

PSYCHOTIC ——— ||



"Seventh Fandom."
"Seventh Fandom!"
"SEVENTH FANDOM!!!!"
"SEVENTH FANDOM!!!!"

"Eighth Fandom."
"Eighth Fandom!"
"EIGHTH FANDOM!!!!"
"EIGHTH FANDOM!!!!"

WHERE THE

(CONTINUED IN 2ND SESSION)

THE PADDED

Are you considering contributing to a fanzine? My advice is to forget it. You've no idea of the frustrations you're letting yourself in for.

Do you have ideas of dashing off a piece of deathless prose or fiction, affixing an air-mail stamp to it, and rushing to the nearest mail box to dispatch it to that fan editor who has been flattering you by telling you how desperate he is for material, any material, but especially material from your typewriter, and then sit back and wait to see it arrive in your mailbox three days later in the lead position, neatly mimeod, with a special blurb by the editor telling everyone how talented you are and how lucky he is to get something from you? And then do you expect within the week a host of fan letters raving over your style, wit, and intellect and a flock of reviews of the zine doing same and ignoring all the other contributors?

Well, if you do you are in for a disappointment. Once it is published your best friend, if he is in an expansive and thoughtful mood, may pen a p.s. to his letter and say "Read you article in SEVENTH FANDOM FOCAL POINT. Nice job." At least he probably will if it is your first published piece. Otherwise he'll probably just ignore it. And about three months later reviews of the magazine will begin to appear. If you're lucky you may find your name sandwiched down at the bottom as one of the contributors. After all, the first half of the review has to be devoted to some involved wisecrack to show everyone how clever the reviewer is, and most of the rest to saying what a fine person the editor is to have brought out three issues already. Naturally there isn't much space left for mentioning what appears in the magazine.

All this you can count on only if the article or story has appeared in a reasonable length of time, say five or six months after you mailed it in. (Of course, if you contribute to a monthly with a demon-for-work editor like Geis, you can expect that estimate to be halved. But three months is about the minimum length of time you'll have to wait -- and what has been a faithfully monthly magazine up to then may have turned semi-annual since you last heard.)

But you can by no means be sure your efforts will see print at all, or at least while you're still in fandom. The naive may think acceptance by the editor guarantees appearance in print, but they'll soon learn better.

My first experience with this sort of thing occurred in late 1950 when I looked upon myself as Allah's gift to the editors of all fiction fanzines. At that time I was

BY V. L. MCCAIN



carrying on a correspondence with Australia's number one actifan, Roger Dard, and he was doing a column for my fanzine.

He wrote me that he was starting his own fanzine and would like something from me. Since I was still so completely unknown at that time that I was submitting most of my material unrequested (and for that you really have to be unknown...not that there's anything wrong with it. I'd still do it if I ever caught up with requests, a goal I gave up long ago) I was quite flattered and promptly banged out a little thing which I modestly thought plumbed tremendously the mysterious depths of human nature.

Well, it takes a while for mail to get to and from Australia. Somewhere in the meantime I'd learned the mag had folded after the first issue so I wrote asking for the story back as I liked it and would submit elsewhere. He replied

that he'd already packed up all the material and mailed it to England's then number one fan, one Ken Slater, who with typical British imperturbability has been living in Germany ever since I've known him. Roger said he'd asked Ken to forward to other European faneds any material he didn't personally want for OPERATION FANTAST.

Despite my inflated view of the worth of my story I didn't quite have illusions about its being worthy of OPERATION FANTAST, then as now one of the more dignified and high-quality fanzines.

Ken didn't mention receiving the story and I felt it might be indelicate to put such a tactful person as Ken on the spot by asking him what happened to my story and forcing him to admit he wouldn't touch it with an eleven foot pole.

Meanwhile I was gaining a bit more objectivity about my writing, had quit writing fiction for fanzines entirely, and recognized that this story was hardly one of my better efforts, so decided that it was probably all for the best that the story had vanished forever into the wilds of unexplored Europe.

The story had just one good point...its title, "Adamant Eve" which still sends me into near hysterics, and I contemplated someday using it again if I ever thought up a decent plot to go with it.

Then it happened! Unsuspectingly, I opened a package from Slater one midsummer day in 1952, glanced at the cover of the new OF and did a double-take.....you guessed it: "Adamant Eve" by V.L. McCain. I guess Ken liked the title too. Well, I reread it. All I could do was writhe in discomfort. I don't know which is worse, sweating over a piece only to have it never appear, or to have it appear too late when you've learned better. It's a tossup. I must admit Slater gave it a nice Alan Hunter illustration, though.

About the same time I wrote the above-mentioned story I incautiously mentioned in a letter to one Franklin Dietz that I'd been writing so many stories that I'd at least one unpublished one placed with almost every fanzine that used fiction.

Now this Dietz happened to publish, theoretically, a fanzine. I believe its name was SCIENCE FICTION AND SCIENCE FANTASY or something like that. I only saw one copy which he sent me after the NORWESCON, and it was nine months old. He printed it on a press which was always broken, so its quarterly schedule wasn't quite lived up to. Since the fanzine was moribund I'd never thought about it, but Dietz wrote back saying there

was one fanzine I hadn't contributed to and asked for a story.

Obliging as always I produced something (I believe it was just about my final fling at fan fiction; I learned better soon after.). I don't remember even the title or anything about the plot except it had something to do with aliens who land their spaceship on the ocean floor and then discover a submarine.

Months passed by and not a word did I hear from Dietz. In the spring of 1952, almost exactly a year after I'd mailed it to him, he wrote me acknowledging receipt of the story and his acceptance of same. He'd been to the Nolacon in the meantime and, as usual, was now in the midst of ambitious plans for his fanzine. Well, so far as I know that was the last anyone in fandom ever heard of Frank Dietz and no issues of his fanzines have since appeared.

Where are you Franklin?

In mid-1951 I got enthusiastic over a new fanzine edited by a fan obviously more mature than most then around. His name was Henry Burwell and the fanzine was SCIENCE FICTION DIGEST.

Through circumstances too complex to go into here I wound up an Associate Editor or some such on SFD and used to select and type up articles from old fanzine for SFD, which was primarily a reprint mag. It did use some new material, though, and Burwell had requested some from me.

I sent him two articles, one serious and one humorous. He expressed considerable enthusiasm over both and used the serious one promptly. The other he was constantly planning to put in the next issue but it kept getting squeezed out. This made me impatient as I still think the piece, "What Sad Universe" was probably the best piece of humor of any of my occasional attempts in that direction.

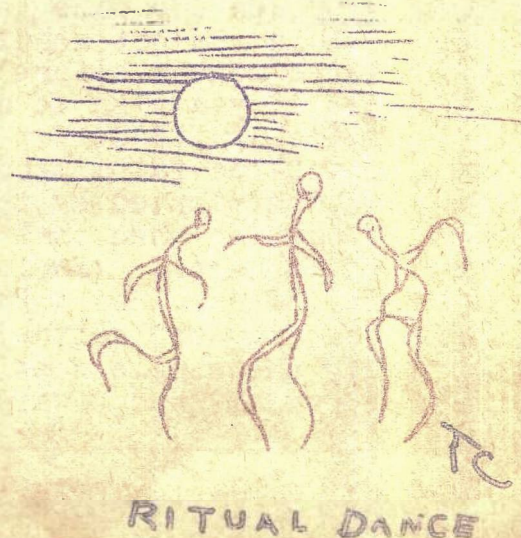
SFD went offset, then half-letter size, then printed, then mimeod again, and back to offset. (I believe SFD only once had two issues in the same format.) And still it didn't appear. Then the mag folded and Henry seemed to turn to a more personalized zine, when all of a sudden it was announced in early 1953 that he had dropped from fandom.

