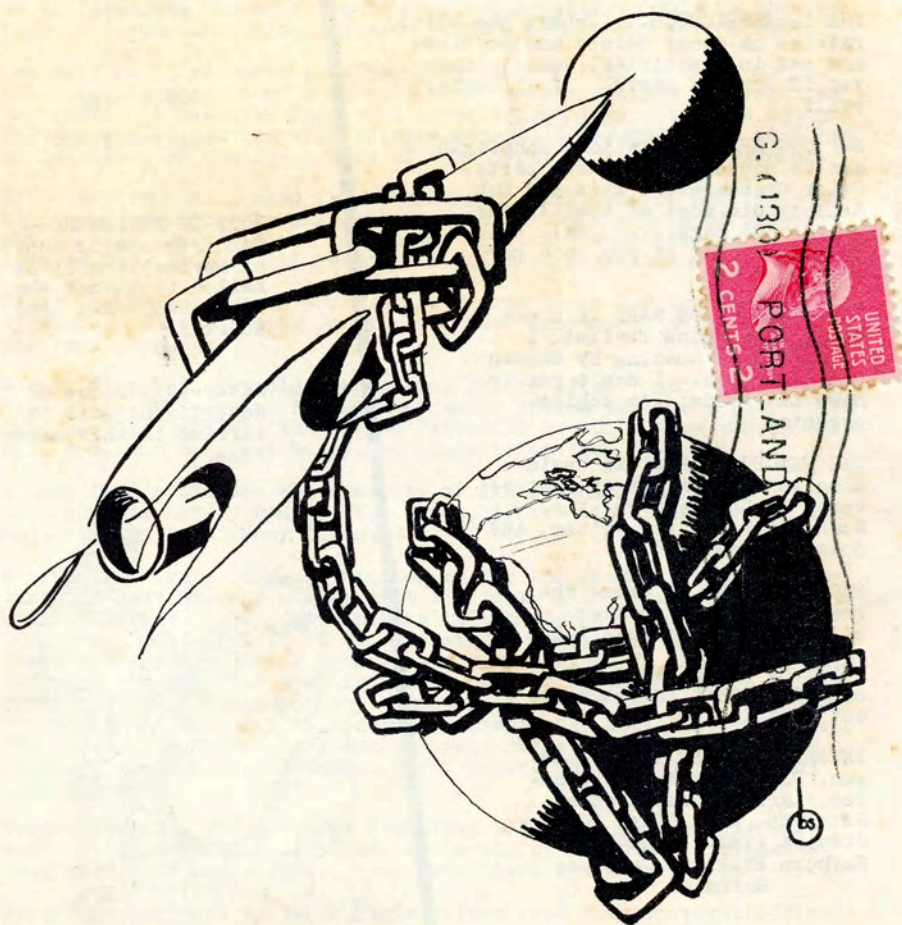


Larry Shaw
135 W. 84th St.
Apt. 5B
New York, N.Y.

psychotic

18



"Poorer Richard's Almanac."

Seal of Approval.
does not boast the Redd Boggs
Regrettably, this contents page

COVER BY BOB STEWART
(and is he surprised!)

THE LEATHER COUCH.....where the editor rambles on about Heroes and Heroines and sex in a satirical vein. Dunno yet if I hit a nerve. If it hurts, yell!

S-F CON REPORT is a long sonofagun and is scheduled in three parts. Peter Graham wrote this and Bob Kellogg did most of the illoing. So turn to page.... Ha! Well, you'll find it if you look hard enough.

THE OBSERVATION WARD is a new thing in prozine reviews, I think. Nice heading by Naaman Peterson, too. I don't really have two heads; I'm schizophrenic.

THE PSYCHO-ANALYST is beginning to cause a bit of controversy by Ghod and yes sir. Noah McLeod is the writer, and does he hate Gold....

SECTION EIGHT is where the readers are kept rather tightly confined this ish.

A BIT OF HEBEPHRENIA is something that got squeezed out last issue.

INTERIOR ART BY Ted Rasmussen, Plato Jones, Jim Bradley, Larry Bourne, Naaman Peterson, Dave Rike, Bob Stewart (Tex.), and Ralph Rayburn Phillips. and Lee Hoffman.

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NOTE TO REVIEWERS—
One free sample copy of Psychotic will be mailed to anyone who sends his name and address.

After this issue no advertising will be carried in this magazine.



THE *leather couch*

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



MAIL CALL I don't know about you other faneds, but I am always curious about other poeple's mail. Whenever I am at Jim Bradley's place I always have the urge to paw through his mail and see what kind of letters he gets in comparison to what I get... and I'm always curious to know what fans write about me to others.

Knowing this about myself, it occurred to me that you other faneds as well as Just Plain Subscribers would like to peek over my shoulder as I examine the mail I have received recently. This is the 20¢ tour of Psycho-mail complete with running commentary by the editor.

Two days ago I received a letter from Boyd Raeburn in which he defines his impression of a serious-constructive fanzine and wants me to please not make PSY into such a horrible thing. Since he associated a SerCon fanzine with fuggheadedness, I assured him that I had no intention of running a zine of that type. I ain't no fugghead.

