge "Review". I dunno how safe the convention will be next year with these two throwing bombs right and left. Ping-pong anyone?....))

V. Paul Nowell
6523 Centry Ave.
North Hollywood, Cal.

Dear Richard,

Just a note to say that I found a mistake in my article: "SPACE STATION TO THE MOON". I therein stated that GRIFFITH PLANETARIUM was the only such planetarium this side of the Mississippi. I have since found out that there is another planetarium in San Francisco.

This planetarium is the MORRIS PLANETARIUM, and is different from Griffith in that it doesn't use the customary Zeiss projector, but instead a clear globe with an electric light inside and the stars on the outer surface so that when the light is on, the stars show through and shine on the domed roof.

Apologies to Terry Carr and any other San Franciscans who may have already blasted your desk with torrid testimonials of my ignorance.

((Yes. And well you might apologize. One bulky letter I had to throw away. There was an ominous ticking....))

Vernon L. McCain
R.F.D. 18
Hampa, Idaho

Dear Richard,

As an anti-fan-fictionist of long standing, I agreed with what Balint had to say, but deplored the way he said it. Therefore I tend to string along pretty muchly with a great deal of Carr's rebuttal. But there are a couple of points I'd like to rebut on myself. I'd go along with Balint's statement that 99% of fan-fiction is slop, but the exact figure isn't important. Also, SLANT is usually specifically exempted by those who attack fan-fiction since it never practices the monstrous habits under attack. And I've always been under the impression that FAN-FARE had met with a lamentable lack of success with organized fandom, and that what support it had came from people outside fandom's main-stream.

But the chief thing I'd like to differ with Terry on are his statements in #5. The best argument against fan-fiction remains that those who are good enough to write readably can sell their wares. This is exactly why I quit writing fan-fiction some three years ago. If I ever turn out readable fiction I have no doubt of my ability to sell it. In fact, in the present glutted market, I believe any writer or potential writer can start selling a year to 18 months before his stuff is really ready for print simply because the pros are so desperate for material. Until that time comes, however, I consider it much better that my horrors offend the eyesight of no one but myself and long-suffering editors who get paid for wading through crud.

"What about off-trail stories?" Mr. Carr asks. Well, what about them? That was a valid query 20 years ago when only four pros existed and William Crawford brought out MARVEL as an amateur outlet for the pro writers overflow and unusual output. It may even have been valid right after the war with only nine or ten magazines when Lilith Lorraine produced DIFFERENT. But today, with thirty or more pros desperately scrabbling for anything half-way readable?

Having watched the various editors trying to outdo each other in off-trail stories (there is hardly an editor that doesn't try to print them, from Campbell, through Gold, Browne to Lowndes, and even occasion-

...IN PLANET. This doesn't mention Mines, who set out to make his magazine better heeled editors by becoming a professional taboo-buster, and Carr, whose semi-artzy zine practically wallows in off-trail items, (some exceedingly good, some exceedingly bad, and some not-so-exceedingly in between), I venture to say there is not now a single science fiction idea or handling, and practically no such fantasy ideas, which are so far off-trail that they cannot be sold if handled with sufficient skill. The truth of the matter is: off-trail stories were embraced by the slicks and the pulps as well as the literary magazines years ago as a much needed change of pace. And while taboos still abound in the slicks, they are almost a thing of the past in the pulps. About three years ago I made this point in a discussion of the subject (it was about this time that Palmer was trying to pose as a taboo-buster by printing stories about cannibalism, racial prejudice, and using God as a character) and I pointed out that taboos (save those of good taste such as using physical infirmities as a subject for low humor) had completely vanished from the pulp magazines with two exceptions. These two exceptions, which I hardly expected to be broken in the near future outside of hardcover books, were the twin taboos of incest and homosexuality. Oddly enough, incest, which I considered the stronger taboo, was broken first with the haunting "No Land Of Nod". But it was only about six months later that Sturgeon came up with "The World Well Lost."

Now what about your off-trail stories, Mr. Carr? What taboos remain? What can't be printed in a prozine that a fanmag would handle except perhaps out-and-out pornography or perhaps a sympathetic treatment of a hero who is a true-blue and unconverted Stalin-Leninist Communist?

