

"A nude on the cover, by Ghu!
Now I know what PSYCHOTIC is coming to!"

The most attractive item on my list of notes today is the one about the framed picture I recently, with much care and loving attention to detail, hung on the wall of my apartment. The note cryptically say, "-Marilyn Monroe pic in PLAYBOY." Yeah..... This PLAYBOY is a new magazine, costs 50¢, and features a full page colored photo of Her in the nude. In the classic calendar pose, this girl is decidedly enough to un-nerve any man....or boy.

In two places this issue Jim Bradley has top-notch illustrations. I wish I could say that I discovered him; actually, I sorta hauled him up into daylight after he'd been two years in the dreaded valley of Gafia. In those two years his work has improved by leaps and bounds. I only wish I could put him under contract... he's damn near a pro right now. I'll buy a whip and make him do as many pics as I can. I hope to have him illustrate all of PSYCHOTIC's stories and serious poems.

Last issue, if you'll remember, contained "It Started With Gold", a pretty long article by V.L.McCain. Vernon suggested that I send copies to Gold, Boucher, Campbell, etc., for comment. I did. I sent a copy with an enclosed self-addressed and stamped envelope to every American science fiction editor I know of. I shoulda saved my stamps...not one of them were used.

I don't want to draw any conclusions from this yet, because it's possible that busy editors just haven't the time to jot down a reaction and seal the flap. A few may straggle in before next. I write this "couch" for next issue. I hope so because I'm interested in the views and opinions of the pro eds in regard to the letter columns pro and con. I'll keep you posted.

Heretofore I've gone blithely along reviewing fanzines, and it never once occurred to me that the individual faned may not want his zine reviewed...if he thinks I may pan it or have in the past...but would prefer just to exchange. So, in the future, if any of you faneds want me to by-pass your zine for one reason or another, just send a card or somethin'.

I need cartoons of $\frac{1}{2}$ -size or slightly larger. I need some poetry.
I need....everything.

PSYCHOTIC is a monthly fanzine published at 2631 N. Mississippi, Portland 12, Oregon, Apt. 106, by Richard E. Geis. (I rhyme with vice and have a hard "G".) 10¢ per copy, 3/25¢, 6/50¢, 12/\$1.00 Advertising costs \$1.00 per full page, 50¢ a half-page, etc.....

THE GLOB

BY
RON SMITH

AND
HUBERT SUMMERS

The glob crawled out of the muck. The glob was a strange, incredible creature. He was formless--the glob was ~~the~~ even from an Earthman's point of view, he might have been described as "cute".

To Earthmen the glob was really nothing more than a glob and was deserving of no respect. He was too meek. He was the type of creature everyone likes to kick around and vent their anger upon. The glob was made to be disliked--he was the meekest creature



He had not always been a glob. He had once been a man. Yes, like every other man. But now he was meek. Meeker than the meekest man. Now he was a glob, produced by the cosmic energy-force of the muck.

Every seven days it was the glob's custom to crawl from the muck to feast on leaves and grass, to plop the tender morsels into his globbish mouth.

He would suck the long slender leaves from the squat fat Venusian trees and the tender purple grass from the soft sticky earth.

This seventh day was different from every other seventh day. On this day the glob did not crawl back into the muck. This day, while he was feeding on the tender shoots, fate chanced a change. This day, fate brought love.

She was beautiful, enchanting; she appealed to his human senses. This was not the love of a glob. This was the love of a man. But the glob did not look like a man. He was defeated in his desire. What was he to do?

The Earth woman was a colonist. She had come with the men and the other women in the silvery ship. All of them had built homes and farmed gardens and had built a new Earth.

She was out looking for new species of Venusian wildlife when she met the glob. Immediately she saw the glob as a lovable little pet. He was so globbish; so cute. Her hand parted the foliage and she reached forward with an attitude of friendliness. The glob was receptive.

Suddenly the love flamed within the glob. This human love, that only a man could feel. This love that seemed impossible, for the glob was now a glob.

How could a woman love a glob?

She could love him as a companion, as a pet. But as a man, as a lover? No.

To her he was adorable, to him she was desirable. To her he was to make a darling pet; to him she was to be loved.

She was overjoyed at coming upon such an enchanting creature, apparently so friendly and meek. Lovable was the perfect word. She grasped its glob of a hand and led it gently back the way she had come, toward the settlement.

For a few days the settlement was excited over the glob. Some were mildly amused at its appearance, a few interested in its origin, some hated it from the start.

Who knows exactly why the glob was hated. Maybe it was simply because he was a glob, or maybe there was some other reason. But the fact was there.

The first day one of the men kicked "the repulsive little monster." The glob looked meek. Not afraid, but not angry. "Beast," thought the people.

The scientists in the settlement were interested in him long enough to examine him and determine him an insignificant glob because it was obvious he performed no necessary natural function. He was stupid, too. The glob would respond to none of the scientists' intelligence tests. "Just a glob," the scientists decided. And after the second day they forgot him, which satisfied the meek glob, who wanted none of their attention.

But others didn't forget.

"You Hell-monster," screamed the man. He had worked and was tired. When he saw the small glob, the meek insignificant glob, he couldn't resist just one good whack. "Makes a fellow feel good. The little monster." And as an afterthought, "What's he good for, anyhow?"

The glob tried to stay out of the way of those who wanted to do with him. In this respect he was no longer a man, he was a glob. He wanted only to be near his love.

But, although they told him to get out of their sight, sometimes he felt they seeked him out. They hated him. The glob.

"Draatted pest," one woman would say. "Ugly creature, makes you sick," another would answer. "Why don't the scientists lock him up?" would muse a farmer. "Yes, always getting in the way," a second farmer would agree. "The hell, forget him," someone would philosophize. "Damn," and another would kick him. "He would be cute," another might admit. "If he wasn't such... such a glob!" "Why doesn't someone squash the thing?" a final one would say. But no one did.

The glob continued to be a pest. The scientists would have nothing more to do with him, and for that he was glad. The other people either ignored him or took time out to kick him.

The people meant nothing to the glob, for actually he wasn't a person any longer, although in some ways he felt like one--he loved, but he didn't hate. He ignored.

The girl was his inspiration; the girl kept him from the muck. She instilled within him the desire to resume his human form. But he knew this was hopeless. The cosmic energy-force had changed him from a man to a glob, but it could not change him back to his human form again. He was forever a glob.

During the day the girl would usually go off into the purple forest looking for more strange life. At night she allowed the glob to sleep in her tent in a special bed she had made for him. She would feed him with leaves which she had picked especially that day; would pet and cuddle him. Then she would go to bed, leaving the glob to his thoughts of love. But he wasn't dissatisfied. He was happy with their relationship; he cherished every moment. He glowed at her touch, her word.

Then the night came when the worst was to happen. The girl lay in her bed; the glob dreaming in his. The tent flap opened and a shadow silently entered. The shadow crept forward, reached down, and grasped the girl. The glob screamed a warning, too late. He was helpless to protect the girl, his body constructed so as to render him helpless to resist any force. He could only scream--he knew no words. But the sound was loud and to a sleeping town, alarming. Everywhere lights glowed and people called and there was no answer. Only a screaming. A terrified, terrifying sound. People were spurred to action. Everywhere they were running and finally someone found the girl's tent and the glob and grabbed the shadow and tore it away, screaming. Took it away and the screaming stopped.

The glob had saved her. He was at her side, small and insignificant and sorrowful. He looked at her with tears in his eyes that were only big round wet globs. Is it possible to record the utmost in human love? Understandingly tender, the glob loved the girl with the torn cloathes and bleeding face with ultimate compassion and sympathy.

With great physical difficulty he dragged the girl from her bed, discarding the nightgown that still clung to her unconscious body. Across the floor he pulled her and out into the night, among the tents and through the purple trees. Over dewy grass and soggy ground, through primitive forest and dark night the glob struggled. He pulled the girl to the edge of the muck and did not stop but continued to pull her in. They disappeared into the sucking, embracing matter--the glob and the girl.

Time passed and the muck was quiet, then, on a seventh day, the muck bubbled and stirred and two globs emerged. They reached the bank and globbed away together in search of food.

-----the end.

WHEN YOU CAN

BUY NOW

THE IMMORTAL STORM

BY SAM MOSKOWITZ

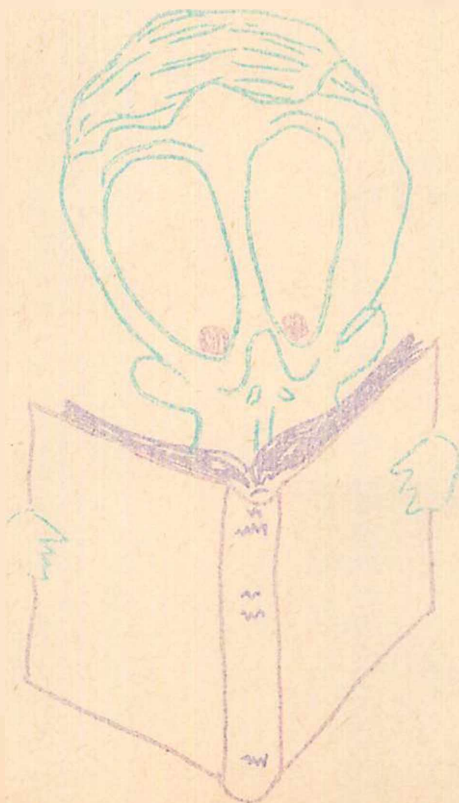
THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE FICTION FANDOM

- # 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))



The Padded Cell

BY V. L. McCAIN



Sooner or later there comes a time in every fan's life--sometimes two, three, or fifteen times--when he is faced with a truly titanic problem; what shall I name my column? It's not like naming an article or even a child. For the title of an article is soon consigned to forgotten history and a child can always be sent to college or left on someone's doorstep. Even naming a fanzine isn't quite so serious. You can always fold the magazine and start another in its place. But a bad title for a column will haunt you for months or years. As long as you grind out the wordage and victimize the editor in question into printing it, you are stuck with the title with which you started. A title can make a tremendous difference. How many times must BMF Bob Silverberg have cursed neofan Bob Silverberg for calling his QUANDRY column "From Der Voodvork Cut"; and how often must Redd Boggs have gloated self-satisfiedly over the succinct impact of "File 13"?