What happened to "What Sad Universe"? I still don't know. I've never heard a word. I'd still like to see it appear. At one time I thought it had gone out of date when June Haver entered a convent but now she's out again it's no longer dated any more. If any Atlanta fans have it with no intention of publishing it I'd be happy to have it back. If I can't find a publisher for it, this is one piece of my own that I'd even be willing to publish personally.

Where are you Henry?

About the time that Burwell dropped from fandom I fulfilled a promise to Bill Venable, with whom I'd been swapping articles off and on throughout my fannish career, and sent him an article entitled "Ten I Admire". Bill was editing a zine entitled PENDULUM. I never received acknowledgement of receipt but I know he got it because I saw an ad for his mag somewhere last year listing people who would be appearing in his mag and my name was among them. In fact, I don't know whether PENDULUM never saw another issue or if I just never happened to have it mailed to me thereafter.

Anyway now they say Venable has followed the Burwell example and exited.



Where are you, Bill?

By this time I was pubbing a zine entitled REVIEW in which I gave vent to my own prejudices on, among other things, fanzines. I gave a thorough drubbing to one issue of a fanzine named RENAISSANCE edited by Joe Semenovich.

Semenovich took this too well, thus leaving me feeling guilty, and heaped coals of fire on my brow by suggesting I help him improve his magazine by contributing something.

He got his article, one which I can't very well describe here as I still have hopes it may appear and much of its impact derives from surprise effect.

But that was a year ago and the then frequently appearing RENAISSANCE has, I believe, made only two appearances since. The latest issue announces it will continue but using weird and outre material only. My article I would hardly categorize as either so where am I left?

Where are you, Joseph?

But perhaps the champion example of pure dilatory negligence goes to a fanzine which flourished during sixth fandom featuring humorous material primarily. This fanzine drew a fair amount of praise and developed just enough prestige to pull material from all sorts of top names when the editor moved away and left material for the next issue with a friend who was to complete it. Fanzines being published for the reasons they are the friend didn't. A year later in the spring of 1953 the editor returned and picked up the material. The fanzine had been an elaborate printed affair and since he couldn't print it now he decided to have it offset. But illustrations had been lost, offset was going to be expensive, the fan was broke, and time had bled off his enthusiasm for the project.

So finally in the fall and winter of 1953 he commenced belated preparation of the now far outdated material. I just received this fanzine a couple of days ago and I must say this is a perfect example of how not to treat contributors.

The fanzine? Oh yes, its name was WASTEBASKET and it was edited by one Vernon L. McCain

Where are you, Vernon?*

Incidentally, I might add that while WASTEBASKET is distributed through FAPA I run off 130 extra copies which are distributed free to people who wish to receive them. While well over half of these were already spoken for some two years ago I do expect to have some extra copies since I'm not sending any out for review, and while it will be about three months before this sees print I may still have some copies available if you wish to drop a card asking for one.

While WASTEBASKET was unusually large for a printed fanzine it makes a not-too-fat mimeod zine but if you are interested in top-notch material contributed by the names which made up the very cream of Sixth Fandom, written when that movement was at its highest point, you will find it here. Included are such people as Robert Bloch, Bob Tucker, Harry Warner, Henry Burwell, Hannes Bok, and Walter Willis (the last was a contributing editor) plus the lesser known names of D. R. Smith (probably the single most skillfull fan writer ever not to succumb to the lure of prodom) and Howard Bergerson (a member of no fandom).

* Hiding my scarlet face in a corner.



A WORD TO THE WISE

By ROBERT BLOCH

Science Fiction marches on!

Marches with sure steps, its head lifted high (dig that crazy point, by the way!) and unfaltering pace.

It is a march we cannot help watching with an interest amounting to a positive fascination, for there is always that enigmatic question lurking in the mind of a seasoned observer -- Science Fiction marches on, yes, but does it know just where in hell it's going?

Now it is not the purpose of your correspondent to speculate upon the ultimate destiny of Science Fiction. Your correspondent has enough troubles without that. Sometimes your correspondent has difficulty in just figuring out how to tie his shoelaces. So if you're looking for a Spenglerian dissertation upon the future, you had better turn to the pundits and savants of Seventh Fandom who can utilize their months of experience in the field to reveal the answers to this profound question.

I propose instead to offer a miniscule speculation to which the reader can propound his own solution. In other words, I'm going to choose the easy way out -- just drop a problem in your lap and run for cover. But if you can answer it, you may also find a clue regarding the greater question of Science Fiction's future.



So gather round, now. Get out a piece of paper and a pencil, and sharpen the points of your heads. The question for today is -- what will be the Word in the Science Fiction of 1954?

For the benefit of those unruly students in the back of the room who seem to be suffering from enuresis of the water-pistol, I hereby repeat -- what's the new Word for 1954?

Perhaps I had better explain. It may not only help to make things clearer, but will also take up space, which is what the editor really wants in the first place.

When I speak of the Word, I refer to that particular arrangement of syllables which is eagerly seized upon by writers and readers alike until it becomes a standard referent. There have been many such Words in Science Fiction, as we all know.

One of the first Words was probably Adaptation. Stanley Weinbaum started it, I believe, with his story THE ADAPTIVE ULTIMATE. This yarn, which was conceived about the same time as Harlan Ellison (but sold immediately: I don't think Ellison sold until last year some time) started a definite vogue for a while. You'll find references to Adaptation running through many of the stories printed during the middle '30s.

The next big word was probably mutation, with the natural evolution of mutant. This springs from the Campbell-Kuttner era of ASTOUNDING. And here, once again, in the early '40s we find story after story containing references to mutation. I'm afraid Kuttner was also more or less responsible for the mid-'40s popularity of empathy. This word runs through a number of yarns, and limps through still more.

By this time most of the writers in the field (including those who merely burrow beneath it) began to wake up to the fact that there was a gold-mine here. Just watch for the annual Word and use it, and you're almost bound to sell. Hitch onto the popular term of the moment and cash in. That's the way it always has been in the movies, you know: let one company make a successful western and they all turn out imitations -- thus making hay-burners while the gun shines, as Dean Grennell would say if somebody didn't stop him in time. In other words, start a trend and capitalize on it. Of course we all know what happened once authors really discovered this truism.

Came the era of nuclear. What a Word that was! Everything was nuclear in the late '40s. Nuclear physics, nuclear fission, even nuclear nuclei.

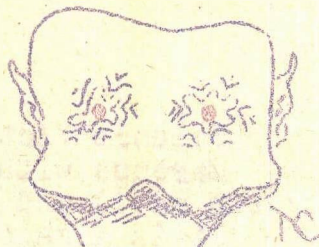
Then somebody hit upon esp and we were esped to death; 1951 especially, until in desperation, Alfred Bester wrote THE DEMOLISHED MAN and demolished this especial term.

1952's big Word was undoubtedly symbiosis. We were more symbiotic than antibiotic in '52.

In 1953 there were, of course, remnants of symbiotickling going on, but the new, real George Word turned out to be estivate. The really alert members of the craft began to work estivate into their stories, much to the confusion of unlettered adolescents who undoubtedly thought it was a reference to some sort of auto-erotic practise.

Now, the big question is, what's the Word for 1954? Who is going to come up with the Key Term on which to build the saleable story?

As I said at the beginning of this article (it did have a beginning, as I remember it: I hope I didn't leave it out, because articles look so foolish without a beginning, don't you think? On the other hand, if you don't think, then it doesn't make much difference, does it?).



Anyhow, as I said at the beginning, I am not going to try to answer. I merely intend to ask the question and then run like hell.