With today's glut of markets, the story slanted to one magazine can almost always be sold to another, if necessary, if it is good enough. Even the long neglected UNKNOWN style fantasy now has two major markets in FANTASY and BEYOND and several occasional ones in MOF, FANTASTIC, and once in a long while, even in WEIRD.

As for the attempted analogy that if a fan could write acceptable articles he'd write them for the pros; this collapses immediately as the situation is in no wise the same. There is not, and doubtless never will be, a commercial market for the article dealing with sf or fandom. Perhaps a dozen of these appear a year, and these are written in such general terms for the reader unfamiliar with the fields as to be of little interest to the fan. The only fiction of which this is true are those dealing with fan names and fan events, and these are usually mere shallow satires and not true fiction at all.

Personally, I'm sick of having every editor in his vlnl issue proclaim his magazine as the vehicle to fill a long-felt need, a place where writers can publish their off-trail stories for which there is no professional market. There ain't no such animal! The only off-trail story the pulps won't accept is the one which is off trail by virtue of being miserably written.

I'm disappointed. Here I've been going around mentally calling you "geese" and it turns out you're not even one goose. Probably don't even have any feathers. How disillusioning is life. Instead, I now learn you are a depraved character who goes around rhyming with vice. What a horrible influence on innocent young neofen you've turned out to be.

Amused to see your reactions to DESTINY are the same as mine. Now you know why I proclaimed Psi to be the first real fanzine to issue from Portland since FANSCIENT folded.

((You know, I'm very glad this fan-fiction controversy has developed as it has. I personally have profited muchly from it, and have altered my fiction policy a few points toward Balint.

But only a few. From now on what fiction presented in P will be top-drawer stuff. In fact, pro quality or near it. I'm afraid I stand condemned, Vernon, as one of those vinyl eds who proclaimed their zine a haven for the off-trail. At least we have a noble purpose and good intentions.

Tsk. Do not slight my name, McCain. Isn't there a Biblical reference to one of your ancestors?

Oh yes...any writers of pornography please send me your work. I may not be able to print it, but I still like to read the stuff.))

Larry Balint
3255 Golden Ave.,
Long Beach 6, Cal.

Dear Fweeps,

I have before me the third ish of PSYCHOTIC. Carr's rebuttal gave me a start, as... although he told me he had made one. I received the impression that it was merely a letter in Section 8. Apparently I was wrong. He had written an entire article.

Terry seems to believe that it is largely true that only neos read fan-fiction, but that it is necessary for their indoctrination in fandom. I don't agree with this at all. The first fanzine I ever layed eyes on was OPUS #5, and there was very little fiction. I didn't even read the fiction. I muchly preferred the satiric articles and the letter column. But, maybe I'm different! I believe that the use of fan-fiction to oriente neofans is only inviting those fringe characters that neither of us appreciate.

He also states that there ARE leading fanmags that print the fan-fiction and he lists a few. Unfortunately, COSMAG/SCIENCE FICTION DIGEST and DESTINY are not good examples of fanzines. They are lithoed zinnas trying their very hardest to perform an imitation of the pros. When a zine shifts from the common mimeo/hecto/ditto duplication methods to litho and printing, there is only one reason: imitation in the extreme. They are referred to by pros in all fields as "little magazines"; the ones that make a slight profit on a very small scale as compared to the prozines.

Terry didn't read my second paragraph on page 24 or he would not have listed SPACESHIP and SCIENCE FANTASY BULLETIN. I stated: "Many faneds who are perpetual BNFs do run a short piece of fan-fiction every once in a while.....Usually this occurs in a larger magazine." In other words, I was trying to point out that mags of great quantity like the above two mentioned can run a piece of fan-fiction without disturbing the format.

And since when has PEON become a "top fan-magazine"? I've always looked upon it as of top quality in mimeoing and arrangement, but as having stayed in the background of fandom and remaining neutral on argumentative points.

Along about here Terry announces that prozines are constantly slanted toward the market trends and it's difficult to sell an off-trail story to them when fanzines haven't half so many taboos. I don't agree with this. There are a great number of prozines on the market at present and each has a different policy. They aren't all buying the same type story. Compare PLANET with GALAXY with ASTOUNDING. Do you see the difference? You mention any fan story and I'll tell you which mag would buy the plot if the story were written decently (which most fan-fiction isn't).