In my own case, results have varied from the pure inspiration of "Beer And Buttermilk" through the dreary utilitarianism of "Craig Comments" to the semi-satisfactory compromise of "The Indefensible Position".

Selecting a name for a column for PSYCHOTIC proved both easier and more difficult than normal. Easier because editor Geis, by dubbing his mag 'PSY' and including features with such perfect titles as "The Leather Couch" and "The Observation Ward", had pointed the way. I would indeed be falling down in my obligation to the magazine if I failed to further this sequence. By limiting the scope in which the title could fall, matters were simplified. But appropriate titles of this nature are not as common as you might think. It was quite a while before I came up with anything which sounded right.

Having considered and rejected "Manic-Depressive Maunderings" and "Voice of the Subconscious" I finally settled on "The Padded Cell" which not only fitted in with the magazine, but seemed singularly appropriate to this column.

Perhaps this installment should be subtitled 'Advice To Editors' since that is what the remainder consists of.

What I am about to say is nothing new. It's at least 350 years old and probably several millennia. But it seems to be something which

obvious and which each individual must have pointed out to him long since lost track of the number of times I've written this to editors starting fanzines, but I recently realized I was getting a bit weary of repeating myself. So once more I think it would be a good idea if this be printed and thus save wear and tear on my typewriter. In another year or a half, perhaps another six months, there will be a fresh crop of new editors who need to have this pointed out all over again. Maybe someone else can be counted on to do it that time.

The typical new editor decides he wishes to publish a fanzine, ~~and he~~ does he have any concrete idea of the results he wishes to achieve, or if he does they are of the unattainable variety such as seven color half-tones, plates illustrating every article and the entire thing printed on ~~high~~ paper. More likely his resolve is a simpler one: ~~he is~~ now he is going to be the number one fanzine in the country, and all he has to do is bring out one or two issues to show how much talent he has on the ball.

It seldom works that way. Even those who do skyrocket to the number one spot within the first year (Lee Hoffman being the outstanding example) generally have pretty pitiful results their first issue or so. This is partially due to inexperience with reproductive problems and lack of material from other fans, but usually the basic problem is that the editor has no idea how to go about editing the fanzine that will shoot him to the top.

It was in the late Summer of 1950 when the final jumbo issue of SPACEWARP, then fandom's top zine, appeared. Guest edited by insurgents Charles Furbee and Francis T. Laney. Laney, himself ex-editor of a magazine which during its lifetime had occupied a position about halfway between that held by FANTASTIC WORLDS and RHODOMAGNETIC DIGEST in recent times, had an article therein on How To Edit a Fanzine.

Some of his suggestions merely mirrored Laney's eccentricities, which were legion. But most of them were eminently practicable and sensible. One left an indelible impression on me. I can't quote Laney word for word, but in substance he said:

"A fanzine is interesting in direct proportion to the faithfulness with which it reflects the personality, likes, dislikes, interests and eccentricities of the editor. I suppose that if a person were a fughead* he would be wise not to have the fanzine reflect his personality; but otherwise this is the wisest course. All the most appreciated fanzines in history have created the same reaction in the reader that meeting the editor in person does, whereas some very long-lived, but not too good ones, such as VOM, gave completely erroneous views of the editor."

He went on to cite other examples in each case.

I can't pretend this advice helped me to turn out an unforgettable first issue of my first fanzine, which I was then producing; it probably helped me avoid a few pitfalls. However this advice stuck, and I think helped greatly with the next couple of issues. Never having been a serious

*A word coined by Laney to describe anyone he disliked.



I can hardly cite myself as an example. But I can
in fact of them. Pick out any favorite famous magazine of the past and
you will find it measures up to this test. SLANT and SLANTY are two
examples. LE ZOMBIE was one of the first. At present VEGA is success-
fully following this pattern, and it is precisely because Geis appeared
to grasp this truth from the start that I have high hopes for this
fanzine and am troubling to write a column for it.

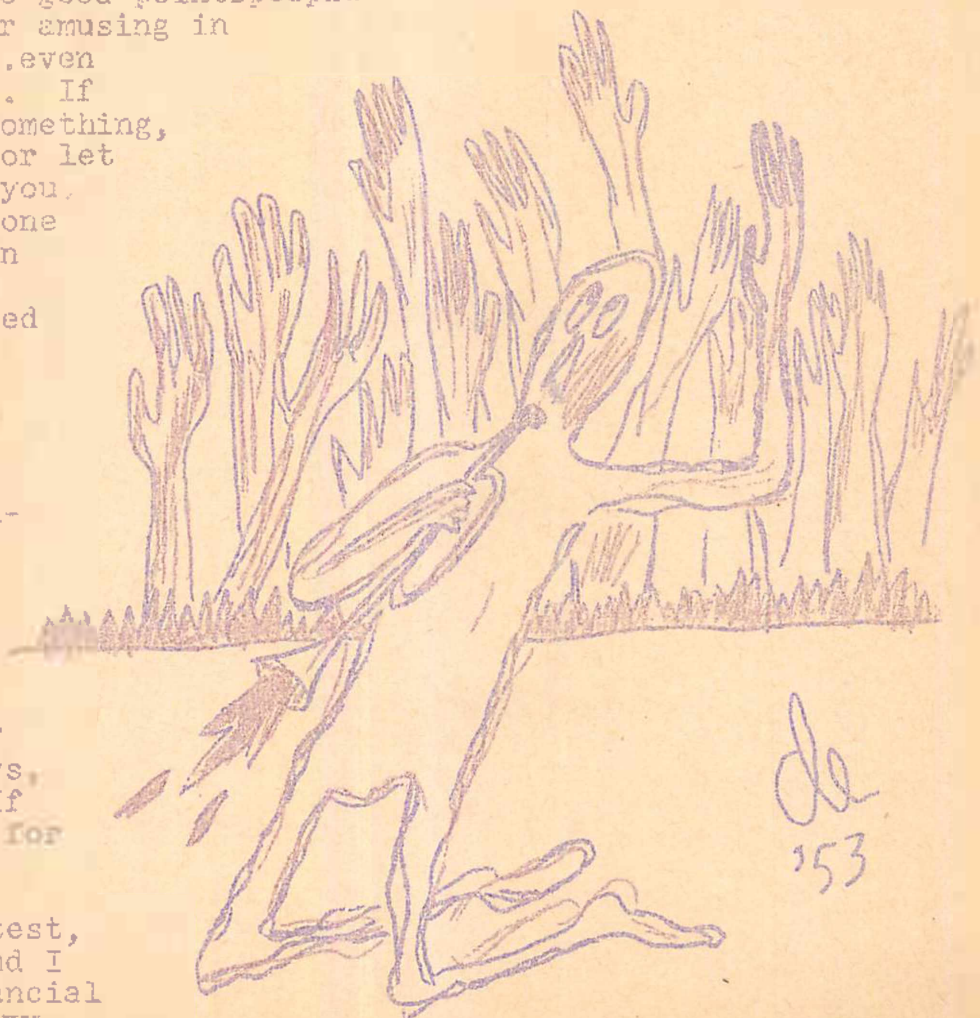
The editor who prints anything which is submitted to him; the
editor who tries to please everybody; the editor who will print even the
sorriest junk when submitted to him by a close friend or someone he ad-
mires (the latter is one of my weaknesses); the editor who holds polls to
learn his most popular features and then adjusts his magazine accordingly;
the editor who wants to be liked and to be popular so badly that he prints
material mainly toward this view; all these editors are headed for trouble.
Or should I say oblivion? In this world where the only legal tender is
egoism, what trouble could be worse than oblivion?

Of course this formula doesn't guarantee you the number one spot
on all fan-polls both as editor and fan if you follow it religiously. There
can be only one #1, and it stands to reason that the person who both ex-
ploits his own personality most fully and has the most interesting person-
ality to exploit is going to be the most successful. Thus a Lee Hoffman
or a Walter Willis will be far more successful than a more prosaic type like
Bob Silverberg or Lee Riddle, although each has in his own way exploited his
own personality with admirable results.

What I am recommending is that you simply be yourself in fanzines,
only moreso. If you have good points people
have found interesting or amusing in
the past, feature them...even
exaggerate them slightly. If
you've proved a dud at something,
just forget it entirely or let
somebody else do it for you.
Walt Willis is probably one
of the most brilliant fan
writers of all time. He
is universally acknowledged
as tops in this field.
But it has been a long
time since he was so in-
cautious as to print a
piece of his own fiction
either in some other fan-
zine, or his own pre-
dominantly fictional
SLANT.

In editing,
don't worry about what
your readers will think.
Cultivate an attitude of
"To Hell with the readers,
I'm out to please me. If
they want to come along for
the ride, fine."

"But," you protest,
"My pocketbook's flat and I
have to get as much financial
return as possible from my
zine. I can't afford to treat



On the contrary, you can't afford not to read the papers and
this apparently intolerant and self-satisfied attitude is the
only one in more fields than just editing. Please yourself first.
You may displease certain people very much. There are people
you have little in common and whom you would be unlikely to please
no matter how hard you tried. Your tastes and theirs are too
different. The best you could hope for from them is grudging approval.

When you please yourself you also please everyone else with
your tastes to yours. By catering to your own whims you are also catering
to theirs. They'll take your magazine over the blander product which
tries to please something for everyone every time. And surprisingly, as will
people who do not share your tastes, but who have no active animosity toward
your views and general slant. They recognize it as a superior product.
More than mere flavor and individualism than those from editors with a desire
to please. These two groups will
bank on; the former will continue to
latter subscribe and then think you are



This is the viewpoint
to cultivate at first. Later on, when
you are thoroughly adapted to it, you
modify it. One needn't be completely
intolerant of criticism and advice. Con-
sider every suggestion on its own merits.
Is the advisor one who just naturally
dislikes what you do and has an
viewpoint, or does he agree with you
of the time? The former can be easily
ly ignored. The latter deserves
consideration. Furthermore, does the
suggestion show thought behind it? Or
has the suggester actually thought out
the consequences of following his
vice or is he just throwing out words
to hear the wind whistle through his
upper plate? Then if you decide the
suggestion has some merit, you must
choose whether you will follow it or
not. Oddly enough, the verdict can be
100% in favor of the suggested change
by the preceding tests and yet the
change itself perhaps should be ignored.