But before departing, might I propose a little contest? Let's everybody try to guess the Word for 1954. Send as many entries as you wish c/o the editor of this magazine, and be sure that each entry is pockmarked not later than June 1st. Prizes will be awarded on a basis of neatness, originality, and the ingenuity shown in attempting to bribe the judges. Anyone is eligible to enter, except members of the families of Street & Smith --- or anyone living on a Street, or a Smith, as the case may be. Or not be.

Better hurry, because this contest closes yesterday. In case of ties, duplicate kicks in the face will be awarded.

But just remember....sometime in 1954, some writer will come up with a new catch-Word and the craze will be on.

Take my Word for it!

---Robert Bloch.

ENTER DIMENSIONS

Over two years ago SCIENCE FANTASY BULLETIN made its bow to the world of science fiction. It began inauspiciously, resembling many another little amateur magazine. By the end of 1953 it was recognized as the leader in the multitudes of fan produced magazines. Then, all was silent. Now, word comes forth that SCIENCE FANTASY BULLETIN is not dead, but changed. That publication will be called: DIMENSIONS.

Material by Philip Jose Farmer, Redd Boggs, Robert Sheckley, Joel Nydahl, Charles V. de Vet, Marion Z. Bradley, Algis Budrys, David Ish, Betsy Curtis, David English, H.L. Gold, Bill Venable, Van Dongen, Henry Chabot, Larry T. Shaw, Norman G. Browne, Samuel Mines, Fred Chappell, Poul Anderson, Rich Elsberry, Robert Heinlein, John L. Magnus, Jr., Willy Ley, Phyllis Economou, Theodore Sturgeon, Ralph Rayburn Phillips, Fletcher Pratt, Gerry de la Ree, Theodore Cogswell, Mary Southworth, Randall Garrett, Julian May Dikty, J. Harvey Haggard, Jack Harness, Ed Emsh, and a multitude of others, both fan and pro, who delight in writing their best work for the magazine which strikes out in new DIMENSIONS.

Subscriptions are NOT being solicited, so please do not send money --- all manuscripts accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelope will get very careful consideration --- edited and published by: HARLAN ELLISON, 41 EAST 17th AVENUE, COLUMBUS 1, OHIO. If you would like to receive DIMENSIONS, drop us a line --- subscription list has been cut to 200 readers in 48 states and 32 foreign countries --- You'll find new experiences in new-----

DIMENSIONS

FINIS: VEGA

---by Joel Nydahl

How do you go about starting an article of this nature. How do you say what you want to say, without making it seem either hap-hazard or trite, or both? How and where should I begin? Perhaps it would be best if I first said one sentence, and made at least one point clear....

VEGA is dead!

From where I stand, I imagine this fact has been guessed by many fans already. It certainly would not take a Sherlock Holmes to deduce that. After all, it's been six months since the VEGAnnish, and that's quite an absence for a fanzine that's supposedly bi-monthly. Letters have been coming in thick and fast for the past two months now. Most of them read something to this effect: "Wha' happen? Where is VEGA? It's been a long time since the Annish, and I'm wondering if perhaps my sub ran out without my knowing it, or if the issue got lost in the mail. Let me know soon, eh?" That was quite a while ago. Lately they've been getting a little like this: "Has VEGA folded? I've heard rumors from quite a few fans that that's so. I certainly hope not, since VEGA is one of my favorites. I'll bet it was the Annish. I told you so..."

Yes, indeede, fans and fandom was/is in a turmoil. No word from 119 S. Front Street, Marquette, Michigan, for so long that one begins to suspect And, of course, I'm too far gone with GAFIA to even acknowledge the letters, or send out a confirmation of the report. So the thing rides awhile longer. All this time I've been meaning to do something about it (what I didn't know) but I never seemed to have the time, or maybe it was the initiative.

The stencils that were cut, the manuscripts that were selected and the few pages that were run off, just gathered dust. Not a letter was written for three months or more. Finally, I got the will-power and the urge to dash off a few lines to Dean Grennell and Bob Tucker. This was asking if they would still do their respective columns for my forthcoming FAPA mag, FAUX PAS. They both answered to the affirmative, and I began to go to work on said mag, cutting stencils, mimeographing, etc.

A few weeks later, a letter arrives from Geis, asking if I would write a letter concerning VEGA folding, so that he could "print it in SECTION 8. Such a letter should, naturally, "answer a few questions for the fannish world."

And I guess the fannish world deserves an explanation of some kind, since it was they who put me on top, and made VEGA the Number One Fanzine for quite a few months (that's what they say).

I shall begin, not at the beginning where most begin, but rather at the end---at least close to the end.

The beginnig of the end started when I decided when I decided to put out a VEGAnnish. That would mean that it began way back in 1952, when VEGA #3 first came out. However, to be more specific, the end began July, 1953, when I started to collect material for the VEGAnnish. I wrote to literally dozens of persona asking for material. Big Name Fans, semi-active fans, and extinct fans. Fans of all shapes, sizes, and colors (?). Gradually, the material began to conjugate, and I began work.

Work lasted close to five months, and the last two were the worst, or the best, depending on how you look at it. I worked like a dog. Every spare moment I had was put on the Annish. I was constantly, for all that time, either cutting a stencil, writing an editorial, mimeographing a page, or assembling an issue.

It began to show. The constant grinding, working, slaving began to take its toll. Exactly how it did so would be hard to explain. It was more like a gradual thing that crept. Not once, however, during this time, did it ever occur to me to completely give up. In fact, the idea didn't even as much as dawn on me.

Many fans say that it was the biggest mistake I ever made in fandom to put out the VEGAnnish. I can't see how they figure that. All they can see is the fact that VEGA is no more. They can't possibly vision, or take into consideration the fact that during those months I had as much fun as I've ever had in fandom--and some of the best fun I've had out of it too. I was another person. I was completely wrapped up in what I was doing. Every page was a new experience and thrill. I had not time for anything else--play, school, work, and other fans included. I really needed nothing else.

I did next to no corresponding, except that which was necessary to getting the issue out. Letters piled up. I hardly noticed them.

I was not, as some seem to think, alone in my work. My mother--bless her soul--slip-sheeted every single page of the Annish, and assembled and addressed half of them. It brings to mind Lee Hoffman's mother helping her in 1951!

My father--bless his soul--aid for almost every sheet of paper, every bottle of ink, and every stencil I used for that momentous issue. He also paid for half the postage. Without them, I'm forced to admit, the Annish would never have been possible.

Finally, it was done!

All the months of labor and love had reached its climax. I mailed it out sometime in November. I was even too dazed to note the exact date. But at least it was in the mail.

Of course, I was expecting returns such as I had never seen. I was expecting letters of praise from all the BNFs. I expected the VEGAnnish to be called the greatest issue ever..... And I wasn't disappointed one bit.





The letters flowed in. Day by day they piled up. Letters of the wildest praise that even I hadn't dreamed of. One week I averaged thirteen letters a day, and even after that they continued to trickle in. If the sole purpose of the VEGAnnish was egoboo, then I succeeded like no one ever has before.

Time passed, and I began to realize something I had never quite realized before. It dawned on me that there are other things in this world more important than fandom and egoboo. I found that my school work was slumping. I was missing many of the things that my friends were experiencing. And most of all, money was draining out like water

out of a sieve.

FOR WHAT?

That's what I asked myself. For what? For recognition by a minority of people all over the country? I had that now.....but what did I have? Was it anything that would aid me in future life? I doubted it. Was an education important, or did it play second fiddle to fandom? I had to think this out carefully. It was a big decision to make, and it wasn't made easily.

I had had my fun. And I will say that I did profit from fandom. The experience I got from editing VEGA will, in the future I'm sure, prove invaluable. But now was the time to get out, I decided. And that I did. I folded VEGA. After I had made up my mind, I was relieved. Actually relieved. No more schedules to meet. No more worrying about whether I'll have the money to meet expenses or not. And best of all, my time was again my own.

