

GALAXY DEPRECIATION ISSUE

PSYCHOTIC

NUMBER 5



"Whaddya mean I stole your format?"

PSYCHOTIC

THE LEATHER COUCH
By The Editor

IT STARTED WITH GOLD
V.L. McCain

A BIT OF HEBEPHRENIA

THOUGHTS FROM OUTER
SPACE...a column.
By Harlan Ellison

PHILCON PERSONALITIES
By George Viksnins

THE NEW ORDER
By Bill Reynolds

THE OBSERVATION WARD
a fanzine review by
the Editor

PROJECT MOONBASE
By V. Paul Howell

SECTION 8---where the
readers are kept.

STFANTASY FILMS
By Larry Balint

2ND SESSION
By The Editor

Covers by Geis
and anything else
that isn't signed.

Illustrations by Bob
Stewart, Bob Stewart
of Texas, Dignin and
Tomcho, David English.

PSYCHOTIC is costing
you 10¢ or 12 for \$1

Advertising costs \$1
for one full page, 50¢
for ½ page, etc.

NUMBER FIVE.....NOVEMBER

THE Leather Couch

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

And usually succeeds in the sometimes avowed purpose of saying absolutely nothing. Ah yes, how well I know the terrible words that are flung, with disconcerting velocity, into the teeth of editors, editorialists, and others of our ilk. "Don't just ramble, say something."

CONSOLIDATION or "Squeeze, damn it, squeeze!" Last issue there was absolutely no contents at all. This issue, in a suitably scrunched up and malformed shape, it leaps once again at you from the tall box to the left. This is called a compromise. After all, there is a certain amount of vital information that must be imparted, and this method is about the best I can dream up.

Then, too, there is the combination of THE LEATHER COUCH with the Contents page. This in an effort to cut down the number of pages in P. (Bitter laughter up tattered sleeve.)

Sooooo, instead of writing articles of deep and lasting importance and running them as editorials, I have ricocheted onto the idea of sending them out as contributions to other fanzines.

Don't crowd, boys, the line forms on the right.....Don't all come at once.....(oh, sob)...

THE OBSERVATION WARD and SECTION 8 and SECOND SESSION are room enough to postulate my pre-postorous principles. This was alliteration?

"LOBBLIES NEVER LIE"

Was an outstanding television production. An hour-long adaptation of his famous short story by Nelson S. Bond. The only word to use to describe it is...delightful. The acting was superb, and the theme music was a stroke of pure genius. My condolences to those poor unfortunates who missed this Kraft Theatre production. Bond should write more for T-vision.

BY V. L. McCAIN

It started with Gold.

Boucher pioneered, but Gold was really responsible. For what? For a reorientation in science fiction publishing and editing. A reorientation I feel is for the worse.

Not too long ago science fiction was a product of the pulps almost exclusively. Now the pulps have practically vanished; the magazines are slicker, smoother, more attractive, and feature better writing. But something was lost along the way....

Remember the old pulps? Big blurry type....bum on, rupture and ICS ads....crude line illustrations with an occasional Bok or Finlay which was worth a bit more than just to break up the solid pages of type....the 'Scientific Oddities' sections....the big blurbs for coming stories....the messy edges which shed all over your clothes....the stories which were a little cruder and a little livelier than now but otherwise not so much different....and, perhaps most typical of all, the letter columns.

The letter column tradition dates all the way back to Gernsback when it was devoted to earnest but usually uninformed scientific discussions. Science fiction was read chiefly by the adolescent boy (the young adolescent) until the late thirties. The letters stemmed from these sources. As the heavy science emphasis eased off, the letters came to be devoted more to the stories. But the naivete of the writers was still present. They were passionately in earnest and managed to discover more classics in the pages of the poorly written pulps than mankind had unearthed in all its previously written history. And woe unto him who attacked any favored idol. Horsewhipping was too good for him, but our letter-writer tried to make up for it on paper.


With Campbell at the helm at Astounding, science fiction underwent a tremendous change, and the letter columns also began to undergo their first important metamorphosis. Stf's

GOLD


IT STARTED WITH

faithful readers were growing up, and the field started to grow with them. More important, it began to attract already mature adults. Campbell, himself well educated along such lines, catered to the technicians. By the mid-40's, Brass Tacks was almost completely devoted to lengthy and abstruse discussions of highly technical points of controversy, usually over the head of the average reader..

Meanwhile the fiction in ASF had soared far ahead of the field and the magazine itself had adopted a different format from the pulps. Stf readers tended to regard everything about ASF as being far superior to its competitors. The format was much better, the stories were much better, and it was only logical that the letter column was also much better. And if literary construction were the sole criteria, they were completely right.



Adolescents, intoxicated by the sight of their own names in print, still tended to dominate other letter columns. Oscar Friend's juvenile creation, Sergeant ASaturn, certainly stacked up poorly. The letters tended to be full of juvenile rantings and plain and simple story ratings.



Then came Sam Merwin, who tossed out Saturn, expanded the column and made a point of personally producing pungent and witty comments on each letter received. To my mind, the Merwin Era at Standard is far and away the high-water mark in letter columns in Stf's history.

In 1949 the new magazines started to appear. Letter columns appeared in each magazine as a matter of course.

But a feeling seems to have grown up among stf readers that letter columns which were so frequently filled with juvenilia were in themselves juvenile. Snobbism had begun to grow around ASTOUNDING, its good features as well as its bad. Letter columns were now regarded as part of pulp policy, and rather degrading.

Actually there seems little reason for this. It is difficult to pick up any well-known magazine from HARPER'S through SATURDAY EVENING POST to the SATURDAY REVIEW which does not still maintain a letter column after many years of regular appearance. These magazines seem to see nothing crude in letting readers and amateurs appear in print in the same pages with their paid contributors. Nor is it considered pandering to an insignificant egotistical minority, although it is probable that stf magazines muster a far higher reader response for their total circulation than almost any other class of magazine.

But the feeling had grown up and the first real encouragement it received was one of the first of the new crop of magazines, THE MAGAZINE OF FANTASY, which appeared in late 1949 sans letter column. There was good reason for this. MOF was patterned in almost every particular as closely

as possible after its extremely successful sister magazine **QUEEN'S MYSTERY MAGAZINE**. EQMM in its early days was much more of an anthology than a magazine. This changed with the years and, in time, EQMM added a book review section, but nothing else. To no one's particular surprise the only editorial feature ever to appear regularly in MOF has been a book review. However, EQMM always had rather long chatty editorial squibs at the head of each story. Thus despite the lack of editorial and letter columns, the editors of EQMM managed to maintain an even closer personal liason with the reader than does the ordinary editor. This practice has also been carried into MOF without quite so excellent results, as the Messers Queen have a unique talent for this sort of thing.

MOF being the second quality magazine in the field, the odds against conventional letter columns were now doubled. I recall during this period one friend of mine remarked that while he personally enjoyed all letter columns tremendously he felt it cheapened a magazine to have one.



A year later came the third quality magazine. "This is your magazine," trumpeted H. L. Gold. "We'll print what you tell us to and eliminate what you dislike." He had certain mental reservations,

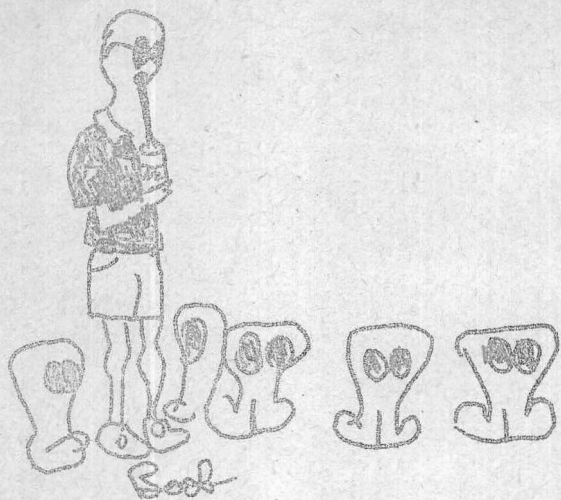
however. He flatly refused to consider pulp format, and went confidently ahead with plans for a special letter column and dropping the editorial after the first issue.



But overwhelming sentiment against the former and for the latter caused him to reverse his plans. Gold did not consider editorials desirable, nor himself well qualified to write them. He frankly admitted he was at a loss as to what to write. Not too surprisingly it is only after close to four years of writing them that he has finally hit his stride and now ranks with Campbell, and perhaps del Rey, as one of the very few currently practicing editors capable of turning out a top-notch editorial.

However, opposition developed to the deletion of letters. That from fandom was to be expected. Fans are naturally contrary...no important move has ever been made in any prozine since the fan movement got well under way without being violently attacked in at least one fan article. Furthermore, the fans who had long romped through the various letter columns, using them for both personal egoboo and club publicity, were deprived of one more sounding board. Less expected, but considerably more reasonable, were the very strong and determined protests entered by the writers who contributed to **GALAXY**.