If you decide the change would make you
unhappy and disrupt what you have been striving for in your magazine, then
forget it. But if the item under inspection is minor, thrown in as an after-
thought, whose absence will make no real difference, then perhaps you'd be
wise to accept the suggested change. Everybody can use advice and no one is
so clever as to perceive all the possibilities in a pattern he has set up.

Any editor with the slightest knack for it knows to play up the
items which excite the greatest enthusiasm while laying less stress on his
own pet themes which are ignored or slighted.

This technique is truest in the field of fiction where most people
are anyway and it's basically a lobby. But it does not stop there.

high-minded editorial talent to turn out a magazine with minimum personality which nevertheless is sufficiently engrossing to attract several million readers.

But with the smaller magazines the fannish rules apply, modified to prevent editorial policy from offending potential advertisers and to eliminate certain taboo items which fanzines can use.

Harold Ross founded a magazine in the 20's which, it was announced in the first issue, was not meant to be read by your aunt Fannie in Dubuque. Harold Ross was a difficult and demanding man. More than one book has been written on the subject of working in the madhouse he ran. But he always forced the magazine to match his own slightly mercurial tastes and by the time of his death a few years ago, the NEW YORKER was a solid financial success, widely distributed throughout the nation, including the homes of a number of aunt Fannies in Dubuque.



It is a proud and lonely thing to be a fan.....

In the science fiction field, the outstanding success, far surpassing any other, has been that of John W. Campbell, Jr. Certainly no other editor has come so close to moulding a sf-mag to his own tastes. The magazine is Campbell. And Campbell has operated basically on the theory that he, not the readers, knows best. He drove away quite a few former ASTOUNDING readers, but he attracted a readership of illustrious nature, many of whom had never before taken sf seriously. True, Campbell did inaugurate the An Lab system, since copied by other magazines, and he does show signs of using it for guidance. But it is always guidance within the previously established limits set up by Campbell. The readership is never allowed to take the bit in their mouth and run with the magazine. Campbell is reportedly the highest paid editor in the field, and it is noteworthy that when Street & Smith abolished their pulp line in 1949, ASTOUNDING was the only survivor.

SF's second most successful editor, over the years, has been Ray Palmer. Now, I'll admit that I abhor both the Palmer personality and his magazines, but there is no denying they are faithful to the Palmer pattern, and most have been quite successful financially, drawing in a readership to whom other sf magazines do not appeal.

Most of the "This is your magazine; tell us what you want and we'll give it to you." types either didn't deliver or were miserable failures.

This is not only true of editing. It is also no accident that the pictures which win Academy Awards are usually written and directed, and sometimes

... by the same man; a man who had set out to please him-
self, to please others in the bargain.

The same is true in fiction. Ray Bradbury, after many lean years,
found a literary gold mine by writing what he wanted to write rather than
what editors wished to print.

I imagine that is true of any creative field. Seek out the core
of individualism; cultivate and nourish it. It is the one quality
which makes you different from anyone else and therefore all you have to
offer the world.

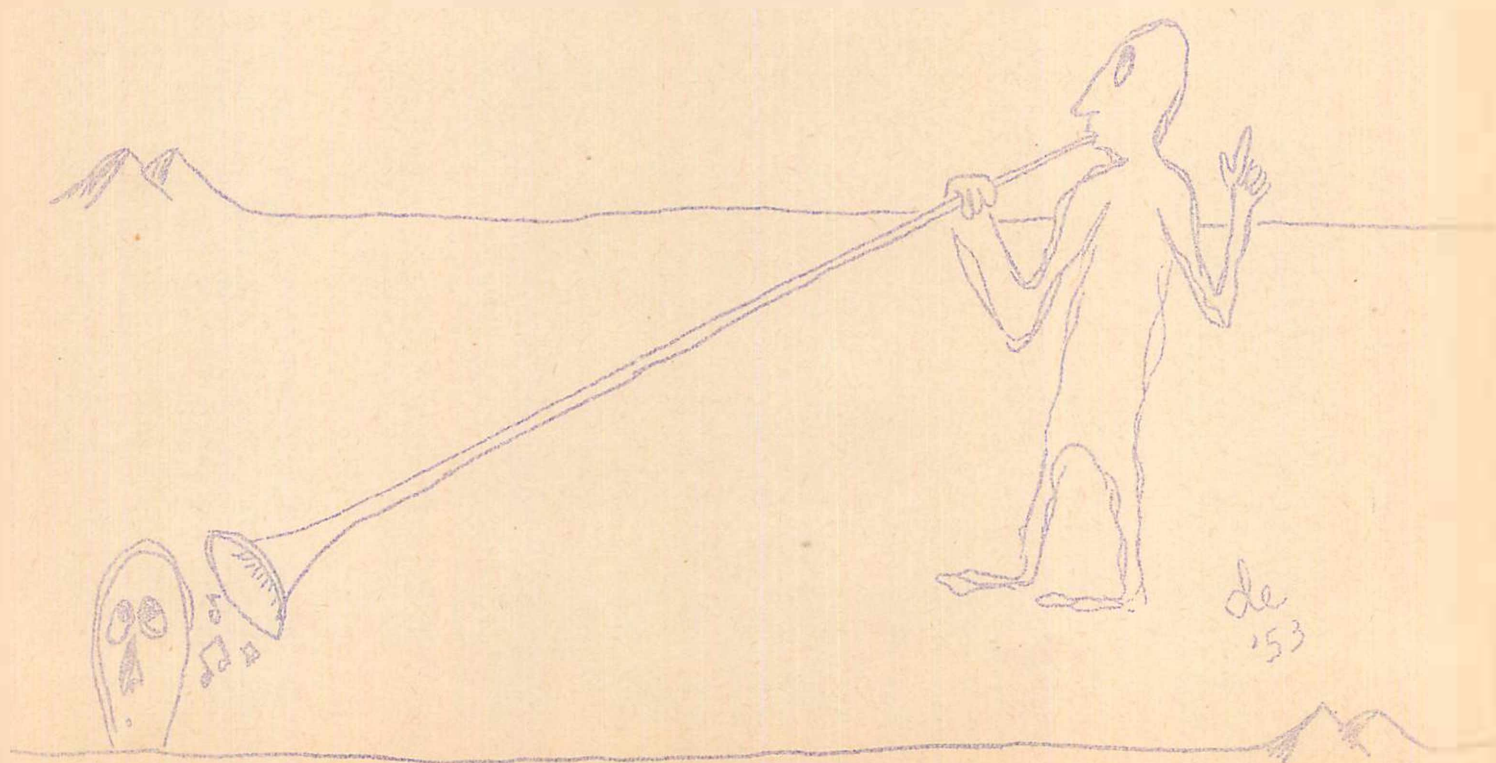
Not too peculiarly, it seems to work equally well as a pattern for
life. The happiest and most satisfied people usually worry little about
whether they are attracting the approval or disfavor of others...and usually
are more admired and liked than those who constantly fear and guard
against the neighbors' tongues.

What this was a truth known at least 350 years ago. You see,
what has taken me far too much space to say, was expressed in only six
words by one of the greatest practitioners of this philosophy of all time.

In the words of a chap named Shakespeare:

"TO THINE OWN SELF BE TRUE."

The Artist and his Public



The Observation Ward

— A FANZINE REVIEW by the editor

Goshwowoboyoboy. How the fanzines do come in....

SPACE TIMES, Eric Jones, 47, Alldis St, Gt Moor, Stockport, Cheshire, England. These British addresses facinate me.

So far as I'm concerned, the cover on this zine is perhaps the best mimeo job ever. The drawing is superb, and the use of shading plates is only astonishing. The scene is a view of the lunar landscape through a jagged hole in the side of a wrecked spaceship; old mother Earth is just above the horizon, twisted and bent I-beams and plates frame the furrow and litter of the ship. All kinds of bows in the direction of Harry Turner.

Not a large zine, this, but material in it with an obvious eye to quality: good fiction, good articles, good reviews.... U.S. subs are 12 for a dollar. Sounds good, and it sounds safe; this is issue #13.

DAWN #13, Russell K. Watkins, 110 Brady St., Savannah, Georgia. no price listed.... Perhaps that's just as well.

I can't think of anything at all to say about this thing. It just lies there in front of me. Dawn 13. The duplicating difficulties and disasters are still with this zine. but the ed promises improvements next issue, so I can't see jumping on him now.... Material is neither good nor quite that bad.... I dunno....

FANTASTIC Story Mag, vln1. Ron Ellik, 232 Santa Ana, Long Beach 3, Cal. Sub rates: 10¢, 3/25¢.

My Ghod, Balint, why'n'cha stop him. He's re-printing FAN-FICTION!

The cover is taken up nicely with the name of the mag spread ALL over the page. Layout reminds me of BOO!; careless and sloppy. As observed above, the ed is hoping to scavenge enough fan-fiction from old fanzines to supply this, his brain child. I will now shout at the top of my lungs: "REPRINT ARTICLES, YOU FOOL, ARTICLES!!!" There is a wealth of material awaiting reprinting other than just fan-fiction. Think of the old QUANDRYs and others that are mere legends to the beanie brigade of today. Tap that source, and you could have a top zine without worrying about all the time where is my next article coming from.

The editorial is called Cosmic Encores. Such stunning originality.

SATURDAY MORNING GAZETTE, John Magnus, Federal 203-B, Oberlin, Ohio. A single page column-like newsletter...you name it. Fan news, a bit of pro news, personal opinions, address changes of fen, in short, all the valuable news and gossip one need to keep in the know.