However, fandom is a big thing to drop just like that, and I'm not sure I'll ever be completely free of it. However, being tied to it in some way isn't something I dread. I think I'll enjoy it, but just don't anyone push me!

And that's the story. Hope it clears up a few things for you fans, if you've been wondering. Though I imagine there are a lot of active fans who have not even heard of VEGA. You'd be surprised how fast new fans infiltrate fandom, and how fast they forget a magazine. Half the fans in fandom wouldn't know an issue of QUANDRY if they tripped over it, and they think Lee Hoffman is a young man who had "something" to do with fandom years and years ago. Oh, well.....

Do I warn other fans about putting out an annish? Do I form an Anti-Annish League? No, I couldn't do that. Tucker and Boggs may be surprised, but I've got a thing against the annish.

In closing, I'll say that the only marked change in me has been that I've stopped taking fandom so seriously. That I would advise.

Will there ever be a VEGA #13. Who knows?

---Joel Nydahl.

Why Not Blast

The Crudzines?

By HARRY CALNEK

There is only one thing wrong with 90% of the fanzines that are published: they should never have been published.

During my first year or two in fandom I thought that the reviews some of the faneds were giving other zines were out of place and even cruel. I didn't see what difference it made, a fanzine was a fanzine. It was only a hobby, why holler bloody murder over it? If a kid wanted to run a crudzine that was strictly up to him. I couldn't see why these other faneds should howl so loud over another mag.

I soon found through bitter experience and money thrown away that these were the only reviews a fan can go by. The faned or fanzine reviewer who gives an honest review and calls a crudzine a crudzine is a distinct minority in fandom. Most review columns, fan and some professional, review every mag in the light that it is just ginger-peachy, and money spent on subscriptions is like money in the bank. How many fans are browned off fanzines when they believe this hogwash? What does a new fan think when he reads a review of a fanmag that proclaims it to be an answer to the SatEvePost, sends for it and receives a cross between illegible Sanskrit and kindergarten gibberish?

There is absolutely no reason for a fanzine to have a sloppy appearance. If the zine isn't neat and looks as if it were printed with an oversized paint brush it should be called down. There is no excuse for sloppiness in a zine. If the neeed lacks experience and knowledge of the type of reproduction he is using, he shouldn't be trying to print a fanzine with it. His fanzine isn't going to save the world from Armageddon, not is it going to revolutionize magazine publishing and make him another John W. Campbell Jr. There is plenty of time for him to practice with his mimeo, ditto, or hecto until he knows the thing inside out. Before he runs one page of his zine he should know how the machine works, and if it doesn't, why not. If he has half the intelligence he thinks he has, this will take a very short time.

The thought and work that goes into a fanzine should be considered, certainly. But, you should also consider how much of this thought and work is sincere. If the neeed is sincere in his desire to publish a good fanzine, he should at least try to make it appear in its best light. If he is using a mimeo he should slip-sheet. There never has been, to my knowledge, a mimeo that will print dry, even though the manufacturer will swear up and down that it will. According to him the paper is so dry when it comes out of the mimeo that you have to throw a bucket of water on it to prevent spontaneous combustion. A fanzine with offset print resulting from not slipsheeting is not due to lack of experience or knowledge; it is the result of just plain laziness and a "I don't give a damn" attitude of the faned.

Take the example of the faned who is not aware of the fact that red ink won't print well on pink paper. This is hardly any reason for him

to keep on using it and sending the mag out in that condition. Surely a neeed is not only inexperienced, but blind to boot? Surely he can see that it won't work when the first sheet comes out -- if he is so naive as to try it in the first place. One faned I know of never bothered to dummy a page in his life. As the material came in he sat down at the typer, inserted stencil, and away he went, oblivious to the fact that the zine would have no appearance of being layed out. This was done in the first issue, and in the seventh he is still doing it. Can you excuse that and pass it off as inexperience when he knows better but just doesn't give a damn?

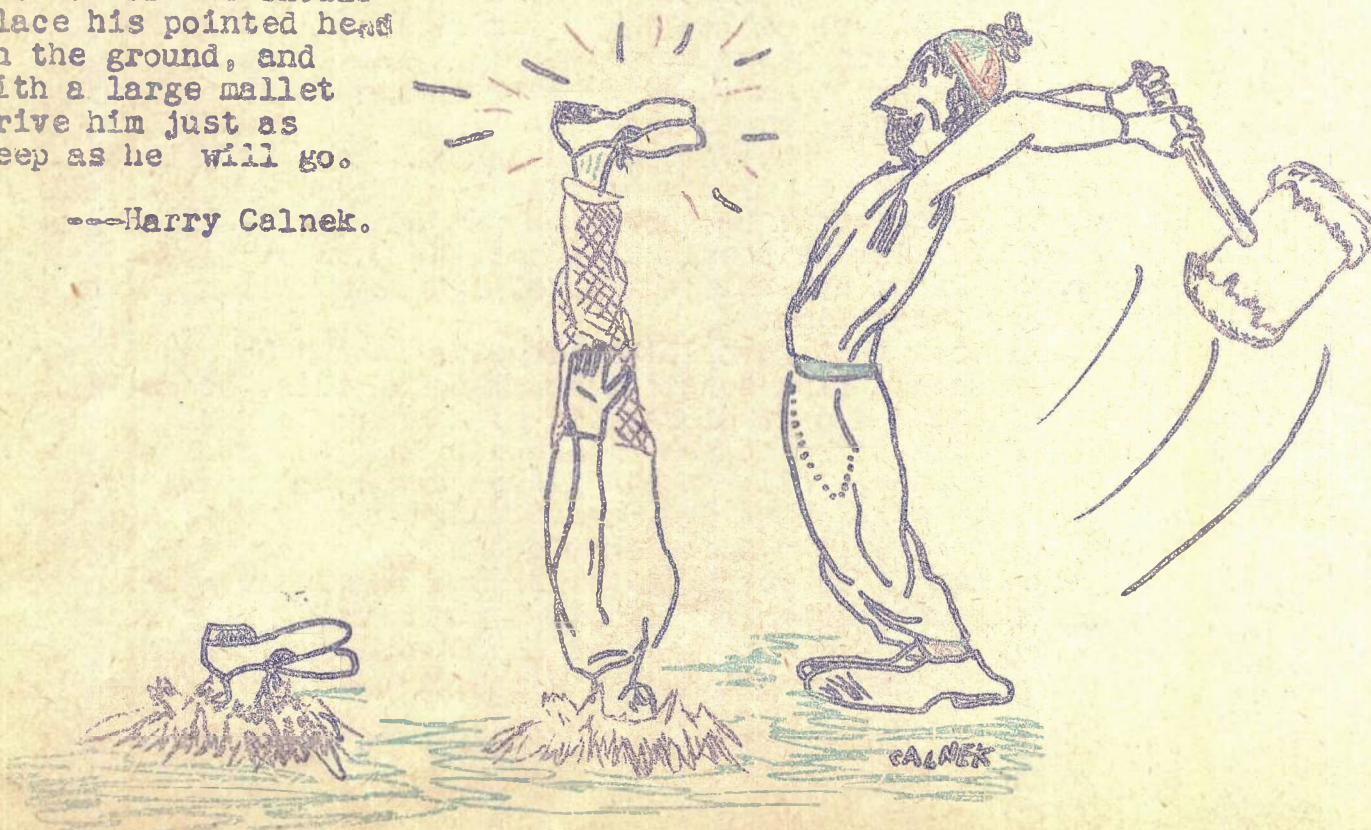
Granted, constructive criticism should be given to the neeed, but he should have a great deal of this under his belt before he even starts. If the neeed is sincere in his wish to publish a good fanzine, he will have to have a lot of know-how before he starts. There are plenty of fanzines to look at. There are plenty of faneds willing to help the neeed in anything he may not be certain about. All he has to do is ask; there are very few who won't give him help.