These writers were used to scanning the letter columns, each time one of their stories appeared, for both praise and criticism. One can safely assume egoboo was a factor, but an even more important one was the "feedback" principle. Important writers who turn out arty bestselling books can study what the reviewers have to say about them. This tends to point out the virtues and faults; indicating to the writer what he should write next...not necessarily a slavish following of



the tastes indicated...he might decide, where something was strongly disliked, to do the same thing again so well as to force the critics to like it. However, whatever the writer's reactions, he needs some sort of access to the opinion of others besides his friends and a few fans he may have who like his work well enough to write him slavish letters full of opulent praise, or those individuals who dislike him so much as to do the opposite.

Unfortunately, the average short-story writer hasn't this opportunity. Selling to magazines, his stories never appear between hardcovers, and the average reader is so indifferent as to rarely mention a story. He reads it and forgets it. Only the most

exceptional stories evoke much reader reaction.

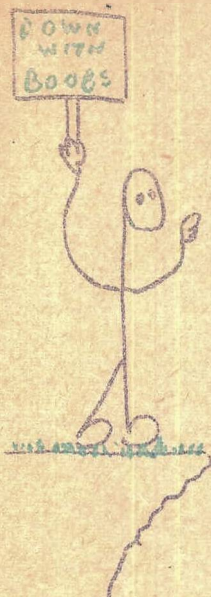
The sf field has always been different. The writer of even the most trivial story could count on at least ten or a dozen brief comments to indicate what he did right or wrong. The important writers like van Vogt, Bradbury and Heinlein were able to keep their fingers constantly on their public's pulse, gauging the reaction of each phase of their work. For instance, when the fan clamor against Bradbury's Martian stories became too heavy, he simply stopped writing Martian stories. Without the letter columns, how could he have known resistance was building up to them? He might have received an occasional complaint, but how was he to know these weren't just from a few soreheads?

Gold reported that some pros even doubted his word regarding a sentiment against a letter column so strongly that he was forced to let them personally examine the mail. They still weren't completely mollified, so he compromised: he would monitor the mail and compile lists every six months of the most popular stories in each issue. This would at least let the writers know how popular each story had been, although it was a far cry from the detailed story of a letter column.

This was vaguely patterned after Campbell's An Lab. Gold pursued the plan for close to a year, then announced he was going to replace it with a better. No word has ever been heard of it since. Presumably the authors must rely on the occasional stir in the fan press over a 'big' story like "The Demolished Man", or the extremely brief comment a story receives from the critics if included in an anthology...unless they can come to New York and invade Gold's sanctum and insist on seeing the letters that have come in about their story. Since there is no letter column, I doubt if the GALAXY readers respond as heavily as do those of the old style magazines.

The GALAXY experiment seemed to make no great inroads at first. New magazines, such as IF, appeared with brief letter columns.

Then, with pulps going out of business and digests appearing on every side, Ziff-Davis launched their FANTASTIC experiment.



The magazine obviously was expensive and this provoked quite a bit of praise from fandom, most of it unearned. Many fans felt there were now four quality magazines... and not one had an old style letter column. (It was always assumed the ASF type letter column would not fit in any other magazine.)

FANTASTIC was distinguished most, however, by having not one editorial feature, unless one counts the little biographical smidgits on the inside front cover.

Other editors had maintained, one way or another, the all-essential personal touch with the readers. Howard Browne has attempted to use MOF style blurbs, but his basic lack of sympathy with the field and with the readers shows through and makes it a failure. The result has been a magazine that is little more than a regularly appearing digest-size anthology.

Even more important was AMAZING's metamorphosis from a conventional, though very poor, pulp into an identical mate for FANTASTIC sans all editorial features. It is impossible to tell the two magazines apart unless one looks at the title.

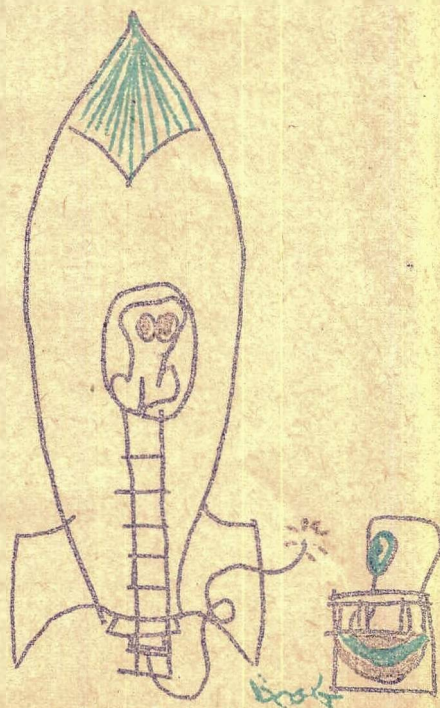
This seems to have been the crucial change. Since then magazines have continued to appear in digest-size with greater frequency, and I believe not a one has included a letter column since then. A few have editorials. Many don't even bother with the long blurbs of Browne and Boucher.

These magazines explode onto the stands with increasing frequency. The stories they publish are by the same authors and thus do not add to a magazine's identity. They are all the same size, and none have any real editorial policy or individuality. It is difficult to even remember what the new magazines are like.

This would never have happened in the old days. A magazine might be good or it might be bad, but each had its own personality and one was never in doubt about which was which if you were in fandom. But how many can conjure up a clear mental picture of the editorial personality of such magazines as COSMOS, UNIVERSE SF, and ORBIT?

To add to the blow, Sam Merwin, second only to Campbell as an editorial writer, and easily the finest conductor of a letter column, returned to the field with FANTASTIC UNIVERSE which contained neither feature.

Why bother to call these publications magazines? Why not just issue them whenever convenient as collections and let it go at that, as does Ballantine?





The decline of editorial personal-
ity chiefly tracable to the cru-
sade against letter columns
is important, but the truly
important and perhaps tra-
gic effect is the lack of
a sounding board for the
writers. Is it any wonder
that the new stf is getting
slicker and slicker and less

and less memorable?

Boucher pioneered.

Gold was really responsible.

And Browne did the final hatchet work.

I wonder where it will all end. Please, you editors, bring back the
letter columns before science fiction goes down the drain with them.

--V. L. McCain.
Illos by Bob Stewart.

A-BIT-OF HEBEPHRENIA

From a De letter:

Seems this father left his
daughter at a friend's house while
he made a business trip. On return-
ing he found her to be a trifle
pregnant. He questioned his friend
about it.

"And where did she sleep?"
he finally asks.

"In my son's room."

"My God, in your son's room!"

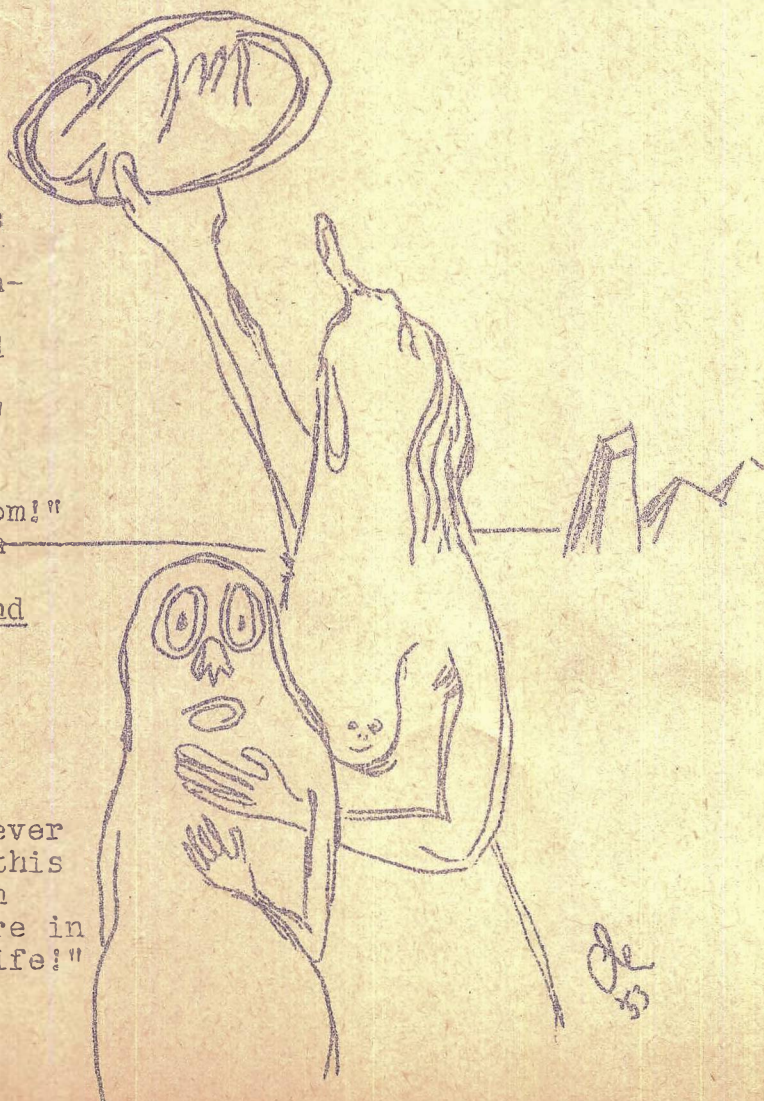
"Well...there was a screen
between their beds."