It seems that many of you have written John wanting on the mailing list. \$1.00 to him puts you on it, but you gotta write too.....

1953, Robert K. Wock, R F D #3, Castleton, N.Y. 3/23/53
NO. 10. A Universal Publication? How prevalent is
this?

One theme runs, nay gallops, through the editorial text of this zine as in many others: "Keep them subscriptions coming in!" I find this all so tiresome. In the first place, if the zine is any good at all the subs will come in due course; good reviews and sample copies will assure subscribers. If the zine is NOT any good, no amount of huckstering and drumming is going to do much good. Reviews like this will spike those guns. To continue the carnage, this fanmag is all of 18 pages (half-counting covers, features insultingly brief material, and needs not more, but better material. At 10¢ per it is (again) not worth it. However, this zine has improved since #1, and it just possibly might go places. At present I know a place for it to go....

#7. Bert Hirschhorn, 853 Riverside Drive, New York 32, N.Y. 15¢. 3/7/53

Now Quarterly, TYRANN is slated for back covers by reading fan letters and mailing envelopes. Much better material is mentioned.

The cover, by Capella, makes use of four colors in the ditto process. Not bad at all, but I think it would have been better in low key. Just a quibble.

Ev Linne writes a good column in "The Big Eye", which rambles humorously and interestingly for 2½ pages. Four pages of David English's folio are the highlight of the issue. "A Visit To The Doctor" by Fred Campbell was very well written and presented a problem for the protagonist to solve. At the end, though, the fellow is revealed as a Martian and so cannot be treated by a doctor for his disease, which was the reason for traveling over the desert in a failing sand-bug. The doc refused him because of racial prejudice. A nice sentiment, but the problem is not resolved, and an entirely new direction was given the story by the Martian prejudice variant. Unfair to the reader, I call it.

"Here Comes A Chopper..." by Rich Elsberry is an excellent vitriolic rendering of the movie "CAPTIVE WOMEN". He does it up brown. There is also present a one-shot column by Hal Shapiro called "Just This Once". On the next page is "The Big Whirlpool & Little Eddy" by T.E. Watkins. Here is a discussion of the non-stf fanzine, and Watkins does a good job on it.

Illos by Harness, de, and H. Ebel.

This zine is urged upon one and all. I hate to have to wait three months for the next issue.

TORQUASIAN TIMES, 821 Robinson Street, Oroville, Calif. 25¢.

56 pages of litho'd excellence. And ain't it a pity there won't be an more of these coming up. With the Summer 1953 issue, TT folds its tent and fades, but not before presenting some of the best material ever seen in a fanzine this side of The FANSCIENT. I can't begin to review all the items in this issue, so I'll just recommend it without qualification. A True Fanzine, for even though lithographed, it has a solid letter section.

What a pity that it has to end. This TORQUASIAN TIMES is good. Where is the wailing-wall? This is a crying shame....

By the way, these are still available, so send in the quarter and at least have the pleasure of reading the last issue.

CHRIS DEVILLE WEAVER WRIGHT.....? No, that can't be right. Lessee now..... yes, way down at the bottom it says BRADBURY YEARS. Is That The Name? Look further.... Now I get it. The name is INSIDE magazine. Looks more like a small litho'd catalogue for an important Art Exhibit. It has about as much personality, too. The material is good, but the layout is distastefully affected. If you want it, it can be gotten from Ron Smith at 332 West 8th St., Oxnard, Calif.

SPACESHIP, Bob Silverberg, 760 Montgomery St., Brooklyn 15, N.Y. 11215-3/1980.
The cover this issue....covered. Compared to many recent covers of SPACESHIP, this issue's front illo is below par.

"Science Fiction Is For Kids" by Larry Stark, is an interesting article dealing mostly with Pal's "The War Of The Worlds". Generally Larry makes sense.

Dave Mason's "Dragon", a neat bit of fiction, positively turns me green with envy. "Brother" by Fred Chappell, was a very good character study. Again I am green.

"File 15" by Redd Boggs; the "old master" of columnists is in a fine form. Still GREEN!

In fact, the only thing that doesn't inspire me to at least a pale chartreuse, is a poem--free verse style--by Robert L. Peters.

Altogether an excellent issue of an excellent fanzine. If any who receive this PSYCHOTIC don't receive SPACESHIP....well, get with it.

GRUE #18, Dean A. Grennell, 402 Maple Ave., Fond du Lac, Wis. 53424.

Being nine pages of interesting and delightful ramblings, opinions, reminisc...reminisc...MEMORIES, and other things by the one and only DAG:mar. He does it for FAPA, but you can have it too.

MUZZY, PFC Claude R. Hall, USS4100511, Btry A, 6th Tng Bn, AAA RTC, Fort Bliss, Texas. ...OR... Claude R. Hall, 807 N. Main, Carlsbad, N. Mexico. 15¢ per issue.

The editorial and most of the material reads as if whoever wrote it was indulging in something with a KICK. The material in this zine is mostly just space filler; it just lies there and dares you to kill it. HELL. FILLER #175.

Best things in the issue were the David English detoons and the directions on the mailing wrapper, "Shake well before using. Not for internal consumption. To open, dip in boiling glue."

Lots of pages...34 to be exact...but nothing but crud. Well, of course there is nothing in the world one can do to prevent this sort of thing, and it is just barely possible that with time this zine might develop. I wonder how long it will take Hall to burn out. In the Army and putting out a 30 odd page monthly....

QUANDRY #50, Lee Hoffman, 101 Wagner, Savannah, Ga. "A Deadly Publication", it just died. The last ish is this. Reminds me of the joke about the party where everybody made merry until she went home, then everybody jumped for joy. Where to now, Oh BNFs? The stamping grounds is done stamped out.

This last issue is made up mostly by Les Cole who was plenty burned up at the Chicon fiasco. He gives the inside personal lowdown and other particulars. It rings true and makes one want to consign politics (fan-style) to hell. I was really struck by the similarity of fan-political intrigue and the grown-up "pro" type being practiced in Washington D.C.

Bloch confesses all over page 22. Messy.

Included in this issue was a newszine called Fanzine-Times. Wells and Watkins do this and hope to continue. 405 Glend St. Savannah, Georgia.

What a pity Q had to fold....what a damn s name....

One good fanzine folds and three crudzines rise up and crowd into the ranks. I weep and moan. Oh, Ghu, what is the world coming to?

SPIRAL #1, vinyl-2, Warren Dennis, 511 Plaisance Ave., 3/25¢, 14/95¢.

This is what might be called a young fanzine. The editor is in much in each issue, and seems, if he long continues, to be well on his way to being a good editor. In the two issues reviewed here, he has the throes of layout troubles, an item that throws older and more experienced eds.

The covers are offset, but done in a kindergarten "primitive" style that is, paradoxically, oddly pleasing. I am somewhat at a loss, however, as to what to make of the information "A Fanzine Of The Cosmic Age" which appears on the cover.

The one major technical fault lies in the hand lettered headlines, ads, etc., which are painfully bad. One or two letter guides would work wonders here.

"They Ask Me Why", by Jerry De La Ree, seemed the best item in the first issue.

The second issue featured the conclusion of a two part serial that ran 5,000 words. The story, "J'anhunt In Arian" by Hal Dunan, has a lot of action. This story really moved. However, lack of characterization, poor dialogue, and experience worked against it. It was a poor imitation of the pro style and plot.

A high spot of the second issue was the "Sports Section" by Warren Dennis. Somewhat in the manner of BALLYHOO, Dennis reports the sporting events of the universe. It was a relief to see that Earth Tech blasted Moscow U. 103-92 in a basketball game which secured their hold on fourth place. They stand a good chance to move up in the standings if our boys can beat third place Pluto on Monday.

This fanzine is still on its shake-down cruise. Hope it doesn't shake down too far, for it looks like it might develope.

SPIRAL #4, Denis Moreen, 214 9th St., Wilmette, Ill. 10¢, 3/25¢.

The cover, by Jack Hazlehurst, should not have been perpetrated. As Harlan Ellison says, "It was slight, very slight."

There is a story by Harlan Ellison in the lead-off position titled "Surprise Package". Aside from a faulty basic premise, the story was well done and easily the best single item in the issue.

"Spiralities" by the editor, was a very good column of the scribbus variety. "Who Goes There", the letter section, is among the best I've seen in fandom.

As Denis says, he needs a couple of good columnists and some good material in the way of articles, artwork, and fiction. Denis writes well and has ideas. His zine may not ever be a world beater, but it will probably always be worth reading.

FILLER, Art Wesley, 402 Maple Ave, Fond du Lac, wis. 25¢ per copy. Shot that might be re-loaded next year.

I am one of the fans who took with a grain of salt all the raves about this FILLER thing. But, in fear of being left out in the cold, and because some of the samples I'd seen were very good, I finally sent in my 25¢. And when it came I laughed, giggled, chuckled, roared, and even smiled faintly several times. FILLER is terrific. If there are any out there who are reading this who haven't gotten FILLER yet, get with it, bub. FILLER is the best 25¢ investment, in or out of fandom, I've ever seen.

XENERN, Bill Knapheide, 992 Oak Street, #C, San Francisco 17, Cal. Valuable research articles and information do not show very well in a zine 1/4 size. Too jumbled and too confusing. End of review.

Section

"IS THIS CRAZY LETTER COLUMN."

8

Thompson, 410 South 4th Street, Norfolk, Nebraska.

AWRIGHT, AWRIGHT!

I been misquoted. I never said a thing about teevie producers having to please everybody. I merely stated that they have a tough job TRYING to please everybody. Of course it can't be done, but at least you have got to try. I greatly fear that there would be a general uprising and overthrow of the FCC, should it establish the networks you propose. The first thing the networks and the press, and all concerned, and a few not concerned, would yell, is UNCONSTITUTIONAL! And they would be right. The Constitution guarantees everybody, including incorporated companies, the right of free enterprise, and dictating what form of entertainment a radio or teevie network should carry is no free enterprise. In fact, it smacks of totalitarianism. (HEY MAN! I CAN STILL SPELL IT!!) However, I imagine you learned that in school. I won't go into a long detailed discussion of the Rights Of Man.