A first issue that is blasted as a crudzine by other faneds will naturally hurt the neeed. No matter how lousy the zine actually is, in his mind it is the most. However, if the neeed who gets blasted for a first issue doesn't try to improve with the second, the reviewing faned should drop a few more pounds of powder in his gun. The faned who has a lousy zine but won't beleive it when everybody tells him is the worst type of menace to fan publishing. On the other hand, if he tries to improve, and shows he is trying, he won't get blasted as hard. There are very few faneds who won't give him credit for trying to improve.

It is quite true that these mistakes are made by hundreds of faneds, but also true that these are all needless mistakes, and are all committed through carelessness.

I agree that we should abolish blasting the crudzine and its editor. We should place his pointed head on the ground, and with a large mallet drive him just as deep as he will go.

---Harry Calnek.



"MAN, WHAT STONED YOU?"
"DID THIS CARAZY LETTER COLUMN."

SECTION

8

Larry Stark, Route #9, New Brunswick, New Jersey.

Dear Dick,

A note on the crudzines: I think they should be attacked as unmercifully by 'old pro' faneds as these old eds were themselves attacked in their youth. The only way they got to be old eds was by eating a lot of slung mud, by listening to whatever constructive brickbats were tossed at them, and by a great deal of stick-to-it-ivity. If you, or Sberg, or even Boggs weren't willing to take advice and suggestions when you started, and to endure or counterattack the oldsters' vilification, you'd have quit a long time ago. And the field would have been consisting of the hardy, the steady, the unbrITTLE personalities that could take it and stay.

I think Darwin's law ought to apply just as well to crudzines as to dinosaurs; what's good in them will last. What's bad OUGHT to be battered away by anverse environment. It leads to better zines.

Besides, any trembling neofan with a new zine would do best to send a copy and a nice letter to Dean W. Boggs; what he'll get back will be a nice, gentle-fingered discussion of good and bad, suggestions for improvement, and general easy treatment. With this discussion and a copy of SKY-HOOK to hang on to and follow and to strive to equal, any neofan with any vitality at all can endure ANY storms of adverse old-fen. And his second issue will be better. After a little experience he'll either agree with the critics and junk the work, (which is a good thing for the aggregate quality of publishers) or convince some of his critics, if only by his persistence, that he has a virtue or two. From then on he'll have both fewer attacks, and more experience upon which to build and learn from.

Crudzines ought to be blasted; they deserve it, and in many cases it's the most effective way of blasting the really worthless ones loose.

((I don't know about Boggs, Larry, but my early issues were almost singularly free of really vicious attacks. Hardly a grenade came my way.))

Bob Madle, 1620 Anderson Street, Charlotte, N. C.

Dear Richard.

The fanzine reviews were interesting. About half of them were new to me. What's the matter with you guys, don't you want a review? In short, I'd like to see copies of the fanzines which I have never seen. (That sounds weird, but I hope I've made my point.)

Letters are always interesting. All this discussion about Seventh Fandom is a little premature it would seem to me. History may show that Seventh Fandom never existed but was only the middle of sixth fandom. Hell, I didn't know that I came into the field towards the culmination

of first fandom until many years later. Why should these birds tell everyone to which fandom they belong?

Tucker's story about the factory shift typo reminds me of the time I received a wire which asked when we were going to ship his material--- only a "t" appeared in place of the "p" in ship....

What does Bill Reynolds mean when he says, "None of the readers caught on that Brentwood...." ((Bob is referring to Reynold's comment about an article by Francis Bordna which appeared in an earlier issue of PSY which discussed "The Forgotten Man of Fantasy". This "forgotten man", Hiram G. Brentwood, actually never existed, and the stories credited to him in 1920-ish WEIRD TALES issues were never in existense. The whole article was a hoax.)) Apparently he didn't read my review of PSYCHOTIC in S-F QUARTERLY for May. You can't fool an old dog like me. And that goes for his "criminal" idea of finding the earliest fanmag or fanzine. It better be good.

((I get a big boot out of all this speculation and conversation about sixth, seventh, and now Eighth fandom. At least the boys are conscious of their place in History.

I congratulate you, Bob. You are the first to spot the "Brentwood" hoax. Take a bow. Take two, they're small. Thanks for the letter of comment. I trust the other faneds who haven't been sending you review copies will mend their ways soon after they see this letter.))

Jim Harmon, 427 East 8th Street, Mt. Carmel, Illinois.

Dear Dick:

My goodness, there is a stf recession, isn't there? Oh what a fragile dream world I've been living in. But I'm hardheaded. I really don't think the situation will get back to only nine magazines. Fifteen or twenty at least. Some leveling off was inevitable, and I never claimed it wouldn't happen. I saw the situation was getting bad when GALAXY started using girlie covers and F&SF tried all "new stories" and inside illustrations.

I'm editing a hardbound anthology, incidentally, of mostly short-shorts (500-3000). Payment will be microscopic, royalties probably -- in fact, I'm even looking for writers of acceptable stories who will help me pay a percent of costs for an equal percent of net. This isn't necessary to get accepted, tho. Original stories. Interested in submitting?

((I fear, Jim, that even an estimate of fifteen or twenty magazines is too optimistic. Every month Kessler is reporting deeper slashes in pages...more and more magazines folding or scheduling fewer and fewer issues per year.))

Redd Boggs, 2215 Benjamin Street, N. E., Minneapolis 18, Minnesota.

Dear Dick:

In "The Padded Cell" this time, Vernon McCain misses the whole point of the interlineation. The point is not "Who said interlineations had to be confined to one line anyway?", any more than it's pointful to wonder who decreed that the sonnet be limited to 14 lines in iambic pentameter. The point is that, regardless of who invented them, both the interlineation and the sonnet are definite art forms and are, like all art forms, definable by certain criteria. In the case of both, one of the criteria is that of rigid limitation of size. John Donne wrote a so-called sonnet or two that have 18 lines and George Meredith, I believe, wrote a sonnet se-

quence of 16 line poems, but the poet who leaps from his bathtub shouting "Who said sonnets had to be confined to 14 lines anyway? Petrarch? Shakespeare? Rossetti?" is obviously taking the wrong slant at the problem of writing a worthy sonnet. Similarly, I am sure that all true artists will shun McCain's unwise advice, realizing that the very art of the interlineation resides in its rigidity, and that, rather than distort the interlineation's form, they should attempt to shape their thought so that it can be set down in one incandescent line, hot from the crucible of mind and heart.

Incidentally, I have noticed that many interlineations today deviate from the practice and sage advice of the master, Jack F. Speer, in being set between lines of dashes rather than solid lines. In the Fancyclopedia, Speer called this practice an "unfavorable mutation." Nevertheless, I have no hesitation in using dashed lines, so:

"I was sitting placidly on a buss"

In fact, I believe I was one of the first to use dashed lines extensively and exclusively. I see nothing corrupting about the practice, and reject Speer's advice for the same reason that I would reject Petrarch's if he had declared that all sonnets should be written in Italian.

Norman Browne's article rates two belches and a hiccough, but so far I have been too busy shuddering to bother. I'm afraid some fuggheads are going to pick up his query, "And Where Is 8th Fandom?," with loud cries of "Here we are!" He is right that seventh fandom is dead, but somehow it never seemed alive to me. I've a notion that, in retrospect, so-called seventh fandom will be revealed as a minor though fascinating incident in the epoch of fifth or sixth fandom.