"And what if he went behind
the screen?"

"Well, in that case it's
possible...."

But, David, how
can a girl
become
a trifle
pregnant?

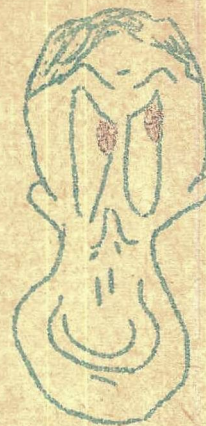
"I never
saw this
woman
before in
my life!"



DON'T BE....



WHEN YOU CAN BE.....



BUY NOW

THE IMMORTAL STORM

BY SAM MOSKOWITZ

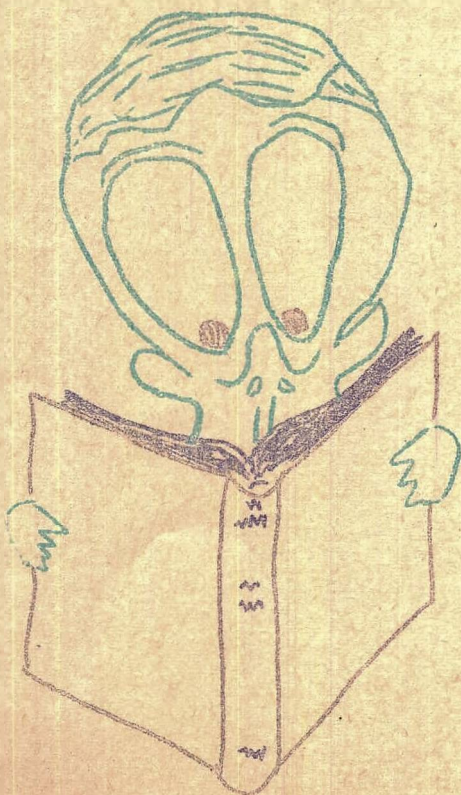
THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE FICTION FANDOM

- # There are more than 200,000 words, over 200 pages.
- # Many photographs of fans and fan-events.
- # Sturdy cloth binding. A library sized book!
- # A beautiful dust jacket designed and drawn especially for THE IMMORTAL STORM by FRANK R. PAUL, the dean of science fiction art.

Send \$5.00 now to

The Atlanta S-F Organization Press
c/o Carson F. Jacks
713 Coventry Road
Decatur, Georgia.

((Mention PSYCHOTIC when you buy))



Thoughts From Outer Space

.....a column by Harlan Ellison

Some things I've been wondering about: have you noticed that previous to the now famous Collier's symposium on space flight, every S-F artist had his or her own personal preconceived notions as to what the first spaceships and first orbital stations would look like, but that now, after the Collier's job has been not only accepted as the most logical visual extrapolation of what those first machines would resemble, that nearly all the artists, most prominent in this discussion being Schomburg and Emsh, have suddenly begun drawing those units with such startling plagerism, that it is obvious that they are indeed copying. Such a blatant form of out-and-out idea stealing is, to me, basically revolting. Schomburg, who shows signs of becoming another Bonestell, may be simply imitating his favorite astronomical artist, or he may be too devoid of his own ideas to logically build-up a spaceship with the necessary attributes but with a different shape.

The other thing I've been noticing, is the steady decrease in quality of the interior artwork in every single promagazine. Even Astounding, which consistently featured interiors of at least interesting content, has fallen prey to that malignant disease: Anaemia Interioritus. The art for "What Thin Partitions" in the September number, done by someone known to the field as Vidmer (but, oddly enough, who signs self as "V. deMer") are but mere henscratches, and the art by Van Dongen, while being good enough, shows his inability to draw the human face in any more than a few expressions. The art, all the way from Finlay's prostituting habit of making up photo montages and then re-drawing them as his own art, down to Amazing's new habit of using art that isn't even vaguely science-fictional, but is too too modern, makes me wonder what has happened to the good old artists who performed with such startling ability. Such magazines as Fantasy and Science Fiction and Fantastic Universe not using art lead me to believe that Boucher-McComas and Merwin (or whoever has taken over SaMerwin's job at FU) realize it was more important to worry about getting good stories than to worry about getting art, which is often several hundred times harder to come by than manuscripts of worth. Right now, insofar as I can tell, the only magazines giving the reader a decent proportion of good art are IF, Startling - Thrilling Wonder and Science Fiction Plus. With the possible exception of Emsh, Freas, Laurence and Ashman, the field is devoid of any true talent that has all-around ability.

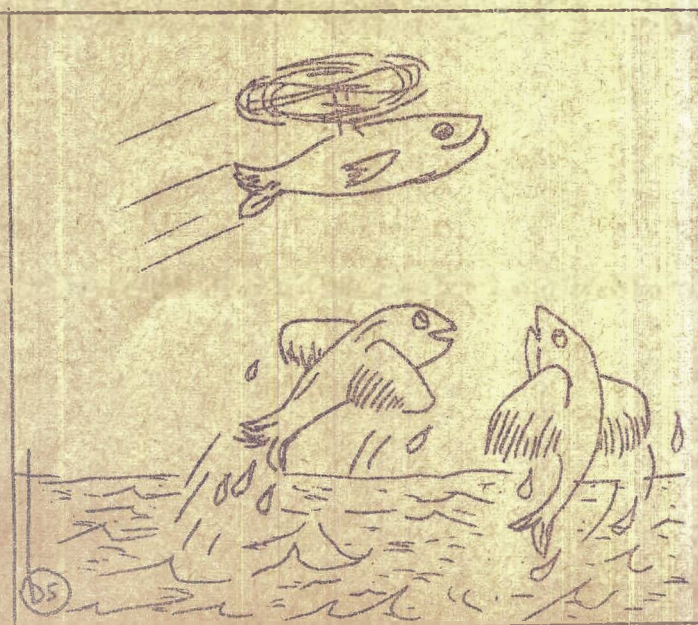
OUTER SPACE ACCOLADE AND SNEER: I'd like to pay a bit of attention in this small section to a fellow in fandom who has received much praise, but not for what he deserves. Sam Moskowitz has been applauded from here to Point Barry, but it's been for his fan writings and his fabulous The Immortal Storm (coming out shortly in hard covers from Carson F. Jacks, 713 Coventry Road, Decatur, Ga. at \$5.00. It has a dust wrapper by Frank R. Paul and is, in the humble opinion of this columnist, one of the building blocks of a good fan library and the only coherent, albeit slightly biased, history of fandom). I'd like to extend to Sam the big Hurrah! for his work with SFPLUS. When the first issue of SF+ hit the stands, the cry, "Abortion, abortion!" went up from the ranks. But through diligent and energy-sapping work over the past year, Sam had toned Hilo Grosbeak down and now there emerges a publication which might well be termed "coming up fast". Fandom and the entire field of science fiction owes Sam Moskowitz a great debt. For I believe that in Sam Moskowitz's SFPLUS, not Gernsback's SFPLUS, there is a Great White Hope for the field.

May I, in my snug safeness in Outer Space, also finish out this initial column with a large, curling sneer at someone? I may? Why thank you. I'd like to extend a pink tongue and a large flattened palm across the buttocks to a great fellow, personally, but murder behind a typewriter---Ray Palmer. Ray, lad, that first editorial in your new Science Stories was not only crack-brained, it was thoroughly downright insane. I'm ashamed. Trying to start another hoax, RayA? And just when you were settling down so nicely and being a good editor for a change, instead of a circulation-hungry polyglot.

THOUGHT FROM OUTER SPACE: Don't get too hepped-up about the way the public is taking to science fiction and praising it left and right. They praised and patted Gaius Julius on the back, too, until things went wrong in Rome. Then those patting hands sprouted knives. Science fiction may have to squawk through bloodied lips, "Et tu Brute?"

Yours very Birdbathly,

Harlan Ellison



"There goes that crazy Orville again."

-Bob Stewart.

PHILCON PERSONALITIES

By George Viksnins

Marvin Snyder is 19 years old, a college student, has blonde hair and blue eyes, and about 5'5" short. He is quite conceited and self-conscious. This is shown by the following episode which occurred Sunday evening at the banquet.... A table at the banquet was reserved for us 7th Fandomites. By invitation, Harlan Ellison, John Magnus, Jack Harness, Andrew Conn, Dave Ish and myself, besides a couple of girls, naturally, were sitting at this table. There were a couple of empty seats, though. Suddenly, as we waited for some other fellows to arrive, Marvin Snyder came up to the table, sat down without a word, and started to attack his food. He hardly said a word for the rest of the evening. I have nothing against Marvin personally, but it seems that he manages to insult everybody all the time.