And in answer to Jerry Burge who pops up from the letter column to tell me that I am making highly ridiculous generalizations; he quotes: "...it is a sheer waste of time and talent for a fan to write it." Unfortunately, Jerry isn't thinking in the same lines that I am. He cont-

inues to say: "If a fan sincerely wants to write, there is no more valuable experience than fan-fiction; not merely the writing of it, but his chance to get his early efforts before a public, however small, and learning the reaction." I disagree again. A more valuable experience would be to submit the fiction to the editor of a professional magazine for the constructive criticism of an expert in the business. That is why I say that writing fan-fiction is a waste of time and talent. He could be learning the fundamentals of writing by trial and error in submitting manuscripts to ~~pro~~ or by taking a writing course in school. I consider this better than dithering in fanzines and receiving praise for lousy fiction by a lot of numskull readers.

With this I close my argument for this. If Carr or Darge still have comment, I'd like to hear it. This will probably cause the destruction of PSYCHOTIC by groups of irate readers who want something more than a feud.

((Hmmm. It would seem that fan-fiction is dying a horrible death. And right here in my letter column, too.))

Paul Mittelbuscher
c/o George Werneke
Sweet Springs, Mo.

Dick,

'twould appear that you sir, are an "Angry Man", rapping RAP has become a wholesale practice carried on with a vast amount of enthusiasm by the younger portion of fandom.....Alas foolish ones, you swear with shadows, you was with windmills; like the "fire and brimstone" reformist, you fall upon the one who has committed the small sin and completely bypass and overlook the MAJOR offender. Direct instead the full blunt of your rage against one who more richly deserves it...HOWARD BROWNE. This nauseating individual has earned himself naught but scorn. Retain also a number of javelins to pierce the inflated hide of that puffed up, pompous jackass Anthony Boucher. Forget not to chastise H.L. "Woman's Home Companion" Gold. But back to Browne...a most sordid subject...speaking of "...tricks, hoaxes, schemes, etc."... Geis, let me remind you that such ghoulish endeavors for sales as the "Spillane opus"...the "Mars CONFIDENTIAL"...the Harriet Frank...the Billy Rose...etc, etc...were brought to the suffering fannish population by Browne...a man who has single-handedly done more to cause stf to decay and sink to levels heretofore unknown than any other. So leave poor Palmer alone. I know, once I too thought ill of RAP. Granted he has many faults, still, he has been more responsive to fannish desires than others I might name....

I have long been puzzled as to why Shelby Vick is regarded so highly. That he may possess a personality, or be blessed with a sense of the ridiculous I have little doubt, but that he has any talent as a columnist I very much DO doubt; his columns not only are dull, but give the impression that he is groping frantically for something to say. In contrast, I point to such magnificent piece de resistance's as Grannell's "The Murky Way", and Ellison's "Voice From The Styx" which manage to say more in one paragraph than Vick could in a BOOK. I question that Vick's column deserves inclosure. To all immature, aspiring faneds I give this advice: "Be not blinded by the big names...." Especially when some feel they can palm off crud to inexperienced editors.

Gad, Geis, I HATE to reprimand you to such an extent...after all those nice things you said about me in A LA SPACE...still I cannot let a slur against DESTINY pass without registering a protest. The quality of material featured in this publication is always excellent to good. One could wish that others could do as well. Actually DESTINY must maintain

an attitude of staid conservatism; its circulation reaches far beyond the
realm of what one immediately thinks of as being "fandom". I rather
doubt that the more mature readers would care for a magazine replete with
fanciful chatter. Don't get me wrong...I like it myself, but I also recog-
nize that others definitely DO NOT.

((True, BROWNE-THE-HUCKSTER is as foul as you say, still...RAP
is foul in still another way.

DESTINY's policy is understandable, if a bit farfetched, in
light of your explanation....but I wonder if those are the prime
reasons? I suspect that you have performed a neat bit of ration-
alization for the eds.))

Richard Bergeron
RFD #1
Newport, Vermont.

Dear Rich:

After giving the mag a quick reading I'd fully
intended to make some attempt to get into its pages. I thought I might send
in a bit of satire that I'd been saving for my SAPSzine and see if you
could use it or do a few illos on ditto masters and see if you could use
them. But, unfortunately, I finally got around to reading the contents
page and found on it the set of editorial blocks that never fail to dis-
courage me from submitting material to a magazine, unless the editor of that
publication has personally solicited said stuff from me.