Reproduction still suffering. (Now don't crack one of those horrid puns at me again. I don't think I can stand it.) Why don't you try a little more pressure?

I don't suppose you realize that the oration at the front of my last letter was supposed to be gently sarcastic? Besides, male and female viewpoints on a subject like that tend to be somewhat different. Remember Marian Cox?

FILLER #128. (Sometime I'll get myself a copy of FILLER and see just exactly what I'm saying.)

I like that...make a mention that I like the color he's got, and so he drops it almost entirely. Number five looks so desolate without pages and pages of colored headings, colored fillers, colored this, colored that. You should try something like Lynn Hickman did on ILMA...printed one of the articles in three colors. The color was arranged in three equal vertical bands, running from green on the left, through red in the middle, to black on the right. The print was colored those three colors, in the appropriate places.

Thing like that shouldn't be too hard to do with a ditto. Simply join three vertical strips of the appropriately colored carbon together with tape, placed on the outside where it wouldn't interfere with the typing. Then just use the master unit in the usual way. Might try that myself...

"...The Story Of The Atom had lots of action but little plot..." I hope you are being facetious, because if you're not, there's something wrong with your eyes. Story Of The Atom was an article, not fiction...

Best thing this is Ellison's THOUGHTS FROM OUTER SPACE. He brings up some very good points about pro-art. I have, myself, looked with dismay at the "henscratches" which pass for pictures in the large majority of today's magazines. I think the old FA and AS were the first two magazines to start featuring really bad art, under the guidance of

... "Ray Palmer" of this decade. Some of the art was
... by one who was mentioned as "true talent that I call
... ability" by Harlan. I mean David Ashman. If you will look
... in 1952, you will find some of the word art ever featured in
... and a lot of it done by Mr. Ashman. However, Ashman has
... considerably since.

I might also call your attention (actually, I would probably
... to call Ellison's attention, since he wrote the column.) to the
... in IMAGINATION. While not outstanding, it is competent. How-
... suspect that it is done by only two or three artists, using
... since you see their art in few other magazines. And ASF, while
... accuses of falling prey to the disease, in its October issue,
... VERY good art. Harlan must have been feeling in one of his dispo-
... the day he wrote that.

Like the man said, I've yapped enough....

((To cover your points in order: Granted, but why should
... teevee producers even have to TRY to please everybody?
I didn't say change the existing networks, just establish
four new ones. And where does the Constitution guarantee
"free enterprise"? You're confusing our political sys-
with our economic system; a thing most businessmen always
do when ranting about the dangers of Communism. I never
go to school, so I wouldn't know about the rights of Man.

I can't see how more pressure would help my repro-
duction... the girls say I'm too heavy now....

No, as a matter of fact, I don't remember Marian Cox.

FILLER #128: IN THE RACE FOR ECONOMIC SECURITY, GIRDLE
MAKERS ARE ALWAYS BRINGING UP THE REAR.

--Gregg Calkins: Confusion #11.

Now you know.... FILLER #2 right back at you.

I'll let you try that color gimmick first....

The Story Of The Atom wasn't fiction? No wonder the
hero kept going around in circles....

You should be happy with the cover this issue. Don't
get it too muddled up with those eye-tracks.))

Don Wagers, 2444 Valley St., Berkeley 2, Cal.

Dear Rich,

Just finished reading PSYCHOTIC #5. First of all, I'd like to
tell you how much I enjoyed The New Order by Reynolds. Also good
With Gold. It's amazing how many fan are getting fed up with
Gold and his mag. Now, if Campbell should start to brag, it would be
okay. He's got something that Gold doesn't.

I see you dropped They Call It Professional by Moskowitz. Too
bad, I enjoyed that. The column by Ellison makes up for it though.

One thing about P I like is your editorial babblings. Too bad
you cut some of them out.

And, in closing, I'd like to state that I think that P is the
best all around fanmag being published.

Afterthought: man, I'd hate to think what your annish will be
like. And with that I go....

((Moskowitz isn't dropped, he's just bi-monthly... I hope.
The babblings will vary with the amount of extra space avail-
able each ish above the 1 1/2 page minimum.
No annish? Ghod...do I have to have one?))

24 Cambridge St., San Francisco 14, California.

Dear Dick;

PSYCHOTIC about a week ago, and must admit that this is
yet. I don't think much of either cover, but the latter
really shines through them. Firstly, McCain's article is
McCain in that it is interesting, concise, definitely stish,
definitely written with an insight into science fiction. McCain, in
opinion is about the best article writer in fandom today (possible ex-
ceptions: Boggs, Silverberg, etc.). de's cartoon at the end of his
article is a masterpiece of de wit. I like the guy's stuff, that's all.
Ellison's column is next. Darned good; this is the type of column I
like to see, not so much the Balint-Stewart-Carr (I'll admit it) type
of purely fannish blatherings (on second thought, I won't admit that I
write that: I have four columns currently going: "Fantastari", which
points out items worthy of mention in both prodom and fandom, with the
accent on prodom; "Carr's Crypt", which is about equally balanced with
comment on both; "Report From San Francisco", which is a new type column,
fannish; and "The Frying Pro", which is a commentary on the pro-page.)
Viksnins' bit was interesting enough filler, though certainly not out-
standing. The standout of the issue, though, even better than McCain's
article, though it ties in with it quite well, is Bill Reynolds' "The
New Order". The more I come into contact with Bill's writings, the more
I respect his many talents. Egad, this is one of the best items that's
been printed this year! Will have to congratulate Bill when I see him
at the next GGFS meeting (if he makes it). Your fanzine reviews sound
half bad, but pall following Bill's gem. Nowell's article is interesting
enough, too, to rate inclusion in Psy; this is the type of thing that only
a monthly mag could handle, since it would be outdated if it waited too
much longer. The Reader's column is good, natch, and Ballot's new
column seems to be a new title for Fantasta Film which he told Bob he
was dropping from FOO! in favor of SFBULLETIN. Not gives?

All in all, Rich, a good issue; nay, outstanding. I don't like
your covers, though, blast it; those heads you draw are getting pretty
boring now.

((I take all credit for putting that de joke and de cartoon
together. I'm only glad I happened to have it handy to go with
the joke; they went perfectly.

Ellison and Balint couldn't get together, so my bid was
accepted... seven no-trump doubled and redoubled. Darn good
thing I'd made deuces wild before dealing, or I'd've never
made it.))

Norman G. Browne, 33 Lyonsgate Dr., Wilson Heights, Toronto, Ont., CANADA.

Dear Dick;

In regard to your column in PSYCHOTIC #5 titled "Phileon Person-
alities": to me, George Viksnins is only a vaguely familiar name. I do not
place the face, nor the personality, nor do I place him in any special
achievement or event. As I say, the name is vaguely familiar.
With this in mind, I would like to know where this George Viksnins gets
off writing crap like that about me in his column. I tell you I really had
to laugh. He says I am shy to meet. Hah! I happen to have a strong per-
sonality - probably the second or third biggest in all fandom. But my
personality is only brought out by the company I am in. My personal-
ity rises to meet the personalities of the people I am with. Obviously then,

...be somewhat of a colorless character, because if he
...have sparked some of my personality to life if and
when I met him.

I also dislike the impression he gives that because I appeared
shy to him, I will appear shy to anyone and everyone else. Hah! Ask Dave
and Harlan Ellison if I appear shy when I'm in their company.

I also think it would be a good idea if George were to write
about what he knew he was talking about. From what little he
knew, he obviously hadn't seen much of me at the Philcon. If he had
seen a lot of me, I would have remembered it and I don't know the fellow
at all. Yet from all this he considers himself capable enough to write
my biography!

Another thing. I don't find his name or address on my mailing
list for VANATIONS. He thus has seen one or two second hand copies of
the mag. But yet he considers himself an authority on fanzines and
especially a very capable authority on VANATIONS. Again Hah!

Look, George, - because I largely self-wrote VANATIONS, doesn't
mean I'm an egotist. Nor does it mean I'm not nice or inhuman. Nor does
it mean I didn't have a good fanzine. As a matter of fact, I never had any
objections to the amount of material I self-wrote for VM. As a matter of
fact, my readers liked it; they loved it; they ate it up; they cried for
more.

And I suppose by your twisted and perverted logic I'm an egotist
because my fanzine was voted one of the top three in fandom?

Huts.

By the way, George, you left out the thumbnail physical descrip-
tion of me. I have blue eyes; brown hair; am 6 feet tall and weigh 140
lbs. Happy now?

Thanks Dick, for sending me Psy. It's the first copy of your
new zine that I've seen, and it looks good, damn good. Keep up the good
work. If you've got any back issues around, I'd appreciate you sending
them along to me. In the meantime keep sending the zine along to me and
I'll see if I can't hustle up some money or material for you to pay you
back.

Fair enough?

And I agree whole-heartedly with McCain. It was a good article,
too.

And oh, yes. An added note to George. I guess I'm an egotist
alright. Only an egotist would contract in advance to write a convention
report for a fanzine. And I wrote the report, too. 26 pages, 10,000 words.
The Epic of 1418 in the VEGannish. And I guess I'm shy, too. I'm so
shy that not once in the whole ten thousand word report did I mention the
name George Viksnins.

((George? ... George, where are you? Are you going to take
this lying down? Get up on your knees and fight like a fan.

Norman, all I got left are a couple of copies of #1.
I'm sending one along with this issue. You can thank John
Magnus and SMUG that you got #5. He provided your new
address....))

Don Wegars, 2444 Valley Street, Berkeley 2, California.

Dear Dick,

I heartily agree with McCain on Gold and the letter columns. He
wrote a very fine article which had an idea, which most fanarticles are
without. (Mine included)

...very glad you got rid of Stewart's column. It didn't do any-
thing but knock a bunch of fanzines. Speaking of knocking fanzines, BOO!

would stand some criticism'...

((I know I should make some kind of comment, but I can't think of nuthin'.))