Lyle Kessler, on the other hand, is as nice a guy as you'll ever meet. Many of the faneds (Browne, Ellison, Silverberg, and others) who had some differences of opinion with him, after meeting him said that he wasn't "... as bad as he seemed", and were very friendly with him. He is 17, around 5'8", and has brown hair and grey eyes. He is a good writer and an excellent editor. There are only two noticeable faults: first, he tends to worry a lot about very minor things, and second, he has a tendency to exaggerate; to tell fanciful stories. In other words he is a bull-artist. These two minor faults are noticeable only when one has known Lyle as long as I have.

Harlan Ellison is a short and skinny guy with horn-rimmed glasses and an unlit pipe. He has an inferiority complex, though. This was best illustrated when Bob Madle, Lyle Kessler, Jack Agnew and myself were sitting at a table in the bar and he came up and sat down. He started cracking some jokes (he is a very lively and talkative fellow) and when he had finished and saw that Agnew hadn't laughed as hard as the rest of us, or saw something I don't know about, he asked Agnew: "You don't like me much, do you, Jack?" Bob Madle started laughing and Ellison admitted: "Yeah, I have quite an inferiority complex, don't I?" This complex was also shown in various other ways. Despite that, Harlan is a very nice guy, has quite a sense of humor, an excellent memory, and is a good worker.

Rich Ellsberry, a rather corpulent person, has blonde hair and (yep you guessed it!) blue eyes. (If I'm beginning to sound like a phonograph record, excuse me, because I gotta say something and I can't remember too much of the convention now. I wish I had written something down, dammit!) Rich is well known for his critical articles which criticize everything in sight. He is an excellent user of rhetoric, but sometimes his articles are so condemning that they become ridiculous. He committed one blunder a little while ago; he wrote an article for A LA SPACE (which is a blunder in itself) in which he said he was leaving fandom...and then he showed up at the convention. That's one thing I can't stand at all!

Norman G. Browne is a pretty shy guy when you meet him, but boy, does he make up for that in print! In his fanzine and articles he is an egotist if I ever saw one. All VANATIONS ever had was a column of questions directed at him, a letter column, a long editorial, parts of his life, and a couple of other departments. When you meet him personally, though, he seems pretty human and pretty nice.

The New Order

a poetic satire

by

BILL REYNOLDS

Listen, my lads, I'm going to sneeze.
You know what that means: there's a story in the air.
So wipe my noses, all eight of them;
Brush the tears from my eyes, I'm sitting on them;
Prepare for the epic of our race: attend me!
For you will learn that we are not the Men,
We are the Fen....
So, stand around me, and hold your heads in shame.
Do not drop them; each has a name
That is carried by another
Falsely calling itself your brother.

I

The thing fell on this very spot
A few years, that seemed centuries, past.
Does not the odor of its twenty-five scents linger?
The perfumed mists cleared from a figure so crass
That we thought it was brass
Until it proclaimed in a voice never bold
That it was not brass; that it was Gold.
I shook my heads, which was easy to do.
They were lying at my feet
And not at my seat.
It was easy to see that he was brass.
But my companions had left their heads at home,
Which is not surprising since our heads are bone.

To be not brass but Gold is confounding
So they all agreed that he was Astounding.
The clangor of his jaws as he tried to speak
Convinced us that he was an Unknown freak...
And less Astounding, so to speak.
And speak he did.
He bared his chest, which was strange to do;
We have chests, but they're home too.
He bared its contents to those surrounding
And we had to agree that this was Astounding.

I was sure he was brass when he forbade us to speak
So I gave his arm a little tweak.
Imagine my surprise when I found him cold,
I had to admit that this was Gold.
I prostrated myself at his feet
Which are difficult enough to face
When you're all seat and hard to reach.
I begged him to give me a pretty speech
Like those that filled his chest;
Like those he proclaimed the best.
Which is more Astounding when you realize
That this isn't brass; this is Gold.

II

To the capital our precious burden we carried,
Never a word he uttered which was not Astounding;
So the crowd grew, and us they harried;
Eager slaves to this creature redounding
Not of brass, but of Gold.
Into the capital we trouped
Into the lead-sheathed cavern known as Fizz
Ruled for eons with the greatest prattle
From the honied lips of our despot Rap.
On his right, beneath a jewel peaked cap,
Sloped the formidable brow of his magician Marwin;
To Rap's left was a barber,
Unobtrusive as a robber
Was the royal pet of the court
And was fondly known to intimates
As the Shaver, barbarian of the caves.
In the plaza sat the imperial trio
To contest our demanding will
That here was Gold to fill the bill.
"Destroy the Traditions found in the scramble!"

Bellowed our Rap, "Forget what we fought for?
Dismiss the torures of Burnback? We suffer
Still the radiation scars of that villain Whole-Hind.
Can you forget our past; the battle so Amazing
Nay, so Astonishing with violent Super Science?"
Our heads bent with a shudder of panic,
That we survived was more than a Miracle:
A sanguine history that was Dynamic
With the suffering of countless Fen.
Fen, our slaves, who became our masters.
Fen who tried to counsel us with blasters;
Fen who threw missives into our eyes
Until our brains reeled with fear;
Who ruled the sacred Conventions with their cries.
So little like our Gold who now stood here....
Our savior Gold immediately became
When he jumped forward to speak:

"I am not the past you blame.
Belabor me not because ye are weak.
The Fen are the past;
To be forgotten with the rest...
With the rest of your ideals so shallow.
Become your own masters
You are not men hollow.
The dangers are past, the Fen are dead
Or few in the hills remain.
Forget them and they will wane
As we wax praising ourselves.
Forget it all, with an eye on your purse;
Realize that your ideals were only your nurse
To make you as you are: ready to be serious...
Fatal to Fen, who find it curious.
Forget the Fen and they will perish
With your ideals that they so cherish."

The bowing audience set up a gasp
Which is easy to do with so many mouths;
They shuffled their feet and rolled their eyes
On the floor and sat and waited for more.
Rap sat stiff and tightened his lips
With a twist of the neck and a roll of the hips.
"The Fen multiply like faneds these days."
Rap tasted doubt in the air.
"They do their treachery in devious ways;
Ways to us that aren't quite fair.
Ah, but appease them with praise;
Recognize the Fen and peace will stay.
Print their proclamations, smile at their ways;
Become their brothers and our chain will stay
Willingly around their collective throats,
Letting us guide them like tiny boats."

Gold sneered at the dull eyes of Merwin,
Frightening the Shaver behind a drape
While Rap blinked his eyes at the concourse.
"Appeasement to become slaves!" retorted Gold.
There are traitors even within our fold!"
With a knife hidden in his mind
He stabbed our ruler from behind.
Then he seized Merwin by the ears
And wounded him too...in the rear.
Before we could move a reluctant limb
The barber fell to our Gold's whim
And was sent sliding to his cave
In a pool of blood that would make him behave:
A Dero for all Eternity.

III

"Dispose of the carcasses!" our new chief cried.
"NO. Let them sit in their lies!" we shouted.
"Out of the city...or else to be fried
In the burning books once redoubted."
Piled in a heap were the sacred Signs
Pro and Fen. They, the hallowed ten
Lay defeated and cheated
By the Astounding revelations of our despot Gold.
Removed all were references to the Fen.
And from the bright flames came a great stink
As things Weird and Startling were added to the fire.
We were unnerved by a shriek without the wall
As Merwin hurtled his wretched body into the Universe.
So it is that the great must fall...
As Rap retired to compose more verse,
Shunned by Fen and Men, impotent without his Shaver,
Wandering the hills without favor,
Tortured by his Imagination, his mad brain
Living in the past, in Other Worlds of fame.

IV

So the new order was established with these cries
From Gold our savior: "All else is lies.
Be Like Me is your new ideal.
From now on, the Fen are unreal.
Only through the dullness of similarity
Can we become alike with most alacrity
Until each is like me...unrecognizable from the other.
Let the only tradition be that I was as a mother.
Begetting mags with but one identity.
Here is the flag to follow with awe;
Filled with rules most Astounding.
A constellation of precept and law.
Remember its immortal title!
Remember GALAXY!"

-----Bill Reynolds



The Observation

Ward

A FANZINE REVIEW BY THE EDITOR

DEPT. OF AMPLIFICATION, CORRECTION, AND FURTHER CONDEMNATION RE DESTINY:

Over two dishes of chocolate ice-cream, Malcolm Willits and I recently had a talk. He protested that Destiny is a fanzine. And I'll agree that it is...technically. But not spiritually. For the policy of the mag, as outlined to me (and as I remember), is that of expansion: of growing in circulation, of attaining newstand sales, and admittedly slanting toward non-fan newstand buyers. Not completely, understand. Just enough to keep them happy.

Confirmed by Mal was the inclination among photo-offset eds to feel that letter columns, as noted in the lead article this issue, are not an attribute of quality; one can't waste expensive photo-offset space on mere letters. Let me hasten to add, however, that Destiny has had letter columns in the past.... From what I could gather, they were mimeo'd appendages to the zine proper. The poor relation.