Since you've never asked for stuff from me, I can assume that you
wouldn't care for any, and accordingly won't send any. After all, why
should I, or anyone else for that matter, take the chance with your getting
disgusted with his (or my) stuff and tossing it in the wastebasket? And
anyways, even an invitation must be construed as a sort of kiss of death,
for anything sent in must be accompanied with a stamped and self-addressed
envelope. You certainly don't encourage contributions, do you? Oh well,
until you ask me to submit something and waive your "stamped and self-add-
ressed envelope" for me, I think that the chances of my appearing in PSYCHO-
TIC's hallowed pages is very slim--other than in the letter column, perhaps.

((ASSUMPTION UNJUSTIFIED, I assure you. I very much want your
artistry and your prose in P. And I am forced to agree with you
(after long and complicated thought) that the business of the
return envelopes is no good. I was trying to be viddy viddy pro,
dontha know.... You will notice that it is not a part of this
issues contents page.

The self addressed return envelope is largely a matter of
courtesy on the part of the submitter, and certainly cannot be
forced. And since this is just a hobby and not a ruthlessly run
business, and since I don't get that many submissions that I am
hocking the family jewels to pay for postage, the request for a
return envelope and postage is no longer...uh...requested.))

Which just about knocks it off for this issue. Keep the interesting letters
coming, people, and I'll try to make this Section 8 even better. It is
plain to see in this issue that your opinions can result in changes in the
policy of this zine. I like to think I've an open mind (I take out the
corks every day for a good airing out), and do realize I've a lot to learn
about pubbing a fanzine. Right now I am going to finish writing this
last line and then settle down with the latest Astounding. Bliss.....

Henry Moskowitz

PROFESSIONAL

Three Bridges, New Jersey, September 8, 1953.--Since quitting his job and taking up full-time writing, Ted Sturgeon is a busy boy. He has done (or is still doing) a novel based on "Baby Is Three" which appeared in the October 1952 GSF and has since been in William Tenn's fine "Children Of Wonder". It will be a Ballantine Books offering. Then, Abelard Press has announced "E Pluribus Unicorn", his second collection. (For those interested, the first collection of his work appeared in 1948 under the Prime Press imprint, with an introduction by Ray Bradbury. RECOMMENDED.) Finally, there's "The Fabulous Idiot", a novel, about which I can tell you no more. And, of course, he has been continuing his appearances in the various mags. He made his first appearance in SS with "The Wages Of Synergy" in the August ish. He had a novella, "The Touch Of Your Hand", in the September GSF. Frankly, this is not the Sturgeon that has made the name Theodore H. Sturgeon one of the top in science fiction; but it is well handled. On the other hand, in the October-November AS, there is a Sturgeon story what is a Sturgeon story! This is voodoo, plain and simple...yet it doesn't say so in the story. True to Howard Browne's prediction, "A Way Of Thinking" was the sole reason for my buying this ish of AS.

You'd like "Little Girl Lost" by Dick Matheson, I'm sure. "The Enormous Room" by HLGold and RWErepps (better known as Geoff St. Reynard) is good, though not "brilliant." The cover, upon close examination, is very striking: Sussman's first, I believe.

Both AS and F have dropped 16 pages, and with their next ishes (December-January and November-December, respectively) they drop another 16, making them both 128 pages.

Lewis Padgett is back. "Humpty Dumpty", a novelleto in the September ASF. Nicely done, as one has come to expect of Hankuttner and his frau, CIMoore. I also liked Algis Budrys' "Little Joe."

TMOF&SF has gone out and gotten itself a novel, which it is running as a two part serial beginning in the September ish. It looks well to be one of the finest adventure-fantasy pieces of the year. RECOMMENDED: "Three Hearts And Three Lions" by Poul Anderson. The editors have asked for comment on this new policy phase...but they have already commissioned Chad Oliver to do a serial novel for them.

Also in the same ish is "One Man's Meat" by de Camp and Pratt, a tale of Gavagan's Bar. Twayne has just issued "Tales Of Gavagan's Bar", which includes all the ones from TMOF&SF, two from WT, and several brand new ones. RECOMMENDED. You'll love that picture on the back of the jacket.