Also received was a card from the John S. Swift Co. of St. Louis, Mo. telling me they hereby acknowledge my order of the 24th of January and that delivery will be made soon. It takes about two weeks from time of mailing copy til receipt of finished magazines.

There were two change of address cards from loyal and foresighted subscribers. These dribble in all the time; fans never seem to stay put very long.

A card from Bill Reynolds expressing relief after I had assured him that I was not turning PSY into a deadly boring serious-constructive fanzine like DESTINY, INSIDE and FANTASTIC WORLDS. This should make Mal, Ron, and Sam very happy; no competition from PSY.

A card from a fan who wants a copy of #16 of which there ain't any left anymore hardly none...of. (Well, if it's funny for George Gebel, why isn't it funny for me?)

A card from Gregg Calkins thanking me for the photo-offset information I'd sent him and saying that I'd just talked him out of a photo-offset OOPSLA! I can just imagine the consternation in fandom if OOPS went "classy" too. I shudder at the thought of an enraged vanguard of fans descending upon Portland with blood in their eyes intent upon rending Geis limb from limb for daring to introduce this "Pro" method of reproduction. "Subverter of Fandom" they would yell, "Perverter of all that is Fine and Sacred" they would cry, "Go back where you came from!" they would shout, "Mimeo Ubberr Alles" their placards would...uh...inform. Ghod, I have been saved by Calkins' good sense.

Yesterday got a fat envelope from Fred Malz with some sample artwork. I selected what I liked, wrote him my likes and dislikes along with some suggestions, sent back those drawings I didn't like.

Received the Certificate of Registration from the copyright office in Washington and now rest easy in the knowledge that PSY and its #17 contents are mine, all mine for 17 years. If you are ever in Washington, drop into the Library of Congress and request to see a

copy of PSYCHOTIC. Watch the librarian's face. Calmly repeat the request (it's for sure you will have to). That could develop into quite a pastime for vacationing fans. More fun than passing quote-cards to non-fans.

Three requests for sample copies of PSY.

And almost every day there are fanzines. HYPHEN, BEM, PEON, ANDROMEDA, and so on and on and on. I have about six right now to comment on when time permits.

Today I came home to find the mailbox crammed full of a story and letter from Larry Stark, a couple of postcards, a couple of letters, and two prozines, one of which was an advance copy of the April issue of IF which the editors want reviewed in the next issue of PSY.

By the door of my apartment I found a large airmail package from the John S. Swift Co. When I unwrapped the package I got a shock. They had returned my money and copy for THIS issue. Reason: "Due to the nature of some of the content of your latest creation, Psychotic No. 18, we find ourselves in the position of being unable to reproduce it." This caused my jaw to drop to the floor. I retrieved it.

I was frankly confused and a bit bewildered and just a little angry. My editorial (I readily realized it must have been the editorial), while it dealt with sex and a few sexual situations and implications, was, I thought, a valid and legitimate comment (even though satirical) on an aspect of science fiction as literature. But...well, perhaps the fact that I dramatized it, used dialogue, etc., instead of using the straight impersonal editorial form, had something to do with it. Probably smacked too much of pornography for their sensitive and cautious un-fannish mentality.

Such is life.

I have submitted the offending material to the chief censor and bottle washer in Washington. If he gives it a green light you'll see it in the next issue of PSY. Otherwise it'll just be a wasted effort. I only hope this censor is an intelligent man. No, he'll probably be a Republican, come to think of it.

So...that is how come this mag is at least two weeks late and why I am writing this editorial over the weekend in one damn fine hurry.

DEPARTMENT OF... Correction. It seems that I think a great deal of a fanzine titled A BAS which is edited and published by Boyd Raeburn, 9 Glenvalley Drive, Toronto 9, Canada. Yet I somehow left out this zine when making up my list of RECOMMENDED FANZINES in #17. And, to tell the truth, A BAS wouldn't be mentioned in this issue if the above mentioned events hadn't occurred. So hereby let it be known that A BAS is an excellent fanzine of the purely fannish type. I rate it on a par with HYPHEN at present.

HERE'S SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT Got a letter from Al Turner, 68-49 Exeter Street, Forest Hills 75, New York. He raises a question that could do with a bit of discussion. It seems to me he has a point.

"Dear Dick, The whole ish was really enjoyable, most of all "The Psycho-Analyst", but I have two gripes.

1. Your attitude toward comics strikes me as odd because of your similar MAD cover, title, format, and policy."

((Whoa....the cover is more Charles Adams type than anything, and the title, format and policy are not similar. I like satire, true, but PSY doesn't specialize in it as a policy.))

"The other is really a gripe because I hate hypocrisy. In various prozines I have read in the past three years I've seen many letters from fen ranting and raving against the nudes on the covers and the Spillane influence on stf and other such nonsense concerning the abolishment of sex from stf.

"To get to the point, if so many fans hate it, why does almost every letter in #17 refer to it?

"From Bloch's letter: 'Do you remember the story about the little Dutch boy? I mean the clean version, not the one Tucker is probably thinking of.'

"Or from Browne's: 'Ellison may be sex starved but the situation hasn't reached that stage yet.'

"And Bloch and you and "Sex Variants" (can you guess what I'm thinking?) and Laney. Even dirty poems and that back cover (good book that "Collected Pornography" but you should read the unabridged edition).