The whole point is this: Destiny obviously is now, and hopes in the future to be, something more than a fanzine. Fine. Nothing wrong with that. But I can't see this wanting to be all things to all fans.

At this point I can see Mal's terrible frown, his angry, scowling face; I can hear the muttered curses and dire threats. I shall be looking for an article from you, Mal, explaining, defending, and otherwise clearing the shadows of ignorance formed against the mighty edifice of Destiny.

BOO!, Bob Stewart, 274 Arlington Street, San Francisco, Cal., 5¢, 12/50¢. Now quarterly after eight monthly issues. The drain and strain apparently was too much.

The cover on this V1N8, is a semi-cartoon of a scene on an alien world...I hope. By McIntyre, it no doubt suffers a good deal in mimeo reproduction.

I'd say that the main failing of Boo! is the plethora of columnists who babble on and on and don't say much of anything. And when they do say something worth thinking about, don't say it well.

"The War of the Lil' Critters" by Bob Stewart, was the best thing in the issue, with "Ghoul" by Terry Carr, and "The Merchant of SanFran" by Larry Balint taking close second place honors. There is a horrendous pun by Art Wesley which defies description. There is also a thing by DAG:mar entitled, "The People Who Make Boo!" A clever spate of wordage.

The Art Section, after having been slaved over for hours and hours, still proves it can't be done on a mimeo. The best of them was a Bill Reynolds effort in a modern symbolic style.

BOO! gets better and better, and is more than worth the 5¢ per copy price.

STARLANES #11, Orma McCormick, 1558 W. Hazlehurst St., Ferndale 20, Mich.
Quarterly, 20¢ or 6/\$1.00.

A beautiful mimeographed and hand-crayoned cover, drawn by Share. I count six colors; a tremendous amount of work.

Going through the mag: "Destiny" by Page Brownton, has a driving rhythm entirely in keeping with the subject; the phrasing of "Song For Stay-At-Homes" by Dean A. Grennell, was gently sardonic with its more than appropriate and discerning insight; "Aftermath", from ADAM INTERNATIONAL REVIEW, by James Angell, struck me as extremely well written. The often used doom-day theme is the theme, but so well done it is that any other poem of the type will have to be just terrific to compete.

I must mention Theda L. Pobst's "The Searchers (To A Lady In Doubt)" as an example of excellent poetry. It is a pleasure to read.

I deplore the too sweet and lacey aftertaste this mag leaves in my mouth. Space, travel in space, alien worlds, all these are filled with danger, death, and worse. Yet, in STARLANES there is an obvious lack of... well, call it masculine influence. The poems have no guts.

A LA SPACE, Kent Corey, Box 64, Enid, Oklahoma. Bi-monthly, 20¢, 6/\$1.00.

The cover on this issue, #6, continues the banner heading for the title. A sub-heading: "The Aristocrat of Fandom", is inexplicable. Not only that, it's contemptuously presumptuous. "Colonel Corey, suh, your so-called aristocracy is fabricated on nothing more than exceedingly wishful wishful thinking. Based on nothing, it is as hollow and egotistical as your other sollemn and earth-shaking pronouncement on the cover, "An Independent Fanzine!". Come off it, Kent, come off it."

The one good feature in this issue was "Nogo", a comic strip take-off on POGO. By Ray Ogden, it is damn near as good as POGO itself.

Two fanzine columns, of which Gary Curto's "Alien Fanzines" is the best, though too enthusiastic by far.

The utter low for this, or any other issue in any other fanzine I have ever seen, is the "Gossip Page" incorrectly spelled 'Gosip Page'. There is a reward of...no, it says "prize"...for the lucky fellow who guesses the author of this thing. \$5.00 is yours for spotting a style. My guess is Balint. The whole thing is in the worst possible taste, and throws a distinctively unfavorable light upon the editorial ethics and judgement of Kent Corey, which would appear to be at best juvenile, immature, and thoughtless.

This particular issue gets one big panning.

RENAISSANCE, v2n3, Joseph Semenovitch, 155-07 71st Ave., Flushing 767, N.Y. Published irregularly, 10¢, 12/\$1.00.

The cover by Capella, wasn't too good...nor too bad...just a cover. In fact, the head in the picture is badly drawn. It inspires no further comment.

One great big gob of "Fortean Phenomena" by George T. Wetzel is the 13 page stopper in this issue. This stuff is fine if you like it....

Bob Silverberg intelligently discusses the question, "What Is A Pulp Magazine?". He points out quite ably that it all depends on the values used: Do you judge by the quality paper, or by the quality of writing? Mr. Silverberg maintains that pulps are pulps because they use pulp paper. The matter of writing quality is not a thing easily agreed upon.

Elmer R. Kirk discusses "Science-Fiction Versus Fantasy" which is like saying, "The Bedroom Versus The House." Science fiction is a part of fantasy as a whole. Mr. Kirk didn't bother to define his terms. A good thing too, for no one can agree on them. This type of discussion seems to be largely useless.

This zine is slanted toward the Wetzel specialties, and has a small but loyal following.

ASFO, vln2, Jerry Burge, 415 Pavillion Street, S.E., Atlanta, Ga. 15¢, 10/\$1.00, no publishing schedule listed.

A very, very nice painting by Burge is reproduced on the cover. The scene and style remind me of a frame from a hypothetical Walt Disney weird cartoon.

Neat contents page, only one illustration in the entire mag, and fair mimeo work. It seems that nobody, but nobody, can beat a cheap machine. Layout is plain and simple. Material is good to excellent, with "Nods & Becks" by Calvin Beck taking the lead. Beck talks informedly and intelligently on various and sundry matters, and writes atraightforward lucid prose.

A piece of fiction, "The Tonal Analyzer" by Fred Chappell, started out and continued as though it were just another imitative pro-type story. But, the ending saved it and made it well worth the reading. That las t line....

ASFO, especially in interior appearance, reminds me of SPACESHIP. The material isn't quite as good, but the resemblance is still very much there. This fanmag is good as it stands. Successive issues will see if editor Burge can improve over this first editing job.

SOL #9, Dave Ish, 914 Hammond Road, Ridgewood, New Jersey. 10¢, 6/50¢. Published somewhere between a quarterly and a bi-monthly.

The cover by Jack Harness is a beautiful example of three color mimeography. Think of the work....

The editorial a new facet of fanning I hadn't previous ly heard about: focal points. It would seem that all the "focal points" jump on a bandwagon and proclaam themselves Seventh Fandom. This is very snobbish and very naive. But these fans, in an attempt to be important and become BNFs, lose perspective and lose contact with reality. But, wotthehell... it's harmless fun. Go to it, fellas, but remember not to howl too loudly when twenty or thirty new fans elbow you aside and proclaim themselves eighth fandom....

Ed Wood, in his article, "Fandom, Grow Up Or Get Lost", indulges in a familiar and useless pastime: he deplores the snafu's, dilly-dallying, immaturity, obstiniteuncooperativeness, and independence of fans and fandom. Ed Wood, and many others seemingly cannot or will not realize that fans are inherently all the above. Generally, fans are rebels agai ns t authority. In fandom fans find a delightful anarchy and a chance to yak and pound their drums and toot their horns. There have been, are, and probably always will be fans who want to give fandom a purpose, a goal, and ethics. But the trouble is, there is no way on the world they can enforce these things. So, after shaking their fists in helpless fury (in and out of fanzines) they frustratedly drift out of fandom. Other fields are more rewarding to these would be Comstocks, preachers, and do-gooders.

VEGA #11, Joel Nydahl, 113 Front St., Marquette, Mich. 10¢. Monthly, I think. The squib on the cover only says "Fandom's Leader---" this time.

Cover format is good. Liberal use of texture plates is clearly the factor that makes the cover as effective as it is.

Not much in this issue. Joel is saving his strength for his Annish. Hmm. Take care, Joel. Remember OUPSLA!

VEGA is mimeo'd nicely, layed-out nicely, and very probably (for the present) is the best monthly extant. Mmmmaff...I just thought of something: with Boo! gone quarterly, I think PSYCHOTIC and VEGA are the only two monthlies currently publishing.

"En garde, Joel, ziss iz zee fight to zee bittair end!"

MOTE #7, The Annish, Bob Peatrowsky, Box 634, Norfolk, Nebraska. 5¢ per, 25¢ per year. Bi-monthly (supposedly).

I'm damned, but this is a very nice little mag. I hadn't noticed previously that the price was only 5¢, and that knowledge amazes me. This is the buy of the year.

A NICE cover by Bergeron, and a host of interior illos by Naaman, McMillan, Gilbert, Grennell, Harness, Fleshman, Hopkins and the editor. Just about every page has a filler of illustration. All are good to excellent. Bergeron has several full-page illos that came off very well.

The material is all good. But somehow nothing stands out in my mind as exceptional. Most interesting tho, were "King Kon" by Jack Harness, and "The Art Of Getting" by Hal Shapiro. The layout of Donald Cantin's column "Disjointed and Un-Epoch-Making Facts About Editors and Authors... Both Fan and Pro" took up damn near as much room as did the column itself.