There was a nice little story in the September BFF. Hey! it's by Ted Sturgeon. Small wonder. Robert Bloch's "The Dream Makers" shows a great deal of knowledge of early Hollywood. "The Wall Around The World", by Ted Cogswell, defies classification. It is at times like this that the stf-fts classification is heaven-sent!

The October-November FU is one of the most handsomely packaged mags I have ever seen. A fine judgement in placing cover type shows off a beautiful Schomburg to good advantage. The mag still offers quantity and quality. SaMerwin has left the mag to take over for the ailing Jerry

by a GSF. He has also had an original stf novel published just recently by Abeland Press. It is rumored that Sam's successor will be a woman editor from Popular Publications...and that the mag will drop paging...and price to 35¢.

The November IF has a fine wrap-around cover by Flagg. The mag was supposed to go monthly with this ish, but will now wait for Volume 5, Number 1, March 1954 ish, out in January. Lead stories by William Tenn and Mari Wolfe. Tenn also has an article coming up in either the November or SFA for the same month.

The English AUTHENTIC SCIENCE FICTION will return to using all new material with its August issue. YThis is the mag which originated the OM and Shining Spear series. The covers, beginning with the July ish, will show step by step "from the first manned rocket to man's final conquest of interstellar space." It sounds--and looks--good. The artist is a new man, Davis.

ASF has latched onto a new novel. "The Caves Of Steel", by Isaac Asimov, will be run as a three part serial beginning in the October 1st. Cover and interiors by Emsh. A report will follow in two months.

If you're a real honest-to-goodness stf fan, you have to read "Against The Fall Of Night", by Arthur C. Clarke. This is a definite must, which will someday rank as a classic. This is poetry in prose. I'd review it here, but you'll find better jobs of it in TMOF&SF and FU.

Ballantine Books has brought out an original by Clarke, "Childhood's End". Well done, this story is a minor classic. If it had been delved into more fully--it needs twice its present length, at least, for a thorough handling of the theme--it would rank among the great works of science fiction, even though the most important factor of the whole book sounds a bit far-fetched.

Ballantine has also presented us with the complete version of Ward Moore's "Bring The Jubilee", which first appeared in a 43,000 word length in the November 1952 issue of TMOF&SF. A finely wrought novel.

From Heritage House has come the "Science Fiction Handbook", by L. Sprague de Camp. This volume is for the beginning writer of imaginative literature. It tells how to write and sell. As an orientational aid, the book gives background information on imaginative fiction from its very beginning to date. It talks about editors and rates and authors and fans. A whole chapter is devoted to top stf authors: Heinlein, Sturgeon, Bradbury, Hamilton, Brackett, the Kuttner's (who are now in Mexico doing an original for Ballantine), etc. Automatically, this volume has become the authoritative one on the background of imaginative literature. As such it deserves a spot on your shelf along with Leys' "Rockets, Missiles, and Space Travel"; Bleiler's "Checklist of Fantastic Literature"; and Day's "Index To The Science Fiction Magazines: 1926 to 1950."

ADENDA: Please read "The Heart Of The Game" in the first issue of the new ORBIT and let me know what you think of it. Address me as per above. Let's not trouble Reg. Merci, mes amis (also amies, if any).

the end.

The Unfair Filler

The purple REM did stalk his foe,
And his scaly lips did lick.
For our Hero, Willy, was tiring out
And I can't think of a good last line to save my soul.
--Reg.

A-BIT-OF HEBEPHRENIA

From THE AMERICAN WEEKLY

A well known psychoanalyst was racing madly down Hollywood Boulevard, his couch balanced precariously on his head, when a friend spied him.

"Hello, doc," he cried. "You're just the man I wanted to..."

"Sorry," shouted the analyst, "Can't stop now...House call!"

From TIME

In New Smyrna Beach, Fla., Robert Miles failed to persuade the city commission to change its zoning boundary splitting his property, still has his two bedrooms designated "residential", the rest of his apartment "commercial."

((Worse, it could have been reversed: ...bedrooms "commercial".))

From THE AMERICAN WEEKLY

Garry Moore, on his CBS television show, told about a dealer in second hand plumbing named Carr, whose sign reads: "Honest Carr, Used John Dealer."