Norma Williams' letter was interesting and many of her remarks were valid, though I infer from her "Now, children" description of offset and so on that she hasn't seen many American fanzines and can't properly judge them. Re proper spelling, did she spell it "celophane"? Of course that may be the correct spelling down there.... From what I've heard from various pros at various times, I'll take Claude's report that O'Sullivan "has the say-so" at PLANET with the usual large-grained dash of salt. What does he mean by "having the say-so"? That he can buy stories and only two others above him can reject his choices? --- Art Rapp's letter was the most interesting, I guess, so send him the original of the cover. I wonder where "minsey" -- Lewis Carroll spelled it "mimsy" -- acquired the meaning of "prim; prudish"? I never heard it used that way. Humpty Dumpty said it meant "flimsy and miserable."

((A hasty check of Norma's letter shows that it was my fault that her "celophane" had only the one "l" in it. Should be "cellophane."

I don't know about Vernon's possible excuses for poisoning the minds of modern fandom by introducing a two line interlineation, but if I had thought of the variation and written an article, my excuse would be ignorance of the law. You quote Jack F. Speer and the Fancyclopedia, yet all I know about either is that he is an Old Fan and that the Fancyclopedia is a booklet or something that was issued in the dim past. Items like this should periodically be re-issued for the benefit of new fans.))

Bill Reynolds, Box 688, Hamilton A.F.B., California.

Dear Dick;

"The Apocalypse" expressed my attitude towards CHILDHOOD'S END, though McLeod seems to find philosophical overtones. Very probably Clarke tried to present his fears and worries as best he could; but it was so poorly done that I class it as a fearfully serious potboiler. Great lapses of time between each book, and Lo!, humanity was meekly conforming to the "Overlords". How did the earthlings accept an obviously superior material culture that had little in spiritual advancement? It's like making the Chinese or ancient Greeks conform to our bawling emotional age. So an Overlord says no evidence of a God exists, though they won't deny that He doesn't exist---that's new? Anyway, after such profound revelations Earth abandons its philosophies and religions --- that's new? It's been going on for centuries. In other words, ego Clarke ignores that strange critter, the much praised and much flouted, the people, the masses that go on doing pretty much what they please. And he ignores another critter that made his magnificent AGAINST THE FALL OF NIGHT a stf classic, the reactionary. Not the passively curious fellow we found in the last half of CHILDHOOD'S END. Everything so set up, no reaction, no emotion; little puppets jumping to Clarke's whims. Clarke wrote another dismal sentimental yarn....it's so easy to be pessimistic.

((You are thinking primarily in terms of Europe-American societies when you complain that the conquest was "too easy". But I should think that nine-tenths of the population of the world would welcome the end of oppression and a vastly improved living standard as brought about by the Overlords. And, disregarding the ultimate end of humanity as postulated in the book (no one could know what was going to happen to mankind at the time the Overlords first came) would YOU object too strongly to what the Overlords were doing for you and the world?))

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

Dick;

About time someone gave out with FACTS on fan publishing. Every week some misshappen monstrosity flops into my mailbox bearing the vlnl tag. If these people only had the intelligence to realize that it is necessary to know any field of publishing before clanking down the visor and charging madly into the fray. Reproduction should be perfected before attempting to put together a fan magazine. One "don't" you forgot (and which you've personally been able to ignore, somehow) is the obvious one that a definite schedule of more frequent than quarterly publication should never be attempted. It becomes work rather than a hobby when such is done. I recommend an irregular schedule, myself.

One can do without letter columns easily enough if the contents warrant it, but the very prim, very "literate" and very "cute" prose printed in that abomination F&SF doesn't warrant it. As for Gold and his G-R-E-A-T magazine (just listen, he'll tell you how supremely wonderful it really is), I can only surmise that he considered "Made In U.S.A." to be science-fiction. One is faced with the dilemma of laughing in the man's face or going off to the bathroom to relieve one's stomach. That utterly incompetent buffoon Groff Conklin even had the nerve to choose it for an anthology. "In the midst of darkness we are led by blind men." --- and of the fumlbers, none fumbles more often or more thoughtlessly than one Groff Conklin.

((I can't see why you object to a regular schedule. If

one fan's capacity for hobbying enable him to put out a monthly, there's nothing wrong with that. In essence you mean that a fan shouldn't attempt more than he can accomplish. Unfortunately, most fans in the first flush of enthusiasm, almost always overestimate their long term fanaticism.))

Vernon L. McCain, Box 876, Kellogg, Idaho.

Dear Dick--

I see no reason to a detailed rebuttal to Hall. As I've said too many times before, every man (or even every fan) has the right to his own opinion and far be it from me to try to interfere with Hall's rights. Two points I would like to deal with however. I am at a loss to see just what point he is trying to make about Bradbury even if his facts are correct. But he states "A goodly percentage of (Bradbury's) stories in those days were written under a couple of pen names." If Mr. Hall is not too bashful I am sure there are many Bradbury fans who would be only too eager to learn what these pen-names were, including yours truly. According to the supposedly authoritative index compiled by Bill Nolan in the RAY BRADBURY REVIEW, Bradbury has used only a small number, three or four I believe (I can't check as I no longer have my copy of this), in his entire career and none of these were used at all widely. If my memory doesn't fail me none were used over three times, and of these only one was ever used in any pulp science-fiction mag and it was used for precisely one story! This was "The Referent" published under Standard's catch-all house name Brett Sterling in the October 1948 THRILLING WONDER STORIES. Don Day's INDEX confirms this....in fact, I just now checked it and find Bradbury's three other pseudonyms listed. They are D.R. Banat, William Elliott, and Leonard Spaulding. At least one of these, I believe, was used solely for collaborations with Henry Hasse. It would seem that Mr. Hall either has some very closely guarded inside information here (information that even Bradbury seems ignorant of) or is talking through his hat.

Even if I could figure out what Hall is trying to say in the rest of that about Bradbury, it is obvious he is on even shakier ground here since he has no way of knowing the number or diversity of stories I was reading in PLANET or other magazines some years ago or my reactions to them. As to PLANET and the 'rut': I make no claims to having a private pipeline into their headquarters or special knowledge of their present editorial policies. I am relying chiefly upon an article Bixby had in some fanzine in which he discussed the policies at PLANET and revealed that no editor including himself (despite the changes he managed to put through) ever had any real authority at the magazine despite their names being on the masthead; that Malcolm Reiss was always the man who determined policy every step of the way and that the most any of the so-called 'editors' could do was attempt to persuade him otherwise. Apparently Bixby had unusual powers of persuasion.

As I said, I am judging strictly from this article and have no personal information. But it does seem strange that PLANET has reverted to precisely the same formula it used throughout its entire history except for Bixby's tenure if O'Sullivan has complete authority. Of course O'Sullivan may have identical tastes with Reiss, but I find that a tiny bit difficult to swallow when the other theory explains matters so much more satisfactorily. Reiss may not be running PLANET any more, but you'll have to prove it to me. I don't give a damn how much people want to disagree with me or how severe the language they use in doing so, but I do wish they'd get their own facts straight before they try using them to punch holes in the

ones I used to support my own opinions.

((Leave us really crush Hall, shall we? Jim Harmon writes concerning the subject:

"As for Claude: O'Sullivan is in reality only an assistant editor. Mal Reiss makes the decisions for PLANET the same as Campbell does for ASF and Gold for GALAXY. Bradbury never used a pen name in PS. He no longer writes for PS, but allows them to reprint his stories from slicks like ESQUIRE and COLLIERS. Mines never bought Bradbury stories for the Thrilling group because when Bradbury was writing for the pulps Sam Merwin was science fiction editor at Standard and Sam Mines was editing westerns."))

Don Wegars, 2444 Valley Street, Berkeley 2, California

Dear Dick,

The letter from Australia was interesting. The main reason for the difference in quality between American and...say British and Australian fanzines is the relationship between the pro and the fan. In America it is rather uncommon to know a pro that is also an act-fan (disregarding Tucker & Bloch) ((just a snap of the fingers, eh?)). Over across the Puddle there is not that line separating the two fields. In England, the pros are fans, but not all fans are pros. Their position is rather like ours about 1931-1938....