A good zine, this, and is very well reproduced in the ditto process in up to four colors. If you aren't getting this fanmag, you should send in the nickles pronto.

FANTASTA #8, Larry Balint, 3255 Golden Ave., Long Beach 6, Cal. "2/5¢ or slightly more if you desire it carved on stone."

This issue contained three things on its four well mimeo'd pages: "Gleep" the editorial; "A Synopsis Of A Synopsis Of A Synopsis Of The PHILCON" by Lyle Kessler; and a fanzine review titled "ATLANTIS...the lost column" in which the number of asterisks signify the rating of the zine. Something like Jimmy Fidler and his 1-5 bells rating system.

Nothing much in this zine, but it makes for a pleasant three minutes reading.

I keep thinking of the postage on the carved stone edition....

ECLIPSE #5, Ray Thompson, 410 S. 4th Street, Norfolk Nebraska. 10¢, 6/50¢. Bi-monthly, this zine presents a loosely knit appearance and slightly below average material. There was a cartoon on the cover.

"The Story of the Atom" by Daryl Sharp, had lots of action, but very little plot. Short on characterization, too.

The best items in the issue were "Inertia", a column by Joel Nydahl, and "EEK", the letter section. In the later, Larry Balint says:

"SITUATION SCARLET was lousy! I didn't read it...."

ECLIPSE should improve a lot to really be worth the asking price. Especially when compared with Norfolk's other zine, MOTE.

MUZZY #4, PFC Claude R. Hall, US54100511, Btry A, 6th Tng Bn, AAA RTC, Fort Bliss, Texas. ...OR... Claude R. Hall, 807 N. Main, Carlsbad, New Mexico. The Army address will reach him much quicker ..even tho you spend two days writing it.

And PFC Hall writes a good editorial and generally shows a good deal of intelligence, if nothing else. Briefly, the zine needs lots of good material, as the editor well knows. He wails for help, and I wail in sympathy. Question: "If material is so short, why come out on the monthly schedule?"

No, no, not 15¢ for this zine? Surely not?... Not even the memorable "Why I Keep My Brother, Antitwerp, In A Closet" was enough to keep this issue afloat.

Next issue will see a review of: SPACESHIP, SPIRAL, DAWN 18, XENERN, INSIDE, SPACE TIMES, TORQUASIAN TIMES, GRUE, S.M. GAZETTE, COSMIC FRONTIER, Fantastic STORY MAG, TYRANN, AND (skooz it, please)...and others if room permits.

PROJECT MOONBASE

A REVIEW BY V. PAUL NOWELL

Having long been a harsh critic of the science-fiction films released from Hollywood, and having seen a number of flops, I feel that when a good movie does come along, it should receive all credit due it. Of course many fans may disagree with me, since I liked IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE, contrary to popular opinions of said production.

Robert Heinlein, long known to sf readers for his fine "juvenile" and "adult" novels, and the man who awoke Hollywood to science-fiction in 1950 with DESTINATION MOON, has just re-awakened the dozing film capital with a picture entitled, PROJECT MOONBASE.

PROJECT MOONBASE combines the features of a well-written, well-acted, scientifically correct one-and-a-half hours of movie entertainment. It isn't over technical, as in DESTINATION MOON, to the point where it downs the plot, nor is it all story, unscientifically made as was THE MAN FROM PLANET X.

A prologue informs the movie viewers that in 1948 the Secretary of Defense advised the building of a space satellite, and from there brings us up to 1970 where the story takes place. A satellite has been established by a peaceful nation, and is threatened by unfriendly powers. No one country is named, and the only city mentioned is San Francisco. My impression was a "united" North America, as far as resources and men were concerned. However, the President of the United States is mentioned and shown. The plot calls for an unfriendly nation to destroy the ominous "eye in the sky" and thus enable its own space experiments.

I won't disclose more of the story for obvious reasons, but I would like to mention some of the scenes and miniatures. I was impressed with the space ship CANADA take-off and flight through the atmosphere to the satellite without the customary spliced-in shots from White Sands Proving Grounds. The take-off was rather shaky, but a triumph in miniatures. The space satellite was a solid disc. By solid I mean it wasn't vacant at the hub like a doughnut, but filled in with rooms. There is no gravity within the satellite, and magnetic shoes are worn. The reason for not having at least "artificial" gravity, produced through centrifugal force, is to allow more room for storage and people. An example of this is when the two main characters in the movie pass a fellow space serviceman who is walking on the ceiling in the opposite direction. It is practical to figure on twice as many people using a hallway as would be possible with an gravity at all. This brings to mind the signs all along the hallways reading: "Please Do Not Walk On The Walls."

The space-going ship, unable to enter the atmosphere, vaguely resembles the same type from Collier's magazine. Scenes on the moon are actually superb. They are equal to the best Bonestell's one can find. For instance, when the six TV cameras on the space ship (then grounded in a crater) pan around the ship one at a time to show the surroundings, the shadows coincide

with the direction to the sun.

Another interesting feature is the clothes worn on space flights. They consist of shorts, light boots, and T-shirts, with small caps. Insignia of rank is worn on the front of the left shoulder. Reason for such clothes is to decrease weight onboard ship. As it is stated in the movie, the government spends \$300 per pound to lift material to the satellite. Instrument panels are beside the acceleration bunks and are compact and light for the same reason.

Scientific data on orbits, terminators, Lunar measurements (on the surface), rocket fuels, and landing and take-off procedures are as correct as can be expected without making the non-stf, non-scientific public shun it as "high-hat",

There may be a bit of scientific double-talk here and there, but it is harmless. Readings on three navigational stars--Vega, Polaris, and Fomalhaut--are given to calculate the position prior to take-off/blast-off.

Perhaps fandom won't think too much of this picture, but for my money, it was worth every cent I spent to see it, and showed me that Hollywood can recover from its stf slump. Of course the main reasons for PROJECT MOONBASE being so good were because it was a Galaxy Picture, and the combined talents of Robert A. Heinlein and Jack Seaman, the producer of the picture.

A parting thought, though: has Hollywood yet found that there are other stf plots available besides trip-to-the-moon and invasion-from-another-world themes? Why not make some of the classics of stf-dom...wake up the world to science fiction in an entirely new way. Any nominations?

.....

A BIT MORE HEBEPHRENIA--

So help me, this is what
I found on a box of blankets:
"Make Warm Friends."
Good advice, what?

First Salesman: "What do
you sell?"

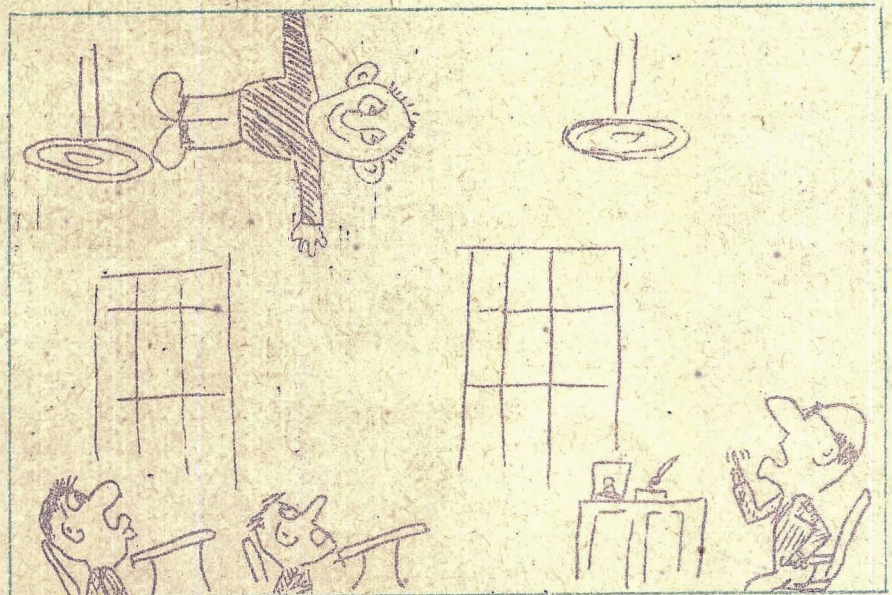
Second Salesman: "Salt."

First Salesman: "I'm a
salt seller, too."

Second Salesman: "Shake."

A lawyer got his client a
suspended sentence.
They hung him.

How do porcupines make love?
Very, very carefully.



-Dignin & Tomcho

"Johnathon! I told you to define
gravity, not defy it!"

Section

"DIG THIS CRAZY LETTER COLUMN"



Ron Smith
549 S. 10th
San Jose, Cal.

Dear Dick,

I agree with you that the "shameless featuring of 'names' on the covers" of fanzines shows ignorance, is a stupid editorial policy, and serves absolutely no purpose. A cover picture and the name of the zine is entirely enough, and I am sickened (editorial wise) by fanzines who run cover layout needlessly, like FANTASTIC WORLDS, for instance. I wish you would quote me liberally as believing so. For if I am criticized, I will not be able to come to my defense until next issue.