Then there's the silly about the man who got hungry during the night and went downstairs to the kitchen. As he opened the refrigerator door he was surprised to see a cute little rabbit leaning on its elbow, calmly smiling up at him.

"Hewwo" said the rabbit.

"What on earth are you doing there?" asked the man.

"This is a Westinghouse, isn't it?" said the rabbit.

"Yes."

"Well, I'm westing."

The Stern Parent

Father heard his children scream,

So he threw them in the stream,

Saying, as he drowned the third,

"Children should be seen, not heard!"

--Harry Graham

Necessity

Late last night I slew my wife

Stretched her on the parquet flooring.

I was loath to take her life,

But I had to stop her snoring.

--Harry Graham

And if you have a favorite joke or humorous poem and would like to share it with the other readers of PSYCHOTIC, then by all means (mail preferred) send it in to the editor. That's all.

LETTERS I FINISHED READING: "Dear Dick; Gee I miss you so. Darling, I yearn for your kisses...."

2nd Session

WHERE THE EDITOR CONTINUES

TO RAMBLE, MOST PROBABLY UNENDURABLY, ON AND ON AND ON...AND ON...AND...ON

The TNFF came in today's mail and, in addition to the Knute Rockne type message from the President along with reports galore, there was a ballot. "Aha," I said to myself, "The time has come again..." And so it had.

Inside the TNFF were the platforms of the various candidates for President. Donald Susan, as a very capable Treasurer and left hand man of President Bill Venable, seems the obvious choice. Two others, Kent Corey and Charles Lee Riddle, base their campaign on cleaning up the mess in Washin--- er, I mean...the NZF. T'would seem to me that they are busily jousting at shadows. To my way of thinking the mess has been cleaned. And personally, I favor continuing the present administration with Don Susan. With John Magnus as official editor, it looks like our troubles are over in that quarter for a long time to come. K. Martin Carlson is also running for President.

Got my first look at a SAPSazine today. Larry Touzinsky sent me a complimentary copy of his THE ARCHIVES. A neat little thing with a wonderful David English cartoon on the cover. An equally excellent bacover by Harness brought a laugh. Dunno who did the full page hilarious ad on page two... (better look inside...) It was Wellons. Who is Wellons? I dunno.....

A friend who works as a janitor for a local high school brought me a little magazine called READ Magazine. You know what it is; one of the carefully edited items put out by VERY respectable people for the bi-monthly consumption of the students of America. It gives the news, current events, a sports article, a movie article, a crossword puzzle, etc.; all cheerfully innocuous. This issue had a bit of fiction. Yeah, you guessed it, it was Science Fiction. The title was "In The Year--2012", and it was terrible. But this is the ultimate in respectability. From now on if your mother takes with the "crap", "useless trash", and "disgusting stories" routine, just flaunt a copy of READ in her face. Shuts them up real quick I hear.

Tom Piper has an ad in this issue concerning his new fanzine, ABERRANT. And from what he says about it, it sounds like a good thing. I imagine he has learned considerable about publishing from his late and unlamented REASON. Frankly, I'm looking forward to seeing that first issue. I wouldn't be surprised if something by me even crept into the damned thing.

GROANNNNNNNNNNN. You remember the speculation about that third magazine Palmer was supposed to be issueing soon. Well...I was up at the corner grocery today and spied...rather, I smelled...something new in the magazine racks. Curiously, I crawled closer, my hands clammy with fear. I slowly raised my head above the edge, and...GAAAAAAA.

There it was: MYSTIC MAGAZINE. By Palmer publications. My worst fears were realized. FATE now has a sister....

THE COSMIC FRONTIER, a zine edited by Stuart K. Nock, RFD #3, Castleton, N.Y., is woefully overpriced, but still has possibilities if the ed will use a bit of color and a lettering guide or two. 10¢ a copy is too much for 16 half-sized pages. Now, at 5¢ per, it would be okay....