Then, too, the American faneditor is (as you say) out to have a good time and to rise to BNFdom on his brainchild. I'll wager that there aren't over a handful of faneds that can say that they are satisfied with the way their mags are running. I'm not satisfied with FOG, and it's not because of little things like reproduction, material, etc. FOG, to me, resembles a big dog pulling me along a path. I am going of my own free will, but I am holding back a little bit, too.

I want FOG to be a combination zine. A combination of the zines that I like and admire. There are about three types of material I'd like in FOG. I like the kind you use, in PSY, and I like the kind Moreen uses in SPY, and I like the kind English used in FANTASIAS. But I'm not the type of person that would make a good editor for FANTASIAS. English was the type and he made good at it. To me, material and reproduction mean nothing. It's personality and atmosphere that get me down.... In other words, I'm not satisfied with being Don Wegars, I want to be Geis-Moreen-English. And it has me stymied....

((Go back, Don, and re-read McCain's column in PSY #6. You'll get nowhere by being a pale imitation of someone else, nor will FOG be any good if it is deliberately slanted in imitation of three other successful zines. One is bad enough, but three....

And try to get hold of one of the last issues of SF3 in which is reprinted Redd Boggs' excellent "Are You A Pseudo-Campbell?" This last influenced me more than any other single thing I've ever heard or read in fandom. It should be required reading.))

Robert Bloch, Box 362, Weyauwega, Wisconsin.

Dear Richard:

PSYCHOTIC #10 is interesting, informative, and (in one par-

ticular) mildly irritating to me. I am not often irked by criticisms of the fan-field, having been inured through years of exposure to feuds, allegations, denunciations, and the inevitable "parting shot" fired by the disgruntled as they leave fandom and return to being just grunted again; however, I was somewhat piqued by perusing Norma V. Williams' letter.

It wasn't that she was particularly caustic, or that any one of her remarks seemed unduly venomous; nor were her individual charges unreasonable. It's just that the overall tone was so petulant. Her implications, rather than her statements, bothered me.

She infers that PSYCHOTIC is the only fanzine she has seen so far which is "physically readable" -- by which I suppose she means "legible". She also hopes it will be "mentally readable" -- I take it this is some reference to ESP, clairvoyance or clairaudience. She hopes it will be "reasonably grammatical" -- meaning, I trust, that a fair share of the writing will be grammatically correct. She desires a "decent layout" -- in preference, I imagine, to an indecent layout. She doesn't "mind slang" if the writer "shows that he doesn't use it just because he knows no better." No better form of expression or no better slang? She doesn't say which, but I assume her reference is to the former. And she wants fanzines to "have correct spelling."

Thus her bill of particulars. Now insofar as spelling is concerned, she is perhaps unaware of the hideous contretemps which has arisen in American education: I refer to the now widely-prevalent "progressive system" under which spelling per se has been discarded from the curriculum and "word recognition" substituted. No doubt about it: millions of young people are growing up without rudimentary knowledge of phonetics or spelling rules. They are familiar with the general outline of words, but do not know these words. The result is evidenced, not only in fanzines, but in the letters and compositions of high-school and even college students. I am inclined to decry this situation even as she does, but in all fairness I cannot confine a criticism to sf fanzines or fandom, nor can I see even a tenuous connection between fanning and faulty philological practice. The same applies to grammatical usage.

Regarding legibility, I think it's largely a question of economics. There have been printed fanzines in the past, offset lithography jobs too: I think most fans are well aware of the desirability of these forms of reproduction, but costs are prohibitive. And operating with crude facilities entails an ungodly amount of time and effort: mistakes are understandable under the circumstances.

As to content, I'm of the personal opinion that fandom's publications offer the widest possible cross-section of contemporary expression: ranging from the childishly puerile, the blatantly and calculatedly vulgar, to the most erudite and polished work. Avant gardist tendencies have been manifested: there have been some notable excursions into the field of the serious essay, we have had polemic and diatribe and dissertation, together with a full measure of vapidty.

For this reason, I wonder whether or not Norma V. has received enough material from this "bloke named Berger" to venture so positive an assertion. Her "few samples of U.S. fanzines" probably do not constitute a representative assortment, either from the standpoint of numbers, diversity, or chronology of publication. All poll-opinions, from Gallup through Kinsey, have been rendered suspect because of the "sampling method": perhaps it would be wiser for her to suspend judgement until she has read at least 50 to 100 fanzines over a period of at least two years.

It's true, people are apparently coming to rely on that "I have no

time to read" excuse: I join her in deploring it. But at the same time, I cannot deplore it and at the same time deplore fanzines -- which are token evidence that some people do have time to read, do have time to write, do have time to produce reading material as a hobby. That the overall quality could stand improvement no one can gainsay: however, I find it heartening to realize that fandom as a whole seems more interesting in reading than almost any other segment of the general public.

As to punning being a symptom of mental illness; I am not qualified to refute such a sweeping generalization -- without firm referents in the form of exact definitions of what constitutes a "symptom" and what constitutes "mental illness". However, inasmuch as puns have been a form of literary expression employed by such "mentally ill" specimens as Francois Rabelais, Moliere, Mark Twain, Edgar Allan Poe, Benjamin Franklin, James Joyce, and William Shakespeare, I don't think that the author of LIMBO will take umbrage at the allegation. He might well take exception, however, to the statement that "Personally, I think it stinks." This is not criticism, it is labelling: as such, it is typical of the very thing Norma V. seems to find objectionable in trashy or juvenile fanzines. LIMBO, whatever its status as literature, is a highly literate and provocatively controversial effort: the "it stinks" school of off-hand opinion should always, in fairness, be backed up by precept and offered example in order to preserve the very amenities which Norma V. holds dear. Far be it from me to differ with a lady, but I'd be inclined to counsel her against propounding too sweeping an opinion on the basis of too scanty, or too scantily presented evidence.

It was a nice little corroborree while it lasted...but now I seek a bomb-shelter before the boomerang arrives!

((Whooooooeeeeeee. You really unlimbered the heavy caliber stuff, didn't you?

Probably Berger sent her only the zines he didn't particularly mind losing; the better zines he kept carefully sheltered under lock and key. Thus the sample of American zines Norma received was not a fair one.))

Dean A. Grennell, 402 Maple Avenue, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

Open the do', Richard!!!

Whoa...wait a minute...are you running this in SECTION8? ((Yup.)) And are you sending a copy to Norma V. Williams? ((Yup, again.)) Go right back and change "Hell, I'm writing, ain't I?" to "Hell, I am writing, am I not?"

((Ha...well.... I decided not to print the paragraph where you say "Hell, I'm writing, ain't I?", so I can't very well go right back and change it...can I? But because this paragraph and the next go together to form a single thought train on your part I couldn't very well not print this one. Could I? And.... Oh, Ghod, where's the gun, I might as well end it all right now.--REG))

Want to have her think all USFans are a bunch of illiterate slobs? Let's try to fool her, mm?

((You try, Dean, I just committed suicide.))

She has a well-taken point there, though...anyone with a reasonably good eye for spelling has it pained quite somewhat in reading most fanzines. But it does little good to beef about it. A proofreader's eye is something you either have or have not. My esteemed sidekick, Gerry Kincannon, a dentist by trade, could not spell small words for sour apples. But, ironically, he could reel off medical terms a yard or more long with

impeccably correct spelling. Some obscure engram, no doubt.

I wonder how many fans know that our boy Harlan has been enriching the pages of the OSU humorzine, SUNDIAL with some top grade Ellisonia? he has very kindly sent me the last several copies of this entertaining publication and I hope to get around to thanking him before he reads this.