Bartholomew Beerman, Grove School, Madison, Connecticut.

Dear Dick:

Psychotic received long ago and read at that time. The editor was ignored until this date.

How much is a shorter term sub, ifn you've got any? my wallet rebels at the thought of putting out a dollar at a time for every good fanzine I see, and there's plenty.

I liked the Philcon report muchly. Dropped Harris a card to that effect. That kid isn't prolific, but he writes good stuff. 'sides- which, he's a friend.

Nowell is another good writer with whom this is my first contact. I like him.

Boob Stewart made a Boo-Boo, if you'll pardon the pun. Vol Walker is not a he. Ask Corey.

Larry, though he and I disagree on matters fan-fictional, is the zorchiest of all the zorch cats when it comes to columns.

For yourself: This is only #4. Hell, by the time you've hit twelve and it's annish time, VEGA'll look like a lot of crud and BShip will be left way Behind. The latter I doubt, but if I think about VEGA awhile....

You sure can express yourself quite well. The FmzReviews show a discerning eye and a perceptive mind. In fact, you're among the fen who could and should take over Mar! Wolf's crumbily executed job.

Disorganization and all, I leave you, hoping you've got short term subs or I get a long wallet.

((Why shore, we got short term subs: 6/50¢, 3/25¢, 1/10¢ I'll even send the cover for three cents.))

Charles Adkins, 6012 Burgess Ave., Baltimore 14, Maryland.

Dear Dick,

I read vln4 of Psy with a feeling of well being and contentment until I reached Section 8. When I came to a letter by one Vernon L. McCain, I nearly flipped what is left of my already too much flipped lid. I then read your editorial (there is a laugh there somewhere if you look closely) comment. It was then that I flipped. Shame on you for apologizing. Are you trying to make like a prozine editor? ((Do prozine editors apologize?--REG))

I didn't write to you about this for issue 5 because I thought someone else would take on Mr. McCain. Since I usually keep away from controversial issues and because I am naturally lazy, I have only now decided to write against the opinion of at least two of your readers.

First we have the statement that those who can sell to pro-zines don't write for fanzines and those that write for fanzines can't sell to pro-zines. I agree. But I don't think this is a reason for getting rid of fan writing. Another way of stating the above is that the quality of fan writing is not as good as the quality of pro writing. When stated this way the statement loses much of its emotional punch. The ridicule (although I don't see the reason for ridicule) of the inability of a writer to sell his work to established markets is left out. With emotion left

he statement objectively. The statement is in every way correct. But there is another statement which is also true. The quality of pro sf writing is not as good as the quality of the classics. This does not mean that I should stop reading or drop it? I don't think it does. It only means that the way in which different stories are written.

But let us avoid the classics as a body, since most writing is not up to the level of the classics. Let us consider only the best of what we can find. Then let us read nothing but those stories. Of course we will have to read a lot that is not good to find the few outstanding stories. However, we must never enjoy the second best stories. That would reduce our standards and that must never happen.

If some wish to read in that manner, I wish them luck in their endeavour. I can not be satisfied by that type of reading; I change my standards for each story that I read. In this way I can enjoy almost anything that I read. I do not read POGO in the same way I read Mickey Spillane, and neither in the way I read Ray Bradbury. Many can do this but can not see that the same holds true for reading prozine or fiction.

Mr. McCain also stated that fanzines do not offer a market for stories that could not be printed in prozines. And you, Mr. Geis, you agreed. For shame. Citing the types of what are considered off-color stories will not decide this question. We must cite examples of the stories that could not be put in prozines.

Could a story written by a master be sold to a prozine if it had a character that very closely resembled Christ? If this character was enough like Christ to remind almost anyone of Him, would the story sell if this character were a mad man with a Messiah complex? Take any Bible story as a background so that the background is unmistakable and make the picture of this holy story seem ridiculous and stupid if not full of sex. Let not a story ignore the existence of God but prove that god did not exist and have the characters act accordingly and where would the writer sell his story?

Since we are dealing with sf, let's not forget the future. Fandom is being shunted out of sf prozines. The pros yearned for an expansion of their audience, and now that they have a larger audience they must cater to its wishes or lose the money they have become so used to collecting. Women and girls are increasing in number in the sf ranks. How long would they stay with magazines that would print stories laughing at these sacred institutions (?) of marriage, the home, and motherhood.

We must also remember that the new market does not contain as high a proportion of the intelligentsia of fandom does and is therefore not as radical. (Radical has a bad smell to it because of connotation but it is the only word that fits. Perhaps a new word is needed that would mean not rigidly restricted.) It may take a little while before the pressure of this new group is felt, but when it is felt sf liberalism will necessarily end. How many utopia stories will be printed if the utopia is communistic and not of the democratic type? Where will we ever find a story lampooning our social structure? (Walt Kelly succeeds in POGO but only by making the characters extremely funny so the dull-witted may chuckle at the funny characters while the more intelligent read the true meaning. This would be much harder to do if the comic strip method were not allowed.)

It is my contention then that fanzines do serve a set purpose in printing stories that are taboo to the pros and will increase in importance as the wider public catches up with the reading of sf. Sometime in the not too distant future, fanzines will be the only place that a decent and original sf story can be printed. The literary value of the stories may be

but I would rather read a poor story by a poor writer selling
books than a good story by a good writer obeying the dictates
of mass readership. I would also rather read Mickey Spillane's Mike
Hammer stories for enjoyment than Lewis Carroll's works. Carroll's works
should be saved until they can be inspected while read. Thus I contend that
a story can be enjoyed in spite of its literary value or lack of literary
value. And a fanzine story can be enjoyed if the story it tells is good
in spite of poor spelling, less than the best reproduction, and poor
characterization.

I do not know if this will be printed due to its length and the
fact that you have stated the issue at hand has been drawn out for too long
a period. But I hope the arguments presented have helped to change your
mind. I for one think the argument should be continued until the matter
has been decided.

((I respect your point of view, Charles, and your motives,
but I must say that your arguments are poorly thought out,
unrealistic, shot full of half-truths, misconceptions, false
premises, and exaggeration. To name a few. I think you
wrote the above at breakneck speed in a white heat of right-
eous wrath and moral indignation.

I hesitate to allow this controversy to continue at
its past pace because it would take up too much room. On
so much can be said for each side, after all, then the reader
and the editor has to decide on his own. I don't think the
matter can ever be settled once and for all. I rather hope
it isn't.))

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

Dear Richard:

Concerning the November ish....Received today, read today,
and also went to a small local theatre and "resaw" (it's a word?) WHEN
WORLDS COLLIDE and PROJECT MOONBASE. Both were good, again. I repeat,
PM is very good. Did I omit the fact that Galaxy Pictures (a trade name,
registered) is actually a subsidiary of Lippert Pictures? As you know,
Lippert Pictures....

I'll now waste space by rating the stories as I liked them...

1. It Started With Gold--V.L. McCain.
2. Thoughts From Outer Space--Harlan Ellison
3. Project Moonbase (excuse conceit)--V. Paul Nowell
4. The Observation Ward--Richard E. (who?)
5. STFantasy Films--Larry (99% of it is slop) Balint
6. A Bit Of Hebeephrenia--(who?) (...I mean: what?)
7. Section 8--Readers
8. The New Order--Bill Reynolds

Of course the Editorials, what there were of them, were
good.

Now to controverse! As much as it disagreed with me, it was
well written! Of course I refer to "It Started With Gold". True, the
editorials and letter columns are disappearing (but dig latest FANTASTIC),
but perhaps it's for the best. My personal opinion is this: ten years ago
top mags were AMAZING, FANTASTIC ADVENTURES, ASTOUNDING, and TWS. There
appeared many cheap, pulped imitations which glowed bright, but short. Ten
years later the top mags are: GALAXY, ASTOUNDING, MAG OF F&SF, IF, FANTASTIC
and AMAZING. There are appearing many cheap, slick imitations: FANTASTIC
UNIVERSE, ORBIT, SCIENCE FICTION STORIES, COSMOS, and the del Rey crap-

Will the future hold? I predict that in 10 years I'll find that all the writers will have died, and there will still be no good sf in the sf sky. Then in about nine or ten years it'll be absolutely a cycle. I appreciate the no-let-er mags, and these columns were helpful. Maybe something can be done a-

"Fantasy Films" was and will be very helpful to me to catch new movies. So many of them either never come here, or they come in a cheap hole-in-the-wall theatre.

Letters were interesting. Missed the fiction; Was happenizing? (Well, you see, it gott crowded out, by Gottttttttt.))

I obviously didn't care for "The New Order". I thought it in taste and inappropriate. Really, deep, deep down, I think it's good. I like Gold, and I think he's done more for science fiction than Gernsbacks. Gold brought sf out of its slump, made it somewhat worth reading again. He won't be recognized for his great work for years yet, but some day they'll praise him for what he has done. As to coming to flaming anybody, I don't see why Lester del Rey and "Holy Four" get by so easy. I think he has a conveyor belt and a Orwell story machine. Lester's stuff (that junk he prints, that is) is really cheap material. You can read one issue of SPACE Science Fiction and have read almost every story in SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURES, ROCKET, and FANTASY FICTION. FANTASY FICTION is different. It's more like WEIRD. (That is it tries to be like WEIRD.) As for editorials, Lester del Rey can no more write a good editorial (one to rank with Orwell, Campbell, Gold or Fairman) than an ape can. There's another gripe. del Rey's many pen names. Why the h___ does he have to have so many names for the editors of his mags?

Now that I've blurted it out I'll cool down and say that the article by McCain was rather slightful. It skipped Paul W. Fairman, who wasn't exactly writing trash for IF way back when. Also James L. Quinn, who writes some grand editorials. I hold more respect for little IF than I do for all these so-called science fiction "slick" mags coming out now. To me, these are just cheap imitations in "Kromkote's" clothing. A pox on them!

Like your new policy of stories, not just printing them as fiction, but I wonder if I stand a chance, now.

Sorry, Rich, didn't mean to explode in those top paragraphs, but when it comes to del Rey being an editor, I vomit. He's an otherwise good FICTION writer.