You see, my reason for the "names" was that INSIDE is sold on the corner newstands. On some of the newstands in LA. I am sending 90 copies today and more to follow if these sell. And I want them to sell. And if I plastered I N S I D E in bold letters on the cover, who would buy it? But with Neville and Wright and Bradburry there to catch the eye, I hope to sell a good number of copies and thus have newstand distribution with every issue. Now, am I forgiven my sin?

Naaman did headings for both a review column and a letter column, which were eventually crowded out by the articles, so I am not to be considered "snobbish" or "outside fandom". My purpose in editing INSIDE is to present a good looking magazine with good quality articles and stories for fans. I am as much a part of fandom as any other fanzine editor, but I am not editing the zine to write editorials. The fan buys the magazine to read what's in it. That's why I edit it; to give him what he wants to read, and other than that I have no purpose. Whether I do a good job in my presentation of material will be determined by the response.

I will print your letter and/ or possibly a few more next issue and try to answer any mistakes I have made this time. That will be my last editorial word, and the magazine will stand or fall on what's in it.

((But the trouble, Ron, is that those newstand copies are not going to sell. On the stands it must compete with promags, and INSIDE's 25¢ pricetag is simply way out of line. The buyers for fanzines simply do not exist on a newstand. And, sad to state, even considered strictly as a fanzine, INSIDE is not worth the 25¢....))

Ray RThompson
410 S. 4th Street
Norfolk, Nebraska.

AHA, G--(damn...cleaned this typer yestiddy, and it gleams and glows so gleamingly and glowingly, I'm afraid to touch i t..) Anyway, as I was saying, ... "AHA, GEIS...!"

What do you mean, sir, printing that fully-clothed female on the cover of PSY? Don't you realize, sir, that ANY female of the opposite sex that appears on the cover of a prozine or fanzine, should be clothed (?) in not more than two G-strings??? He. DARE you go against tradition? How dare you break one of the cardinal rules of faneditorship??? ANSWER ME!!! COME OUT FROM UNDER THAT DESK, AND PUT THAT PAPERWEIGHT DOWN!!!

Just see that it doesn't happen again, hear?

Nice heavy stock on that cover. (I MEAN THE PAPER!)

Notisit? 241b?

One of the things I like about PSY, Rich, is the great use of color. Makes for a lot of variety and spruces up the mag no end. The green is evergreen, y'ken... (Who trun that?)

Seeing as how your return envelope business is off the front contents page (MAKE SENSE OF THAT--GO AHEAD--I DARE YOU!!), I rather think I shall submit to you'uns'all, some of my crud, whensoever I get around to writing some. The den isn't completely fumigated from the last session, so I'll be some time yet--probably all of two days.

I keep turning back to that fully clothed girl on the front cover....

Reproduction suffered a little this ish...wha' happen?

Best thing in the mag, o'course, is Charles Harris's con report. Seems to me I've read Balint's column somewhere else before, even to the same material. Must be because he sent the stuff to me only to be rejected. Agree with you about Teevee shows, but what can you do? The producers have a tough job, y'ken, trying to please everybody.../FILLER # 1/. ABBERANT--I'll have to see it before I'll believe it. Nowell puts forth a couple of good points, but let me suggest this: all prospective fiction authors should read a few articles and books, try to get a few pointers about how a short story should be written. You know, a story gets harder to write, the shorter it is. Too many fans, and other amateur authors, go ahead stumbling blindly like Roosevelt's charge up San Jaun Hill, writing...writing...writing. But all they're doing is putting down words. They don't get any characterization, (which, bye the bye, is the main fault with a lot of fan-fiction--cardboard characters) the finished product wanders around, etc. A good story of any sort, but especially a SHORT story, should have a beginning that caught the reader's attention and progress IN REASONABLE ORDER to a climax. At this climax, or shortly thereafter, all the loose ends should be tied up. This goes for shock endings too, only in that case, instead of tying up the loose ends one by one, they are all fused together like a couple of pieces of metal subjected to the sudden blast of a heat ray.

I've gibbered enough....

((You certainly have. Couldn't resist that.... Now, sirrah, about the gul--(now you've got me doing it) gal on the cover last issue: "I liked the cover. Modestly dressed. What a change from all the other magazines; a very welcome change!" The quotation is from a note from Isabelle Dinwiddie. Are you thoroughly squelched?

The reproduction wasn't so good because...well, I'm not as young as I used to be, and those girls are so darned demanding....

OH...YOU MEANT THE FANZINE. (loud clearing of throat and red-faced side glances.) Wellllllllll...a still more expensive paper is the answer. My budget is in splints.

The cover stock is not 24lb. paper; it is 36lb.

I now ask you WHY the teevee producers have to please all the people. It's laldly obvious that it's impossible. I only wish the FCC would establish say four universal coast to coast networks: each network to devote itself to a cultural level of entertainment. One channel in each city for each of the networks. One net would feature kiddy stuff; another would cater to the moron group; the 3rd to the vast mental vacuum of the "average adult"; and the fourth would be devoted to us high-class cultured geniuses who read stf.))

Jerry Burge
415 Pavillion St., S.E.
Atlanta, Georgia.

Dear Dick,

After getting all set for an argument, I re-read Larry's letter and find there's nothing much to argue. At the bottom of page 28 he says he and I are not thinking along the same lines, but fails to indicate along what lines he is thinking, so I can't very well argue with him there. But I still don't see that fanzine fiction is a "waste of time and talent". "Talent" in this case is ability to write fiction, isn't it? Disregarding the publishing angle for a minute, how is the young writer to develop his talent? Larry suggests submitting manuscripts to pro editors or taking a writing course in school. Undoubtedly large numbers of writers have developed their talents in those ways; and no doubt others have used the method of simply writing stuff and throwing it away until they felt capable of producing salable fiction, and others have probably learned by letting family and close friends criticize their manuscripts. And, probably, good writers have developed their talents by even worse methods. But all methods require that the beginning writer WRITE. That is simple to the point of idocy.

It makes no whit of difference if the first few stories are fanzine fiction, or what-have-you. The important thing is to write. But a fan has an advantage in that he can get his early work published and criticized by a small audience. It is true, as Larry ssays, that fans give fan-writers a lot of rude, cruel advice; but whose fault is that?

The criticism, anyway, is not so important as the writing for an audience. About two years ago I took a correspondence art course. The most oft-repeated bit of advice given by the instructors was this: no would-be illustrator can develop his ability beyond the amateur point before he has allowed his work to come before an audience. An amateur artist will just naturally TRY harder when he is drawing for reproduction, and therefore he will learn more and learn faster.. It is my opinion that the same applies to the amateur writer who seriously wants to develop his ability.

(It might be a matter of interest in regard to the above, that last year I found a very interesting job in a lithograph company here in Atlanta as a direct result of my connection with C/SFD, and that lately my drawings have been bringing in a little extra cash, also as a direct result of my drawings in Cosmag. Shall we bannish fanartwork also as not being of "professional calibre"?)

I fully agree that any stories of professional quality should be submitted to professional magazines. However, just how much constructive criticism will a pro editor "expert" attend to the beginning writer? There

isn't much room on those rejection slips. And, at any rate, it is necessary to LEARN to write before sales can be reasonably expected. Learning to write is hard work. Writing for fanzines is an enjoyable hobby, I have no doubt; and this makes learning that much easier. Is there any reason why fanzines should not perform a service for fans? If there is not, there is no reason for us to eliminate this source of enjoyment and easy development for fan-writers.

Now, there is the matter of C/SFD and DESTINY. I am forced to disagree with you and Larry most emphatically about those two mags. I can only speak for C/SFD, but my remarks can, to a certain extent, apply also to DESTINY. C/SFD was done by litho for several reasons: first because of the possibilities of that repro method--copy was easier to prepare, drawings could be made by any black and white technique, photographs could be used, and we never got around to using any; second, because it was easier to read; and third, because a neat format attracted the better fan-writers. We made no effort to "imitate the pros". That would have been both futile and stupid. We were trying our hardest to produce a superior fanzine, not an inferior prozine. And where did this "imitation" come in? Cosmag had one (count it) professional-type story which Mack Reynolds gave to Ian. Otherwise I can see nothing in either mag to give such an impression. Does a fanzine which uses better reproduction methods and better material cease to be a fanzine?

As for the "slight profit". C/SFD "profited" the AS FO club treasury out of \$125.00 for the last issue alone. Altogether, the five issues cost us something like \$250. Actually, we sold the thing under cost. The last issue cost about 70¢ per copy. We charged 50¢ a copy for it. That sort of thing makes even a "slight profit" rather difficult.

The thing that angers me about this is that we did our doggondest to produce a good fanzine, and now we get jumped on for succeeding! Are all worth while efforts in fandom to receive this sort of reception?

((Let me hastily add that I never saw a copy of C/SFD, and thus have utterly no opinion on the matter. But DESTINY I know about!))