"Don't get me wrong now...I enjoy this type of trash, but let's ditch the hypocritical attitude so many fans seem to subscribe to."

Of course Bloch and I are adults (ahem) and both geniuses and so are not given to self-deception concerning human repro. But certainly there is a case to be made concerning fannish hypocrisy...in many fields.



"Damn! Forgot the beer!"

THIS ISSUE has been a horrible battle between material that by all rights should go in and the inexorable space limitations of 32 pages. Complicate that by adding the desire to present as much of the artwork I have piling up as possible, and you can picture a beautiful case of anxiety neurosis. BUT, it's fun. I may as well get gray at the temples and develop duodenal ulcers this way as any other. And when I die and go down to the warm place, you can bet I'll do a bang-up job of torturing all Right Thinking sinners with regular issues of PSY. In no time I'll be a BNF down there; a Big Name Fiend. I've already got the Devil on my sub list; he goes by the name Grennell, but I know who he is.

Have fun, don't do anything I would, and watch that night attendant; he'll put you in a cold pack if you so much as cough thrice.

---REG

by **PETER GRAHAM**

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I left home about three in the afternoon on Thursday. An hour and ten minutes later I got off the Greyhound bus, and a five minute ride courtesy Municipal Railways of San Francisco brought me to the hotel door.

I entered. My suitcase and tape-recorder were immediately whisked away by the Head Bellman who set them down near the registration hole-in-the-wall. I registered for Terry Carr and myself and in turn received the key to room 903; this was to be the room where Terry, Boob Stewart, Frank McElroy and I were to stay the next four nights. Sharing expenses, this would come out to \$12 per person.

As I was led through the lobby by the bellman, I noticed a group of four people seated on a sofa. One of them looked like Forry Ackerman, and another with a striped black-and-white shirt looked like the picture of Bob Bloch I had seen in GRUE.

YOU MAY QUOTE ME AS SAYING THAT IN THE BATTLE OF SHIRTS, BOB BARRETT WILL NEVER WIN.



ROBERT
BLOCH

While I was casually musing over this and stepping into the elevator, someone outside the doors said, just within the range of my hearing:

"I HATE these people who come up to me and ask, 'What day is this?'"

I wondered if I would ever find out who said it.

Room 903 was rather small, but it would do. Immediately the bellman had left, I called Terry at his home to let him know the room number. He told me that Boob had already left for the hotel and would probably be there soon. Terry had to wait for Frank McElroy (a local fan usually known as Mac); they would come to the convention together.

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I unpacked my suitcase; that is to say, I removed my camera and flash bulbs, the "Big Brother Is Watching You" cards, my confederate cap, and pencils and clipboard. This latter was one of the handiest things I brought to the convention and I recommend it heartily to anyone who plans to write a report of any length. The "Big Brother Is Watching You" cards were something Mac had cooked up about six months before—the idea was to place the postcard sized sheets of paper in all sorts of places: under pillows, under plates, in bathrooms, under glasses, on chairs, just anywhere and everywhere. The total number of fans who would place them was rather small at the beginning, being only the local Golden Gate Futurian Society group consisting of Boob, Frank, Terry, Rike, Keith Joseph, and myself.

"Just walk out the door, go into the elevator, and say 'I want to go to the beer party.'"

After unpacking I went down to the lobby again, and noticed in one corner a magazine stand. I bought the latest F&SF and walked around the foyer displaying it prominently, almost waving it in the air. Nobody bit. I tired of this after a while, and after walking past the same four on the sofa that I'd noticed before in a last ditch effort, I went back to my room.

About ten minutes to five there was a knocking on the door, and I let in Boob and Rike. Boob left his suitcase on the floor and we chatted for awhile, wondering who was already here at the con. Boob mentioned that he'd seen what looked like a group of fans sitting in the lobby; evidently the same ones I'd seen. After a while we went down to the lobby ourselves to see what we could see.

On the way down we stopped at the room of Steve Schultheis, who had phoned Terry on his arrival in the city and given him his room number. He didn't answer our knock so we left a note—"We were here; why weren't you?" and signed it Boob, Dave Rike, and myself. As an afterthought Boob did a not very creditable signature of Dean Grennell—not very creditable, as when Ellison was reading it later I had to tell him what it was.

We saw the same group in the lobby, and I was toying with the idea of walking up to Bloch, giving him one of the quote-cards which Dave had gotten from Grennell, and saying "God Bless You, Sir" in a typical London Circle Manner, when a pair of people walked up to us and introduced themselves as John L. Magnus, Jr. and John S. Davis (a SAPS member).

Magnus is a very quiet, shy sort of person, and one of the nicest people I've ever met. He's not the type of person you'd expect right off-hand of being a BNF, but somehow after you get to know him you can visualize him doing just about any fannish thing. His personality is not the one you'd expect after reading his mag, VARIOSO, but after meeting him you are able to see how his writing personality ties in with his actual personality. He's much younger than I'd thought, being 20 years old, but has moments when he acts somewhat younger and much older. One or two candid pictures that I took make him look actually slightly lonely. He was one of the last people any of the San Francisco group expected to see at the con.

Davis was somewhat different; I got the impression that he was just standing around soaking it all into a photographic memory and would later go into some sort of trance and write a complete con-report. He took few notes, and most of these were interlineations or quotes of some kind. Somehow, unobtrusively, he contributed to the general fun of the con, but damned if I can remember how.