Thinking about McCain's article again, if Gold started the policy of no letter columns, and everybody followed suit, it must have been good. As they say, "imitation is the highest form of flattery." If so, why does fandom complain? I'd say that fandom complains just to hear itself complain. Like crusaders, we need something to gorn and argue about. But why not? It keeps their imaginations sharp and their tongues loose.

Guess I got out of bed on the wrong side today, or something. Some of your material just rubbed me the wrong way. Again, Rich, sorry for spouting off.

((I think you took the Reynolds spoof a bit too seriously. Just so long as you don't like the material for reasons of opinion, fine. I hope you agree, however, that the quality writing is pretty high.

You should know that del Rey was sacrosanct and inviolate because he was sympathetic to fandom. We'll overlook quite a lot for a kind pat on the head.))

William H. Napheide, 392 Oak Street, #C, San Francisco 17, Cal.

Dear Rich:

As to XENERN's format, I gave my reasons for small size in XENERN II, in the article "Why XENERN?" In addition, the small size makes it easy to stick XENERN in your pocket when going to the library or second hand magazine store to look up data mentioned therein. Letter-sized format would be too bulky for this. Then, too, XENERN isn't aimed at the average fan, although the average fan will, no doubt, find XENERN useful also. Rather it is aimed at those fans and students doing research work into fandom, e.g., Sam Sacket, Bob Madle, Orvil Mosher, etc. In other words, XENERN's purpose and aim is entirely different from that of the average fanzine.

I received the "Galaxy Depreciation Issue" of PSYCHOTIC. Vernon's article was very good, except that he failed to carry it to its logical conclusion. In the preGernsback era (the first one-not the current one) there was no such thing as fandom, such a thing as a letter column was unknown. There was no way for the fans to get together. With the founding of Amazing Stories in 1926 and the beginning of a letter column, it became possible for the fans to gather. This was the fundamental condition for the rise of fandom. Where Vernon fails to carry through in his article is to point out that if this tendency continues, and all letter and fan columns are removed from all prozines, can fandom itself continue to exist? If any more letter columns or fan columns go, this is certainly going to be a question which will be facing fandom.

As to the so-called juvenile quality of letter columns, well... this is a democracy, or so I've always been taught, and if younger fans want to write in: fine. I like to read what everybody thinks. In fact, those fans who support the removal of the letter columns are in effect working for the destruction of fandom. And if Gold wants a "mature" "adult" magazine, neither he nor anyone else has to cut the letter columns. Astounding is the perfect example of a mature letter column, and there is no reason why Gold, Browne & Co. can't follow Campbell's example rather than cut the letter columns altogether. If they can't get mature letters, as they claim, then it's a reflection on themselves as editors and not the fans. But perhaps "Brass Tacks" is too mature for their juvenile minds....

In conclusion, I'll point out that both Bill Reynolds and myself are college graduates and neither one of us go along with the "no letter column" boys.

((Personally, I suspect that the real reason for the discontinuance of letter columns is that they entail a lot of WORK for the editor. It is much easier to rationalize them into oblivion by minimizing their value. The time will come, however, when circulation slumps...))

Bob Silverberg, 760 Montgomery Street, Brooklyn 13, N.Y.

Dear Rich:

I don't think I've said this yet, so let me point out that I've decided PSYCHOTIC is one of the most interesting and intelligent fanzines currently published, and I enjoy most of each issue. Whether PSYCHOTIC seems so good to me merely because of the general decline of the fanzine field during 1953 or not is a different matter. But keep it up.

((That particular compliment has a definite left-handed flavor. Ah, well...good thing I'm left-handed.))

And this friends, (you are my friends, aren't you?) is the end of Sect. 8

Maleficent

The trees stood silent in the wood
But horror filled the air,
The branches twined and intertwined
Concealing what was there.

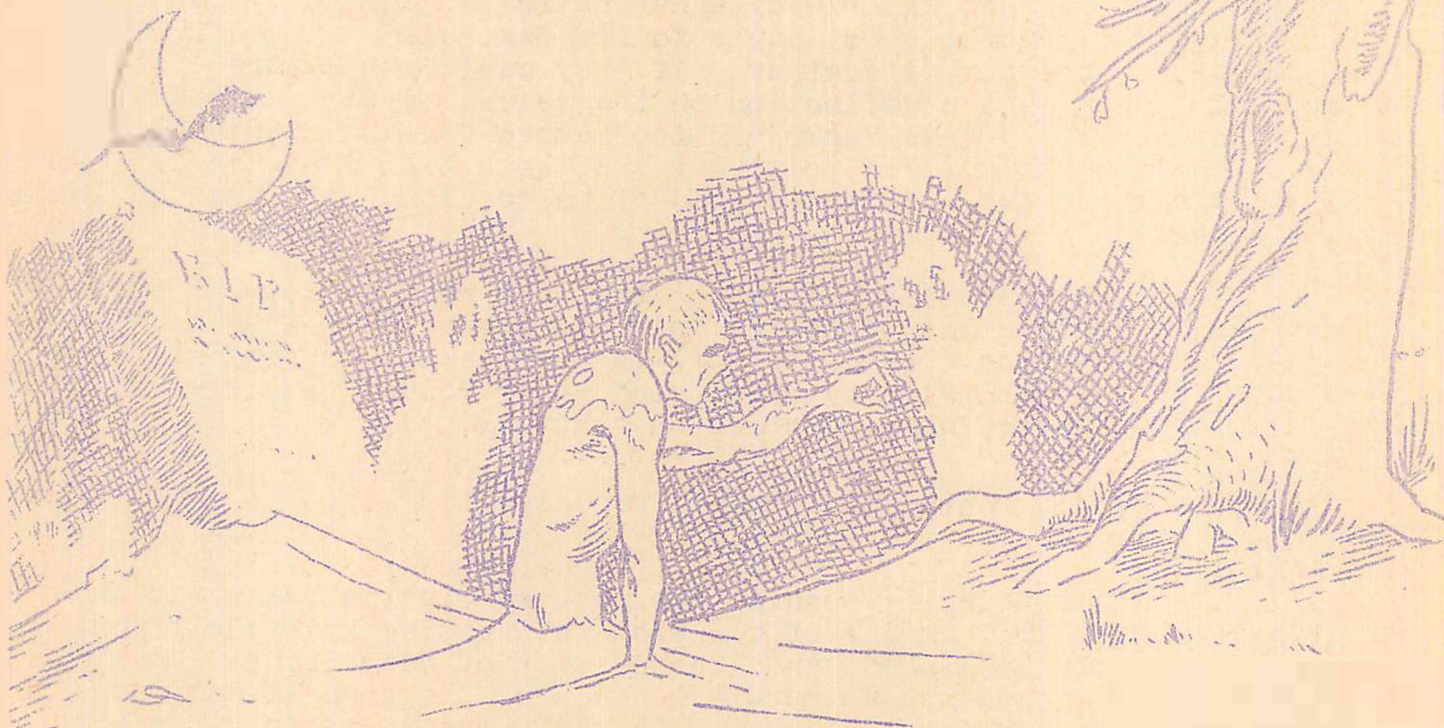
Eyes that were red gleamed in the dark
Moved silently from view
And every leaf upon those trees
Trembled and hung askew.

Sinuous forms slipped through the grove
Leaving a shining track;
Even the owls were silent now;
Gray shadows turned to black.

The thing that had been buried deep
Upthrust one bony hand
And it began to clamber out
Then stood on roots and sand.

The lightning flashed and thunder rolled,
In torrents fell the rain.
The Thing gave one despairing groan;
Crawled in its grave again.

-- Isabelle E. Dinwiddie



GREATER LOVE WITH NO FAN



Editor's Note: this letter came in three days after I'd reviewed MUZZY #5. Now I'm cowering in the fruit closet of a friend's house, hoping like hell this issue reaches Claude when it's too late for him to go A.W.O.L. and journey across the country frothing at the mouth with the homicidal intent I know will dwell in his breast when he does read the review. I wonder if even the Atlantic will stop him.

My stf collection I bequeath to.....

Dear Mr. Geis:

You bastard, you!

How's that for a nice simple start? I thought it was a fair way to start. Nothing so dignified as being honest and straightforward. However, if you don't think it forward enough, I'll be glad to continue at some later date or even start all over. I've got a mind full of phrases I could--maybe "should"--have used.

Tell me. Do you call this thing in which you attempt to review fanzines, a review; or is it a personal egoboo section merely for yourself in which you try to run every fanzine of fandom down so that PSYCHOTIC won't look so bad itself?

I will not do much explaining for the other faneds you cut--but for myself; yes; I think you deserve a reply. To your question: "Why do I come out monthly?" Mr. Geis, surely you're not aware of the state of the army? I do damned good to come out at all.

Here's what I go through to get out an issue of MUZZY. What material I've got on hand, I mail to Robert McMillan and Bob L. Stewart along with stencils, shading plates, styluses and postage. McMillan and Stewart then have the grace to work far into the night, using up hours during which they should be sleeping or studying. Anyway, sooner than a person could expect possible, the finished stencils are back on their way to me--this time to my address in Carlsbad where my parents reside. McMillan informs me of this fact via a letter, generally airmail.

So, right after payday, I head for El Paso--buy several reams of paper and load them into the suitcase I have brought with me. Then I take the suitcase over to the bus depot and store the thing in a dime locker for a couple of days. On the closest weekend, I drag my typer out of the bottom of my foot locker where I've been hiding it from

first, second's inspections. Then, as twelve o'clock comes, I get up, wash, eat, and lug the typer with me onto El Paso. In El Paso, I buy a round trip ticket to Carlsbad which sets me back 40 bucks, then with suitcase and typer, I'm ready for the four hour trip over.

Going to Carlsbad is quite a risk. It's 100 miles further than a class "A" pass allows.

But once in Carlsbad, I jump off the bus, carefully sneaking away into my parents' car--hoping that an MP doesn't spot me. At home, I'm safe. Just as long as I remain inside.