Norma Williams talked herself out of a free fanzine, Yankeestyle. I was going to send her a GRUE or two til I got down to the part about "punning is a symptom of mental illness." I staunchly disagree, noting as others have in the past, that the only people who sneer at puns are those who couldn't pun their way out of a wet paper bag. I think it takes three things to pun successfully, viz., a sense of humor, a large vocabulary of words and cliches to work on and an efficient filing system for said vocabulary which places the entire contents at your mental finger-tips. A punchant for penning...I meant to say 'a penchanr for punning'...will greatly improve the practitioner's ability to lay his tongue on the right word at the right time. This is what you might call making a virtue of an obsessity. I have seen a lot of fanzines from Australia, but I've yet to see the first one with any particular merit in my eyes. This is not to be interpreted as chauvinism...I think HYPHEN is incomparable, and Gerry Stewart's CAN FANDOM is by no means bad. But the antipodextrous jobs, spelling notwithstanding, are of use only if you happen to own a canary and want something to place on the bottom of it's cage. Sorry, ma'am, but that's the way I see it. But if she doesn't like puns, GRUE would hit her like a triple charge of ipecac, don't you think? Maybe I will.....

'Tis said in Chicago that UNIVERSE #8, when and if, will contain a revived version of Rog Phillip's CLUBHOUSE. U's #6 & 7 are as good as out since one of them--maybe two--is/are SCIENCE STORIES bearing a universal cover. Palmer is phenomenally slow in paying for his stuff these days. Several authors in Chicago haven't been paid for stoffies appearing even in #3 & 4, according to an unsubstantiated rumor I heard. I only know this...UNIVERSE #5 has been on the stands here for the past six weeks and at date of writing ((April 6)), I haven't been paid for either the story by DAG or the one by Art Wesley. Bea Mahaffey has went back to Cincinnati...left by plane Friday night, March 26th...and, unless conditions improve at Palmer's she won't be back. It is said that this will be the end for the outfit, since Bea was pulling a lot of the load there. This from Ted & Judy Dikty, from Earl Kemp and another source best left anonymous.

F&SF is said to be about to resume Quarterly schedule, no adequate confirmation for this, tho.

Please excuse typer...can't find pencil.

((If you cannonade Norma with the heavy caliber puns of the destroyer GRUE, and I with those of PSYCHOTIC, we should have her in a pretty heavy dross-fire. We could hole her ship like a doughnut, which should sinker. That was one hull of a pun, wasn't it?))

Bob Tucker, P.O. Box 702, Bloomington, Illinois.

Cheers:

I've just had a thought about this numerical-fandom thing. Not so long ago when a certain group of noisy newcomers appeared, they came a'whooping and a'hollering and claiming they were 7th Fandom... and therefore 6th Fandom was dead. This is probably the quickest murder and burial on record.

Now, in your tenth issue, two of your correspondents announce that 7th Fandom is likewise dead and the glorious 8th is practically upon us. Frankly, I'm confused. Apparently a new "fannish era" commences each time some new name or new fanzine begins activity, or each time some individual decides an older one has ceased, or each time some editor suspends his fan magazine. Gee whiz, at this rate the 11th or 12th Fandom will be upon us by the time Christmaas arrives.

I submit the following:

7th Fandom never existed. The thing termed 7th Fandom was a fraud, a ninety-day wonder, a splinter group revolting against its parent. It was unconstitutional and had no authority to declare its parent dead, or itself alive. For the sake of identification, the group should be known as 6½ Fandom.

6th Fandom is still with us, accepting new members all the time. The splinter group known as 6½ Fandom has dissolved itself (again unconstitutional) and no longer exists. Sometime in the future we will xwell-come the new era of enlightenment, the coming of the True Seventh Fandom.

(This last sentence is to be read or spoken to the sound of bugles and drums.)

((I declare I don't know what all this talk is about 6th, 6½, 7th, and 8th Fandom. Issue before last I sounded the clarion call for ninth fandom, and of course that means that all you old 6thers, 7thers, and barely-able-to-walk 8thers are all out in the cold. As I said, it's tough, but.....))

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

Dear Dick:

Y'know, I have the very same trouble...I usually think up a pretty good set of first lines for Li'l Willies, but the second set throw me....

Little Willy, horrid brat,
Kicked his sister into a vat;

And from there, it's strickly blank. If you can find something to add to it, you can use it in A Bit Of Hebewhatever.

((She didn't come up; its surface was placid.
For the deadly stuff was sulphuric acid.))

This conception of the advent of eighth fandom is interesting, to say the least. Which is not to say that I particularly like it, but we must face the fact that fans are great little imitators....

At any rate, it would certainly seem that Browne and others are right, if one takes into consideration the fact that seventh fandom certainly hasn't done anything. It could be, could it not, that this is seventh fandom coming up in earnest? After all, the only reason that "seventh fandom" became so notable so fast is because Ellison and a few of his cohorts pushed the conception into the fannish eye, falling all over themselves to proclaim themselves its heralds. Could it not be that Ellison & Co. gave it a false start?

Oh, well...I am a supporter of fandom as a complete object, not something divided into eras, as Silverberg would have it.

((Here's one for you to finish:

Little Willy, feeling fresh,
Grabbed a girl and started to blesh.

I will expect the next two lines in your next letter.))

2nd Session --- WHERE THE EDITOR, GRIMLY,

RAMBLES (ON A SUSTAINING BASIS) ON AND ON AND ON AND ON AND ON AND ON AND ON ANI

but will not be as fat as usual.

This issue contains a lot of letters. I would like to print more, but simply cannot. Because of the letters and the 26 page limit, all columns and departments except THE PADDED CELL will appear in the next issue. To make room for the articles and stories and columns next issue, no letters will be printed. Thus you see the stagger system I'm imposing in order to present as much of the material I have and anticipate.

Do not worry, fans, The OBSERVATION Ward will appear in all its glory next issue. I've a drawerfull of zines to review, so it will be a looong one.

I've two PADDED CELLS in reserve as a backlog, so Vernon, just send me one or two when they get written. No worry there.

But since THOUGHTS FROM DEEP SPACE will appear in #12 along with HOW ARE YOU FIXED FOR BLOOD and AFTER HOURS VISIT, and considering that I have no backlog at all and the fact that I can't set any exact date as a deadline, (deep breath) please Harlan, Lyle, and Bill -- send in the column as soon after your previous column sees print as you possibly can. (Messed up that sentence good and proper.) Because time and tide and PSYCHOTIC wait for no man.

There will be no bacoovers. The fellow who has resided there in all his shagginess and exhaustion will have to go. After all, how shaggy and exhausted can you get? Short of giving him a crew cut and a close shave and starting out all over again...there isn't much more that can be done to him. And I was running out of captions and such. R.I.P.

Curiously, SECOND COMING, the story by John Magnus in #10, has not received the comment I thought it would. Like dropping a bottle of nitro to the pavement and hearing only a tiny "pop". Conversely, the letter from Norma V. Williams that appeared in the letter section last issue seemed to me to be only mildly controversial, yet it erupted like a monster volcano. I know now what pro editors go through. Mr. Mines, sir, I understand completely.

There will be no Annish. #12 will just be another issue as far as I'm concerned. I suspect that many of you like myself wish now that Joel Nydahl had not put out that tremendous VEGAnnish, fannish landmark that it is, but had instead continued to put out regular issues for a while longer. A long while.

I read a rumor that LE ZOMBIE is going to be revived . Is this true, Mr. Tucker? Do we dast dare hope?

Also read in HYPHEN that Keasler is not dead and is going to stage a comeback.

— Nick

PSYCHOTIC

c/o Richard E. Geis
2631 N. Mississippi
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Apt. 106.

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