There's only a short time left to get your copy of the Atlanta Science Fiction Organization's hard-cover edition of

IMMORTAL STORM

THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE FICTION FANDOM
BY

at the prepublication price of only

We honestly believe this book to be one of the most important publications ever to come from the ranks of science fiction fandom. The birth of fandom and its subsequent history of violence and intrigue is told with authenticity and fascinating detail; a story more dramatic and suspenseful---perhaps because it is true---than a tale of fiction. We can't adequately describe THE IMMORTAL STORM---you'll have to see it to believe it---but some of the data we can list:

#There are more than 150,000 words, over 200 pages of small but readable type.

#Many photographs of fans and fan-events.

#Sturdy cloth binding.

#A beautiful dust jacket designed and drawn especially for THE IMMORTAL STORM by FRANK R. PAUL, the dean of science fiction art.

Again, the price NOW is \$3.95, but the pre-publication offer definitely closes October 10, when the price goes up to \$5.00.

The address is:

The Atlanta S-F Organization Press

c/o Carson F. Jacks

713 Covey Road

Decatur, Georgia.

An IMMEDIATE order will not only save you a dollar, but will assure you your copy. This first edition is limited; there may never be another.

GET THAT ORDER IN NOW!

This is the day. That day of final handle cranking and cursing. The tremendous job of assembling this monster is facing me in the face. Gotta here I come.

I had some notes around here somewhere. Pardon while I button on my zap guns and go forth to do battle with this CLUTTERED desk. To burrow or not to burrow, that's the question....

It would be wise if you all heeded (if you haven't already) the last page. NO, no....I mean the page previous to this. By the time this issue reaches you time will be short and you'd better stop procrastinating and shovel out the cash for THE IMMORTAL STORM. Otherwise it is sad you will be when the bill reads \$5.00 instead of \$3.95.

TECHNICAL MATTERS: This area right here might also be labeled apologies and explanations. To those of you who follow page numbering religiously and miss a page number if you can help it, are going to be shattered by my next words.

Next issue will have no page numbers. Only a line up of the material in proper order on the contents page.

Please do not send letters asking about page 19. I don't know what happened to it. I'd tell you if I did. Really I would.

Woman to husband in tavern: "Don't swear, it sounds like Hell!"

Hey, fellows, is you going to vote me into Seventh Fandom? I feel left out sorta like....

After much loud and long wailing in the direction of Cleveland I finally got a copy of SFB #13. This is the greatest. The mostest. Real cool, man, real nervous. And Harlan, I STILL don't think it was lewd! Refer here to The Dream, a bit of fiction in PSYCHOTIC #1. Now that I think back to that editorial I wrote for #1, I flinch and cower and shudder in mortal guilt. I am (or was) a pseudo Campbell.

This area here might balloon (that's the "L" of it) into a page of absolutely nothing if I let it. My fingers just keep hitting the keys and words just keep coming out. Complete waste of space and energy. Guess I'll review another fanzine or two. Gotta whole drawer full of them. I'll take one of the oldest....

VANATIONS, July 1953, Norman G. Browne. With this issue ceases publication. It is duly lamented.

"Would You--?" by Jack Harness gave quite a few good laughs. A good idea that was excellently done. The other humor piece, "Poe and Me" by Bloch, was superb. That question and answer style can be terrific when in the right hands. It was.

The poetry was fair. With the magnificent exception of "No Form Or Shape" by Richard A. Kirs. Here is a bit of free verse that really weaves a spell.... "An Opium Dream" by Fred Chappell suffered from a common poetic failing: obscurity. Seemingly if a poet can write a poem that is hard to understand because of a thick fog of undefinable and generalized terms, then he is printed and hailed on high if the whole thing is done with a certain competency. No one can completely grasp his message (usually because there is none) and so conclude that he is deep. "Here Too?" a poem by Art Huseboe, is incredible. But then, I'm prejudiced in matters religious....

Norman G. Browne's editorials always struck me as being a bit too too self-conscious. A bit too devoted to Norman and his mental gymnastics with regard to VANATIONS which always occurred on a very high plane. Affected.

At least his method of writing always seemed so.

ADVENTURES, August-September, 1953, 10¢, Warren A. Freiberg, 3018 West 18th Street, Cicero 50, Illinois. A Fantasy Pocketbooks Publication--All Rights Reserved.