I start work immediately. On my schedule, there's little time to waste. I finish cutting material on stencils, getting the mimeo done, planning my layout. With the issue you review, I had to write some more material--re: Antitwerp & Why Not Muzzy. Then, I cut my material hot on stencil. Along about 4 o'clock of Sunday morning, I finally have to give up cutting stencils and get a little sleep. I can't necessarily stop--if it weren't for the fact that I couldn't use the typer anymore. It's during those later hours that I can't see to correct my mistakes.

Well, I sleep about four hours, generally two or three. Then I continue typing, finishing up in a couple of hours. Then I lay the stencils down on the floor in order. I number them--put out a contents--then cut it on stencil. Finally, I'm ready to start mimeoing. I do so.

Since I'm working in the dining room and my mimeo is on the table, my parents eat standing up in the kitchen. I eat a sandwich (meat and bread) and keep right on cranking out sheets. Someone finally tells me it's four hours til bus time.

I mean out and continue.

After approximately two hours, I'm through mimeoing. I dig the stapler out of the pile and start assembling. 115 zines later, I'm through. I put them into the suitcase, grab my typer, and crawl into the car for the bus station. A few minutes later I'm on my way back to Fort Bliss. With issues four and five of MUZZY, I didn't even have time to read them for three days.

Late that night I'm in El Paso and heading for Bliss again. Yes, I'm tired...darned tired. I'd like to see what's in the zine I just put out, but I don't dare. A blank page might stare me in the face--and in my present mood, I couldn't take the strain.

I check in at the Battery, hand in my pass--tell the first sergeant that I slept with some whore downtown, and from my appearance he readily believes me. Then I hit the sack and God, how I sleep!

Next morning, I am a soldier again. A stf fan! What's that? Who'd be crazy enough to put out something like that? What! You waste 40 and 50 bucks a month for something like this!

Hell, yes! I damned well do! And I might be a stf-fan and I might not. I'm still too blamed beaten to tell or even care.

That night, I thumb through my effort for the month, loving each little typo I spot, carressing every little smudge. This is mine, I tell myself.

And that's why no bastard like you must be, is going to run my fanzine down!

150!!!! Well, I've only received two subs. One from Bill Farger for two issues--after I'd sent him one & two & three

the c... from Shrewsbury, who just wanted me to save something for her when sending MUZZY to her.

Why I try to send it to other faneds generally. So they might want to trade zines with me.

Re: Material. Do you consider Art Rapp as writing bad material? Or Lynn Venable? Rapp was a fan before you were born--likely--and Lynn is a pro. Stewart and McMillan and Davis are college students. The others are in high school.

Why do I come out monthly? Namely for this reason: in the army you can't tell from one day to the next just what's going to be what. I wanted to get out as many MUZZYS as possible before something happened. Well, as feared, it happened.

I've got orders for Europe. Two weeks from now I head for New Jersey and then overseas. I can't put out MUZZY while over there. I'm as sad as hell. This was one thing I didn't want to happen. Because, in my opinion, MUZZY was afloat with #4--started flying with #5--and with #6 would have passed from sight of such zines as even PSYCHOTIC. I really had some good material lined up for #6...Ballard, English, Rapp, etc.

MUZZY five should be at your beck and call by now. Be damned sure that you treat it gentle.

Another thing. A LA SPACE is going to be the zine of the future. Lynn Hickman is now assistant editor. He wrote "Gossip Page"--so, here's a way for you to earn \$5 fast. With your zine, you need it.

Adios,

Claudius

A BIT-OF HEBEPHRENIA

From Bob Nichols....

The drunk was lying in the gutter with one elbow on the curb screaming: "If it takes me all week, I'll get over this wall."

I crossed a chicken with a racing form and now she's laying odds.

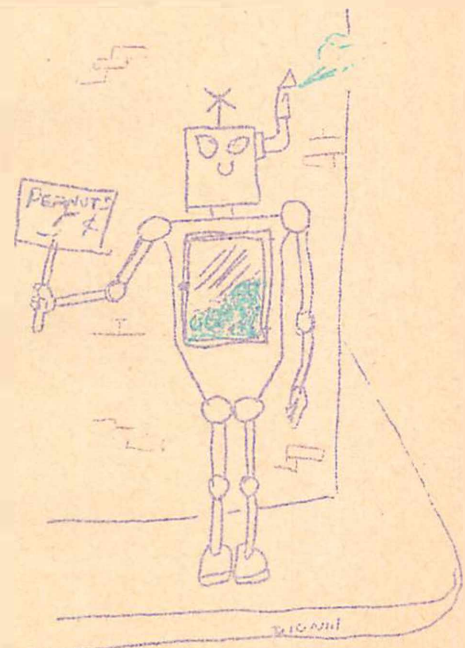
"This sauerkraut isn't sour enough."
"It isn't sauerkraut, it's noodles."
"Well, for noodles, it's sour enough."

Fellow to blind date: "I don't believe in reincarnation, but what were you before you died?"

Letters I Never Finished Reading....

"My dear Talented Friend:

We have been told that you have artistic talent which should be developed. If---



THE WAR OF THE WORLDS

A REVIEW By R.C.H.

As a whole, I thought the movie stank. That's because I put more emphasis on plot and acting than technical effects. Unfortunately, unless you are overwhelmed by the technical perfection of the movie and weak with admiration at the realistic monster Martians and ships, it is all too readily apparent that the movie was designed to appeal to the mass mind. The young mass mind.

Plainly the actors were not in the movie to act. They were employed to decorate the action. They were about as real when depicting human beings as the producer and his advisors thought should be shown to the kids who would see the show. I no longer blame the actors who play in movies for a bad movie. It is increasingly obvious that the director and script are the things that determine the acting level of a picture.

The one special effect I have a quarrel with is the ray of heat which can reduce a man to ashes, a tank to nothing, etc., and yet do so little damage to the surrounding area. The most chilling effect was the monster Martian themselves. Especially the last scene in which an airlock opens in a crashed machine and a arm with distended veins, odd fingers, and green skin, slowly and painfully inches its way outward only to stop and relax completely in death. To me that was the high point of the entire movie.

I have no quarrel with the change in location and updating the story in an effort to make it more meaningful and real to a modern audience. The liberties I do resent are the tacked-on romance that is in every instance purely and completely superfluous. It ruined the story, and it ruined the movie. For, in order to bring about the required happy ending for the two love birds, the producer found it necessary to pay more and more attention to them as the picture progressed. And at the end we are given a steady diet of sickening and incredible love-conquers-all. The Hero frantically dashes from church to church searching for his Beloved. The walls rock and quake, they shiver and shake, but remain standing while our Hero calls out Her name. Demented people with little or no sense crowd the churches praying like mad to God for a miracle. It doesn't matter that in over half the world millions of people are dead and dying, and other masses of stupids made the same plea to Him just before the Martian ships made hash of them in their churches. The good people in God's country require a miracle, and by heaven, a miracle they get. Just as it seems that the next seering ray will parboil the people in the church wherein our Hero and Heroine are reunited at last, the germs in the air finally get to the Martians. Just in the nick of time the machine down the block falters and runs down like an unwinding spring-run phonograph. It crashes into a building. The cobra-shaped tri-eye droops in symbolic death. The schmaltz is thick enough to walk on. Then this airlock opens and the hand comes out.

In the interests of "commercial appeal" the men behind this picture did another hatchet job on a good story and succeeded in ruining it. I want to know why a story that is entertaining in written form is not so on film.

Why change a winner?

2nd Session

----- WHERE THE EDITOR CONTINUES TO RAMBLE ON AND ON...AND...ON.

I saw Jim Bradley in the Rec. Rm. last night after dinner, and after he had inspected the terrific VEGannish put out by Joel Nydahl, told me he plans to put out a poetry zine. He plans it for ditto (using my machine) and liberally illustrated by himself. Go back and take a look at his drawings in this issue, then all you poets who read this make with the pens. This guy can DRAW. Personally, I would be honored to have one of his efforts decorating my verse, even though I may secretly feel that my poem was really decorating his drawing. Jim resides at 545 N.E. San Rafael, Portland 12, Oregon.

I was stunned yesterday to read a letter to the editor in The Oregonian of November 30. The letter discussed science fiction as a new hope for American satire. The letter was quite a good advertizement for GALAXY because at the end of the letter the writer informs us that he has a story coming in the January issue entitled "Backlash". The name? Winston K. Marks. He lives in Ashland, Oregon, Box 332. Funny thing, but I used to live in Ashland myself. Nice little town; it has a Shakespeare Festival every year in an open air theatre that is (as I remember) situated on the fringe of Lithia Park, a truly beautiful place.

I finally found what was making the paper feed improperly on my ditto; there was a little rubber thing that fitted on the axle of the feeder arm that had come loose and slipped aside. As a result the arm was loose on one side and kept shoving the paper in crooked. It's fixed now, but I didn't discover the thing until over half the issue was run off. Am I boring you?

John Hitchcock, 15 Arbutus Ave., Baltimore 28, Md., puts out a fanzine called RENEW which features, among other interesting items, reviews of PSYCHOTIC (favorable reviews of, what else?) No. 3 issue of RENEW has an article on 3-D by Dave A. Bates, other fanzine reviews, and editorial ramblings. Next issue will be larger, but also not free; from now on it costs 7¢. It should be noted that this is mostly a free plug, not an honest review....

My deepest and most humble to Bob Stewart of Texas. I shoulda reviewed his "The EC Fan BULLETIN", but mislaid it in the bottom drawer of the desk.

Attention EC fan-addicts, this zine has news and views, a "Vault of Horror Index", a list of people with EC comics to sell, and purple sometimes-hard-to-read print. Rt. 4, Kirbyville, Texas. 10¢, 3/25¢.

You may wonder what happened to all the other columnists this issue. I am too. Harlan Ellison may have forgotten, or gotten so involved with college, that fanning is very much minor. Hank Moskowitz...I dunno. Hey, Hank, where is you? Larry Falint is not a regular columnist; he'll appear whenever there is enough moon-picture news available.

Dick



WHAT I GO THROUGH _ _ _