We chatted with them about how I'd never gotten any copies of SF and VAMP, how well I thought Davis had written his account of his accident (in SAPS), about how Boob hadn't gotten any issues of VARIOSO yet, and Terry had gotten two copies of the latest, and so forth.

We then noticed a small crowd forming in the center of the lobby. The center of it turned out to be Harlan Ellison talking to Evelyn Gold. As we joined the group Harlan turned to us and said, "Are any of you little Petey Vorzimer from LA?" We denied this accusation and he continued talking to Evelyn about GALAXY. He asked several pointed questions about the illustrations ("Why has the art budget been cut?"), the new type of paper ("Why are you now using blotting paper—because it



pads well on the newsstands?" Answer: "Well, it's actually a more expensive type of paper...."), and several other questions which Mrs. Gold wormed out of neatly. Mrs. Gold, I hate to admit, is not as pretty as I had heard, although pretty enough.

The crowd thinned out soon after Mrs. Gold left, and the conversation got around to DIMENSIONS. Without too much prodding, Ellison asked us up to his room for a look at the stencils of the next issue (he just happened to have them with him). Among those that went up to his room, which was 319 at the time, were Steve Schul-

"...had a ball and a half (for overtime)..." he

theis, Al Ficzeri (a SAPS waiting-lister), and myself. Steve I had expected to be a much older person, judging from a rather biting letter I had seen that he'd written to Bill Knapheide, local fan. However, he turned out to be quite a nice guy in his younger twenties. I didn't see much of Al; he came from Tucson with John Davis and seemed a nice guy—although he doesn't impress me as being someone who could write and publish in the SAPS manner (or any manner, for that manner). I hope I'm wrong, tho.

We looked over Harlan's stencils for a while. He has some nice stuff coming up, admittedly, but why he has to ballyhoo it so much is beyond me. After a time it gets to the point where nothing new can be said about the material, and no matter how terrific a certain piece might be it can't be called anything better than a merely good piece which has been previously adjectivised to the highest hilltops.

A few minutes after we started looking at the stencils, Schultheis went over to his adjoining room for a moment. When he came back it was with a "Look what I found!" and the note we'd left earlier. Everyone looked at it and I explained the last signature to Ellison and the rest who couldn't make it out. "Oh, yeah, I see," he said.

Ellison that day struck me as being a very insincere person, along with having a penchant for name-dropping. This opinion I abandoned as merely a quick first impression which wasn't entirely valid, but that he is guilty of name-dropping I think is true. For instance: when E.E. Smith walked into the lobby to register,

"I've got Dean A. Grennell quote-cards, and you can't beat 'em, buddy." he

Ellison, eager to show everyone that HE KNEW E. E. Smith, immediately yelled across 10 yards of lobby, "DOC! DOC SMITH! Hello, Doc!" To this Smith replied with a friendly wave of the hand which I think he would have given to anyone who happened to say hello to him. He also acted a trifle embarrassed, as who wouldn't when someone you at best know casually yells at you across a hotel lobby. I call it name-dropping for want of a better term that won't come to mind at the moment.

After about a half-hour of listening to Ellison raving about DIMENSIONS, I went

back up to my room. In 903 I found a beer bust in full swing; while I had been in Ellison's room Magnus had taken his fake draft-card (showing his age as 24) and gotten a case of beer. All who had contributed to the beer fund were partaking joyously. In the middle of this Terry and Mac walked in, and Terry's first words were "Hey, give me one." He was given one. After a few moments, Terry and Boob put on their Revival Hour skit, which was greatly enjoyed by Magnus, Davis, and Ficzeri. This skit is the greatest and will appear soon in Terry's and Boob's new fanzine if rejected by HYPHEN.

During this skit Magnus got carried away and began to laugh; his laugh is something halfway between a groan and a laugh, being caused by a sharp intake of air. No one has ever duplicated it. You haven't lived until you've heard John L. Magnus, Jr. really laughing. This broke up the skit in the middle and it was 3 or 4 minutes before it could be begun again.

I then began talking to Magnus about my taper which I'd brought to record the voices of BNF's, BNP's, and various people I wanted on tape as a souvenir. He mentioned that he was doing the same, except for a more worthy cause. He was trying to get as many fans and pros on tape as he could as he and some other fen in his area were planning a series of LP records of stf personalities. Among these are to be as many recordings as possible of previous convention Official Programs, impromptu recordings of various fan conversations and bull sessions, and interviews. Eventually I asked to see John's taper so we all went down to Magnus's room, 313, which he was sharing with Rog Sims, George Young, and later Harlan Ellison. I saw his machine, bought a few copies of VARIOSO from huckster Magnus, chatted a few moments about his father's tapers, the record project, and how I could get back issues of VARIOSO, VAMP, AND SF.

Suddenly the party broke up and the group went to Ellison's room to heckle him. He was out, but the door was open; we saw that a maid was cleaning up. We decided to stay and suddenly became impassioned with the idea of planting "Big Brother Is Watching You" cards. After letting Al, John, and Jawn in on the secret we started planting. We must've left 50 cards in there; in his card deck, between the bedsheets, under the pillow, under the blankets, in his spare suits and clothes, under tables, under rugs, in desk drawers, in Drake envelopes, in his DIM stencils, in the toilet...everywhere.