The facade of professionalism is so good in this zine that I find myself wondering if perhaps this is a fanzine. The imitation of prozines is so marked as to be slavish. After Reading Boggs' article in SFB this afternoon, I can only conclude he had a copy of this zine before him as he wrote. The fiction isn't too bad in this, but with the new viewpoint I have after reading that article....well, my opinion of B.A. goes down. This zine has everything on the cover Boggs talked about: Big Logo, the price, a squib about a story inside, and the "A FANTASY POCKETBOOKS PUBLICATION" smack dab in the cover illustration. The cover, by the way, has everything but a BEM. Inside is a poem--a "Classic Poem" if you please--by Jonathon L. Magnus. I rest my case....

FAN-WARP, vlnl, Lyle Kessler, 2450-76 Ave, Phila. 38, Penna. 20¢, one year sub is \$1.00.

The cover on this newcomer is outstanding, and every bit of praise that the editor pours forth for the artist, Sol Levin, is well deserved. The fellow is very, very good. His illustrations for the Bloch item, "How To Attend A Science Fiction Convention", are a delight. Easily this boy is what makes the issue outstanding.

"Zealot" by Basil Wells is the best amateur fiction I've seen in a fanzine. Nicely written. I'll always remember that story.

Dave Hammonds satire of the Foundation series, "Than The Eye-A Foundation Story (A sequel to The Hand Is Quicker), was...well...good. Hammond has the ability to gently exaggerate and warp anything until it is positively ludicrous.

The Mari Wolf effort, "weightlessness in Space", seemed a waste of space.

I found "Grand Old Fan", a tribute to Sam Moskowitz a bit alarming; is Sam going to die or something. Is he that old? Does Gernsback do that to everybody he comes in contact with?

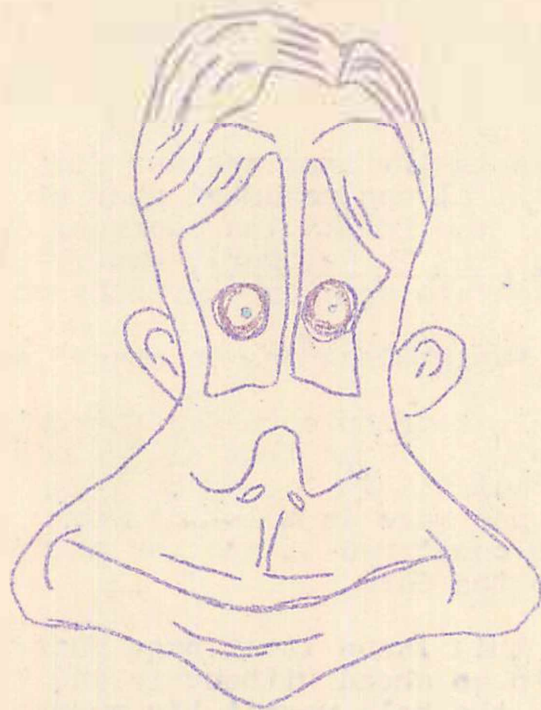
Two justified columns per page is a lot of work. I wonder if it is justified. Might not this be construed as another example of copying the prozines? ~~Heh~~ Perhaps I go too far.

The Convention Report this issue isn't page numbered because it was late in arriving, and I had to go ahead without it and leave a hole for it in the front. Unfortunately, the hole wasn't big enough. I'd like to print any other Con Reports, extracts, or reminiscences any of you might care to send in. That way, by reading of the Con from as many viewpoints as possible, a complete and fascinating picture can be built up. Almost as good as being there myself.

You will also notice that the poem by Isabelle Dinwiddie finally got printed. There is a long and sad tale behind that. I finally illustrated it myself. Yeah, I know...it shows it.

Got a nice long article by V.L. McCain in the works for next issue. Or did I tell you that? Anyway, next issue will be a surprise. Zines reviewed next month will be: BOOI, STARLANES #11, A LA SPACE, RENAISSANCE, ASFO, VEGA, MOTE ANNISH, FANTASTA, SOL, ECLIPSE, MUZZY, and anyothers that drop in and I have room for. (Room, he says. Hell, I could just print the letter section, the reviews, the editorial pages, and have a good twenty pages....)

Before I forget, does anybody agree that the Schomburg cover on the October Startling Stories was perhaps the BEST cover they've had for years? It possiti vely fascinates me. Gruesome. Well.....gooooomby.....



I FEEL FINE..... I THINK.....