V. Paul Nowell
6528 Gentry Ave.,
North Hollywood, Cal.

Dear Rich,

Re "Progress": is William L. Freeman really Richard E. Geis in disguise? I don't think he is...his style's different from Geis's. Freeman is a good writer. (that doesn't sound quite right, but heck!) The illo was excellent. Who did it?

Now the story is rather unusual, yed I'd venture to say he took the "basic" idea from a story in an EC comic sometime last March or April. I believe it was March SCIENCE FANTASY. Anyhow, the story, which had a switch, surprise, and astounding ending, concerned a Negro also. It was so well done, I never expected any story of the same vein to ever come close to it. Freeman's did. The story was sweet and short, didn't exactly have a switch ending, but did have an ending that left the reader at "home". That is, not stranded in space from shortness of story nor held under water from excessive length of same. I liked it, and I think it was one of the 1% of stf (using Balint's figures) that is worth reading. By-the-way, did Balint ever mention "Counter-Charms" by Peter Phillips which was taken from SLANT? I read it in the OMNIBUS of SF by Conklin, and thought it good. It must have been. It was reprinted from fan to prozine. To get back to the point: "Progress", though not a brilliant example, was a good showing of what fan-fiction can be. Another, "The Mongrols" by Bert Garwell in the Winter 1951-52 ish of THE LITTLE CORPUSCLE was an excellent pro-like story. "RECO-

MENTED", to quote Henry Moskowitz.

"The Mongrols" brings up another point. Lynn Hickman has printed some very superior fan-fiction in his LITTLE MONSTERS and CORPUSCLE which has since become STF TRENDS. Lately he cut down the fiction...but he did have some good stuff.

P.S. Please print a request by me for crudzines from disgusted collectors so I can write an article on same. I'll try to make it constructive!!

((I had to cut most of your letter, Paul, because you merely repeated what Jerry Burge had to say. Had his letter already on raster before your effort came in. Re the crudzines: I assume you pay the postage.))

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

Dear Thing,

I say there, old fellow, you know I'm quite sorry that I brought up all this anti-fan-fiction crap in PSYCHOTIC. I hope to ghod this doesn't keep up at the same rate it has been. My brain is being strained.

But I agree generally on all that V. Paul Howell had to say in his article. His statement on fan-fiction build-up in the fanzines brought to mind the case of BREVIZINE ADVENTURE and editor Frieberg's policy. His needless build-up of both stories and fan-writers makes one sick to their stomach at times. Although Freiberg has been attacked again and again by angered faneds, he persists in his same damn juvenile attitude in pubbing. And to top it all off we'll see an article by him in the November issue of ZIP called "The Science Fiction Fan: A Jackass." If anyone ever deserved to be run out of fandom on a rail, this is the fellow.

Anyways, I still firmly believe that 99% of the fan-fiction published today is slop.

The Anti-Fan-Fiction Society is finally getting underway too. Val Walker recently joined as Vice-President and Treasurer, even tho we have no dues or any other money problems. At least for the moment. Anyways, there are two of us now. Anybody else want to join?

There seems to be some confusion as to what I meant by "fan-fiction". In GRUE #18, Dean Grennell mentions one of my works in BOO! as fan-fiction. The piece was "The Merchant of SanFran" and was actually a fan-satire. It may be termed "fiction" however, so I see I'll have to clear this matter up. By "fan-fiction" I mean science fiction or fantasy tales fashioned after pro fiction and written by fans. I do not define satire or poetry as fan-fiction. I hope I didn't disillusion anyone by not making this clear at first.

Hang by yore thumbs....

((I'm not sorry you brought it up, Larry, but I think the subject is about talked out now. My brain is strained too.

(99% of fan-fiction may indeed be slop to YOU, Larry. It all depends on ones standards and the values used to determine those standards. Everyone has a different set. Besides, you don't read fan-fiction anyway, so how can you judge?

According to Bob Silverberg's definition of fan-fiction, you ARE guilty of writing "fan-fiction".

Die of apoplexy, go on...I dare yuh!))

STEANTASY FILMS

By Larry Balint

BLACK LAGOON is a weird-fantasy film starring Richard Carlson, Julia Adams, and Richard Denning. Now in the process of shooting, it'll be a 3-D from Universal-International. USC basketball player, Roy Irvin, is featured as a primeval giant with webbed hands and feet, and a half-human face. He lives under water.

ROAD TO THE MOON with Bob Hope and Bing Crosby probably won't be filmed til next summer.

TWENTY THOUSAND LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA formerly was to be filmed in 1955. Now it is scheduled for November 1954 release. Walt Disney is working this one in live-action and Cinemascope.

THEM from Warner Brothers has commenced filming. In 3-D and WarnerColor, it stars Edmund Guinn and James Arness. The latter was The Thing in THE THING.

RIDERS TO THE STARS, with a screenplay by Curt Siodmak, has Richard Carlson both directing and playing the lead. Other stars are Herbert Marshall, Bill Lundigan, and Dawn Addams. In super-cinecolor, it will be out Oct.-Nov.-Dec.

RING AROUND SATURN will be filmed with electrically animated puppets by Nassour Brothers Productions in color and on the wide screen. A U.A. release.

SPACE STATION U.S.A. will star Herbert Marshall and Constance Dowling. In super-cinecolor, it will be filmed by the end of the year.

NIGHT PEOPLE, supposedly a weirdie from 20th Century Fox in Cinemascope and Technicolor, is completed and awaiting release. Filmed in Munich, I believe.

PROJECT MOONBASE has a story and screenplay bt Robert Heinlein. Stars are Donna Martell, Hayden York, and Ross Ford. Producer Jack Seaman gave a talk at the '52 Westercon in San Diego. He mentioned then that in a matter of a few years we would see as many as 100 stfilms per annum.

PHANTOM APE is before the cameras now with a cast of unknowns. Directed by Del Ruth, this film is suspected to be similar to HOUSE OF WAX. It's in 3-D and WarnerColor, and possibly wide-screen.

MAD MAGICIAN, being filmed by Edward Small for release by Columbia Pictures, stars Vincent Price in this 3-D Technicolor film produced by Bryan Foy.

CONQUEST OF SPACE will be on George Pal's schedule in the near future. Richard Conte will star.

DONOVAN'S BRAIN should make its appearance soon in the theatres after some trouble with the releasing companies.

THE MAN WHO SAVED THE EARTH has been completed. Peter Graves stars.

THE RETURN OF CAPTAIN MARVEL is a re-issue serial from Republic Pictures.

LOST PLANET is a new Columbia serial in 15 Cchapters.

THE CANADIAN MOUNTIES VS. THE ATOMIC INVADERS is a new Republic serial in 12 thrilling chapters.

2nd Session

WHERE THE EDITOR CONTINUES

TO RAMBLE...RATHER BRIEFLY THIS TIME...ON AND ON AND WHY GO ON.....?

I have information to impart. From a letter from Tom Piper I learn that Gregg Calkins is now stationed at Camp Pendleton and is living in Santa Monica with his grandmother. The address: 2317 11th St., Santa Monica, California. There seems to be a chance that OOPSLA might rise from the dead. Rejoice, brethren.

Along the same lines I have information about two other fans; both of Portland.

Jim Bradley, a fine fan-artist and late co-editor of DESTINY, is seriously considering re-entering the fan-pubbing field with a photo-offset zine of his own.

Things are getting active again in Portland. Also, Malcolm Willits, present co-editor of DESTINY, now habitates at 2018 17th, Forest Grove, Oregon.

FOUR DAYS WITH THE DEAD --And Other Stories of the Weird & Fantastic, by E.R. Kirk, is a printed first edition just off the press. It is a library sized booklet containing ten (10) stories of the bizarre and grotesque. Send for your copy today. NOW only one dollar, postpaid. Box 462-P, Buffalo, Missouri.

At this point a request for material. Plus a few thoughts about the quirks of fan material.

It seems that some fan material, like a lot of pro material, is submitted to many faneds before it reaches a faned who will print it because he is desperate for material and wants to fill out an issue. I'll confess that in issues past I have done this. I wanted a BIG zine, and I wasn't too interested in the quality just so long as it didn't sink below a certain level. This is changed now. This issue is 30 pages. Next issue may only go 20 pages. I don't particularly care. I don't want P to be considered the port of last resort. I would rather that fan writers thought of me and P first when thinking of a possible vehicle for their work. This is NOT to say that if a piece of writing has been submitted to another faned and rejected by him, that I wouldn't consider it. If the writer honestly thinks it is good and up to high writing standards, and would go well in P, then by all means, send it. It does not have to be fannish. Indeed, I think I'd welcome something un-fannish.

I need material, but don't send it unless YOU think it's good.

The latest VORTEX certainly has a lousy cover. More like a cartoon than a cover painting....

I hope next issue to have quite a long letter section due to the "controversial" nature of the lead items this issue. I'm sure everybody has an opinion.

P is late by a week this issue because of non-delivery of paper and fluid by a prominent department store in the city. Sorry. I say now goombye.



DEAR SLOB:

"WHADDYA MEAN GALAXY'S BETTER THAN ASTOUNDING?"