Midway through this the maid said timidly, "Are you sure it's alright for you boys to be in here?" We blithely answered, "Oh, sure, sure, he won't mind."

After this Terry and I wandered down to the lobby. Carr was collared by Ellison, who asked Terry if he would do an exclusive series of Face Critturs for DIM. Terry explained that the Face Critturs were promised out already to such people as Carol McKinney, Gregg Calkins, Pete Vorzimer, and others. "No, no," said Harlan, "I mean an exclusive on one particular theme." "Oh, well, sure," replied Terry. "Which theme?" "Impressions at this convention." Terry quashed him with, "Pete Vorzimer's paying me \$5 for 50 Critturs about the SFCon for ABSTRACT." Ellison shrugged his shoulders and walked off, muttering something about how he couldn't compete with money markets.

I went over to the magazine stand in an ensuing hiatus, and as I came back passed a bank of telephone booths. One was occupied, and the occupant looked familiar. Both Pete Vorzimer and I did a double-take, he hung up on whoever he had been talking to, and I met him again for the first time since Easter vacation. Pete has about the same personality as in ABSTRACT, although he somehow manages to act quite a bit nicer—he was a slight bit egotistical, as always, but in the last six months he's made great strides in overcoming that fault. When I stayed at his place during Easter vacation he was almost, but not quite, unbearable. The change was so marked

that I told him the one about "I know, I used to be conceited as all hell. Finally some guys got tired of it and took me out in an alley and beat the crap out of me. Now I'm really a nice guy." He appreciated it and told it to Ellison, I think.

"From the halls of Montezuma, to the shores of EEE."

Somehow I got to room 318 where a party, presided over by George Young, was in full swing. He ran the blackjack table, and at the same time tried to keep the room quiet...I don't know about the former, but he was a miserable failure at the latter. By that time it was ten o'clock, and none of us had had any experience with the house dick—we were young, naive, loud....

"Mother told me there would be rooms like this." --PJV

That room, judging from later happenings, certainly should have had the house dick running up the stairs at top speed; there was a blackjack table in the center, a dirty joke circle in one corner, a mere drinking session in another, about five fans yelling and cavorting on the bed, and the fourth corner was occupied by a comparatively quiet group, the on-lookers. The dirty joke corner was where Andy Nowell first came into his fannish prime. He had actually only come to the con because he had picked up his brother, V. (for Vermin) Paul Nowell (rhymes with bowel) at the bus depot, as he (Andy) lives in San Francisco.

((Editor's note: not any more, he don't. Seems that Andy had to report back for duty at the recruiting office on the morning after the masquerade ball. He was not awakened by the hotel operator at the time requested, overslept, didn't have time to get all the green dye off his face and hands, and was a few hours late reporting in. His commanding officer was fit to be tied. Andy is now ~~settling in~~ in Washington state somewhere doing penance after being transferred out of his soft berth in the bay city. I believe he said it was Moses Lake, the army equivalent of Siberia. Andy stopped by at my place on the way up and met Jim Bradley also. Jim wasn't home when we arrived, but I knew where to find him; he was holding down his favorite stool in Dave's Place.))



Being fascinated by the people he saw at the con, he decided to stay for a while. He was so fascinated he stayed for the rest of the convention, and almost stole the show at the masquerade.

Nowell is one of the first fen to become a semi-BNF in 48 hours. Saturday morning he turned up with a one-sheet one-shot called THINGZINE ("Get your THINGZINES here...can't tell one thing from another without a THINGZINE...sir, do you have a THINGZINE? You do? Too bad...THINGZINES here—I've got 500 copies to get rid of...make wonderful paper airplanes to throw at the speakers....") which he gave away in the convention hall. Regretfully it is slightly unavailable or Dave Rike and I would have had it in FAPA or SAPS. The zine was financed by Uncle Sugar as Andy is based at the local Presidio and has access to a mimeo and all the ink and paper he needs. He seems to be about 27 or 28 years old, is rather fat, and one of the funniest guys I've met.

It was at this party that I met Frank Dietz, one of the nicest guys I met at the con. He was friendly to everyone, and for some reason especially friendly to the Frisco group. If there was an award for the friendliest and nicest fellow at the con, I'd nominate Frank Dietz.

Later, Pete Vorzimer came over to me and said he'd just won two dollars in the blackjack game. About then a rumor spread that the house dick was on his way up. Terry and I left then (about midnight) for 903, where the earlier beer-and-bull-session was still going strong. The house dick (busy, busy man) soon told us to break it up. Ten minutes later he was back, and stayed until the room was cleared of but four or five fans. There was a quick interchange here between Terry and he (whom Nowell later referred to as the "souse dick") when Carr said, "I'll write my senator" to which the house dick said, "Yeah, go write McCarthy." "No, thanks!" said Terry. I'm quoting this because it wasn't til hours later that I was informed that the house dick had not said, "Yeah, go rape McCarthy." as I believed. At the time the house dick had seemed like quite a nice guy.

Just before the party broke up at one-thirty, Pete Vorzimer called and asked for one of the four registered in our room to spend the night with him. "This is a twist," I said. "Usually you call the bellboy for things like this, although even this is stretching a point." However, he convinced us that he actually was lonely, so we said one of us would be up later.

By this time, after mixtures of beer, gin, and mixer, neither Boob nor Terry were feeling too good, although Boob didn't show it. It was decided that Boob and Mac would stay in 903 for the night, while Terry would stay in Frank Dietz' room as per invitation and I would go to Vorzy's. Terry, Dave, Rike, Frank, and I went down to Frank's room, 526, where we all chatted for a while about the Bok originals Dietz was trying to sell for Hannes (at \$75 for the color jobs, \$35 for the black and whites), and about Hannes himself. Terry unobtrusively fell out of the conversation since he wasn't feeling too good, and after a while I got Vorzy on



Terry unobtrusively fell out of the conversation.

the phone after calling his room for an hour. Where he'd been I still don't know, but I made arrangements to go up to his room. Five minutes later (2:45 AM) I was there and found him reading VULCAN, a real fine mag. I tried reading VARIOSO in bed but my heart wasn't in it. We went to sleep about three in the morning.

Thus ended Thursday.

We were wakened at ten minutes to eight the next morning by Dick Finney, an L.A. fan and friend of Vorzimer. A few minutes after telephoning he came up to the room and began talking to Vorz. I left and went up to 903 where Mac had just opened his eyes and Boob was still half-asleep. We tried to get Boob up for half an hour, and after trying everything short of pin-sticking, he rose. Leaving Boob to get dressed Mac and I went down to the Monterey Room on the second floor where registration was to start at 9 AM. It being a few minutes before nine, the room hadn't been opened yet, so we went back to 903 and called Terry at Dietz' room. He said he'd be up and around in a few minutes, so I went back down to the Monterey Room and registered.

They had an assembly line going at the registration table. As you walked in the

door somebody would give you a card to fill out (name, address, and whether you were a fan or pro), then you went to the right hand end of the table if you'd sent in your dollar previous to the convention, and to the left if you hadn't; from there you proceeded toward the middle where someone was huckstering the Special Event cards, tickets to the banquet, and tickets to the Opera, all for \$5. Taking advantage of this tremendous bargain, I received four slips of cardboard, an N3F bellyhoo sheet ((couldn't resist that typo—REG)), a program booklet, a card that was good for a free cup of coffee anytime during the SFCon at Mannings restaurants, the Second Bob Tucker questionnaire and fan poll, and a list of local restaurants recommended by the Con Committee.

I met John Magnus again, who asked for his recorder which he'd left in my room the night before. We went up to get it and it suddenly occurred to me that since his recorder's take-up reel wasn't working, and that it was only with great difficulty that Jawn could use his recorder at all, and whereas I wasn't going to be using my recorder since Magnus would be duplicating my purpose, Magnus should use my recorder. He agreed, so we brought my taper down to the Monterey Room. John set up the recorder in a convenient corner and began looking for people to interview.

I left him and wandered over to where Terry, Boob, and Mac had come in. They had started looking over a pile of manuscripts and artwork at a sort of "bargain table" where art and manuscripts were sold for 10¢ to 25¢. I picked up "Surface Tension" by James Blish for a quarter, and Terry picked up two or three others for a dime or so. After deciding there were few manuscripts I'd want that were not already planned for the auction block, I told Terry I was going to eat breakfast. He and Mac decided to come along, so we went across Sutter Street to a little joint which sold something called a "Ham and Egg Stack", which featured two large pancakes with a slice of ham between and a fried egg on top of it all for 60¢. Terry and I ordered this while Mac ordered a concoction of sausages rolled up in pancakes. We each politely retched over the other's choice, and began to eat. After a few moments of this Terry began feeling ill again (evidently the mixture of beer and gin hadn't yet gotten out of his system) so he cut out. I ended up eating and paying for his breakfast; I didn't mind, since the more I ate then (and I shovelled it all in) the less I would have to eat later, ergo, the less I would have to spend later...and since it was a cheap breakfast, I couldn't lose.

I got back to the Con display hall about 10:30 and browsed around the tables meeting people. One of the more outstanding personalities I met then was Malcolm Willits. Mal I had expected to be a much older person from what I had seen of DESTINY but he turned out to be about 23-4. I strangely got to know him rather well in a very short time; we hit it off right from the start. Mal is a person I was very sorry to see leave. Medium height, quite intelligent and rather slim, he's very good-looking. I envy Portland fandom. ((HA!!))



"Didja shay it wash Tueshday?"

"Pardon me, but your coat-tail is in the booze." —Graham

I met local fan Bill Reynolds, whom I hadn't met for 8 or 9 months. He lives about 15 miles further north out of town than I do and therefore can't easily make it in to meetings of the Golden Gate Futurian Society. I knew all of the local group would be glad to see him and tried to drag him up to 903 but he wanted to stay in the Monterey Room for a few more minutes. I talked to Magnus then, who was going great guns with his interviews, already having a half-hour of them. We chatted about what he was going to do with the interviews but since most of it was tentative, telling about specifics would be misleading. One interesting was this: if more than 25 advance orders for any one particular record were received, pressed by Columbia Records it would be.



I worked on Reynolds again and finally got him up to 903. Just as I was about to put my key in the lock, the door opened and Terry, Boob, and Dave Rike started to walk out. They saw Bill then and we all went into the room for a few minutes of "Howza boy where've ya been how long'll ya be here" etc. This I soon tired of and went back down to the display room. I wandered around after seeing how Magnus was doing (he was trying the under-the-jacket method of hiding the mike, which didn't seem to work too well). I looked over the nearby Garden Library display of foreign and domestic books and magazines, and bought a few NEW WORLDS and SCIENCE FANTASY's to fill in my collection.

Over where Magnus had the recorder a large crowd had gathered. It turned out to be Ellison doing an interview with Anthony Boucher. I came up just at the end of it and heard Ellison sign off, making sure he mentioned his name as the interviewer. Then someone rushed up with what seemed the youngest kid at the con. Ellison (I can't blame him) couldn't resist interviewing him, too. There were several double-takes and twists in that interview; the boy was 12, named John something McCain (I asked him later if he was any relation to Vernon L. McCain. He said no, but he'd heard so much about him he was wondering), and GALAXY was his favorite magazine. At this point everybody sort of looked at each other. Ellison went on rather quickly, "What do you think of John W. Campbell Jr., and of ASTOUNDING's editorial policy?" "Oh, I like them both." replied McCain.

Around that time Les Cole began shooing everybody out of the hall so that preparations for the Westercon proceedings to start half an hour later at one o'clock. Ellison did a quick sign-off and McCain walked off with someone. Ellison stared after him with an amazed expression on his face..."Twelve years old...and GALAXY his favorite promag!"

J. Ben Stark started out within a few minutes of the scheduled time with a joke which had absolutely nothing to do with science fiction, then went on to welcome us all to San Francisco in his capacity of Westercon Chairman and mentioned a few of the attractions in the fair city—one of them being the name of Stanislaus Bem in the phone book. "What other city," he asked, "Can offer you a real, live, Stanislaus Bem?" We had to admit that this was rather spectacular.

Anthony Boucher was then introduced and started speaking on the "Significance of the West Coast in Science Fiction." After mentioning the large numbers of fans, editors, and authors on the Coast, with a passing reference to Hollywood as the home of movie stf, he continued on to the troubles of organizing the Science-Fantasy Writers of America. Seems that for three years at all the Westerncons and national conventions they'd been announcing the organization would be in full swing the following year. The first year the proposed leadership was given to

the East, and nothing was ever heard about it again. The next year it was given to the West, and the East Coast writers started hollering that they were being cut out of their rights, etc. So the next year they gave it to the East again, and again it was never heard from again. I'm not just sure how it stands now, but Tony Boucher extended an invitation on behalf of the Mystery Writers of America for stf writers to join that organization, on these grounds—any stf writer who had written a story that was essentially of detection or suspense, no matter what the time or place or characters, is eligible for membership.



A. Boucher
by J. Bradley

He then expressed doubt over whether this was actually a world convention or not. Somebody in the audience yelled that there was a fan from British Columbia, Canada, here. So Boucher said, "Good, good—now we have a World convention."

Stark then introduced Poul Anderson, a tall, thin sort of person with curly hair. He started out with a bit of humorous patter, then moved into the topic of alien races, their physiology, their mentality. He touched scathingly on the persons who write stories with "...alien mentalities we are able to understand." The fact that his child of but six weeks started crying out in the audience didn't seem to help him much, and understandably, made him a bit nervous.

I then went up to 903 with Art Rapp and Irene Baron, two real fine people. Irene seems just a normal person turned fan, but there is something indefinable present that makes her entirely different. She's rather young, has the brightest red hair I've ever seen, is eminently eligible—and got that point across rather well by actions, and has a really charming personality. Art Rapp is another of the nicest people I've met; a completely wonderful sense of humor, never gets mad at anyone, a person who, to my knowledge, didn't make a snide remark about anyone at the entire con. He's of medium height, rather thin, and has dark hair. He wore his Army uniform throughout the convention, changed only once to his civilian clothes, and looked good in both outfits. Contrarily, the more he drinks the funnier he gets (up to a point, but that point is only when he's completely potted). I've got a full quarter-page of closely written interlineations that were taken down in but an hour's time.

I showed them a piece of artwork Terry and Mac had done for the Golden Gate Futurian Society display table, and when they'd finished making appreciative noises over it and I'd gathered some flashbulbs, we went back to the Con Hall.

We returned about one-third through the panel, "Stf Versus Hollywood," which featured Dick Friendlich, a local movie columnist who seemed to be intelligent about science fiction although he was obviously out of his field and realized it. It was felt that stf films have passed the adolescent stage, although not obviously so because, as Forry Ackerman said, "The science fiction films can make money, but the good ones often don't." It was agreed that good stf films could be made if Hollywood had the sense to make them.

During a half-hour intermission of 50 minutes I just held my seat at the tape-recording table, which was handily near the speaker's rostrum, and talked with Frank Dietz, John Magnus, and Wally Weber, a SAPS member from Seattle. Wally went around with a perpetual smile on his face and had a personality to match. Not too tall, about 5' 10", he was extremely thin. Usually dressed conservatively, when I met him he wore on of the wildest Hawaiian shirts I've ever seen. He also sported a movie camera mounted between two floodlights which he flashed in some speaker's eyes for about 20 or 30 seconds. Amazingly, it didn't seem to affect them much.

"But on you, Irene, looking you straight up and down is no good." --Young

"The Plight of the Stf Authors", a dry talk by Dave Dryfoos, gradually asked why-is-the-READER'S-DIGEST-more-popular-than-ASF?, giving the answer, "There's more reader familiarity in RD, more well-known and solid names, etc." Dryfoos went on to say that radical changes were needed; stf must again pioneer, as when stf-mags first started. He never made clear what they'd pioneered in the first place, or what they were to pioneer now. During the question period Evelyn Gold expertly tore into part of Dryfoos' speech, and George Young asked questions about a comparison of ASF and RD, opposing on the grounds that RD was appealing to a different type of audience. Dryfoos then began answering questions with "That is correct." Someone else stated that a function of science fiction is to educate, and that it is failing. Dryfoos merely nodded. Bob Bloch got up and mentioned that the average person today isn't interested in news about atomic energy, but only in baseball scores.

Miriam Allen deFord was introduced and spoke well and informatively (and an hour) on Charles Fort, who wrote BOOK OF THE DAMNED, NEW LANDS, LO!, WILD TALENTS, and THE OUTCAST MANUFACTURERS. This last you might suppose to be about a manufacturer of outcasts, but such is not the case; it is a serious work of fiction evidently written just to make money. Fort was introverted and anti-social besides having a slight inferiority complex. He married in 1894, but Mrs. deFord never mentioned his wife again. Fort had for his books almost a million notes, clippings, reports etc. which he carefully checked, discarding any of which he had the slightest doubt. The first half-hour of this talk was damned interesting, but the next quarter-hour palled on me, and the last fifteen minutes were sheer torture. It seems that by correspondence deFord was a very close friend of Fort, but actually never met the man.

When she finished I shook Magnus awake and we went up to his room for a moment or two. I then left for dinner with John Davis. I phoned back to 318 from the lobby, and when somebody answered, said I was Harlan Ellison and wanted to talk to Magnus. "Hey, Johnnie," the other said, "Ghod wants to talk to you." Magnus didn't believe me, so I asked if he wanted to eat with Davis, Al Ficzeri, myself, and I think Dave Rike was with us then. He accepted, and we had an inexpensive dinner in a semi-cafeteria half a block away.

That evening bidding began for the '55 Westercon site. The first bid was put in by Hollywood and was followed by a young lady who made a bid for, of all places, Catalina Island. This woman was Virginia (Gin for short) faime, young-woman-about-Con. Then some one from Seattle made a ridiculous bid on behalf of The Nameless Ones ("If we get it it'll be the worst Con ever held.!). This preceded a bid for Los Angeles by Don Donnell.

Immediately the person from Hollywood got up and said, "Since we would only be fighting against ourselves..." they would throw their vote to Los Angeles. The Catalina Island girl withdrew her bid after several protests from the audience, and the vote was taken. I voted for Portland, but Los Angeles won by a landslide, so it looks like I'll be going to the next Westercon too.

"When I hear the word Venus, I don't think about the stars and the planets. I think about other things." --Mike Roscoe.



After all commented on what a complete nothing that had been, the panel "Science Fiction and the Detective Novel" began with Nancy Barr Mavity as moderator and pan-

el members EESmith, Lenore Offord, Mike Roscoe, and Miriam Allen deFord. This soon deteriorated into a symposium on writing detective novels which was in itself good, though hardly topical. EESmith interestingly commented that he writes about people that he'd like to be. Talk then centered on the sex angle and it was generally agreed that love interest shouldn't be dragged into either a stf or detective story unless it was an integral part of the plot. Here Mike Roscoe, a detective who also writes, mentioned that "It doesn't matter what I read, there's gotta be a gal along the line." I think Mrs. Offord said she didn't like a purposeless sex affair cluttering up a story. "Nice cluttering," commented Roscoe. Mike struck me as being very nice, polite, but blunt and dumb. This was corroborated by Es Cole who was seated beside me for a few minutes. After Roscoe commented, "Stf stories bore me, but I see all the science fiction movies," she said, "He probably moves his lips when he reads, too." I agree, but he wasn't afraid to tell his opinion of stf in front of a pro-stf audience, or to be very blunt about his personal likes and dislikes.

After this much-fun panel we saw a pair of movies, the first utter crud, and the second utter excellence. The opening pic was called "Atomic Attack", had been on TV, and was shown to us complete with Motorola singing commercial. The plot wasn't at all bad, being the story of a suburban woman whose husband was killed in New York by an H-bomb blast, but the characterization--the acting--was miserable. Several neighbors whose homes have been destroyed or who can't live alone for some reason come to live in the house of the protagonist; a school teacher who thinks he is being pursued by the government for his subversive activities (he refused to work on the A-bomb when he found he was helping create a destructive instrument), a hysterical woman no one believes when she says she is dying of radiation poisoning (later it turns out she is), and a woman who is so struck by the death of her husband that all she can do all day is lay in bed and moan of her loss. Near the end of the picture this woman is given a rough talking-to by the heroine, and all of a sudden she pops out of bed and says cheerfully, "Why, I'm so sorry I acted the way I did. I've gotten over it now, and I'll do all I can to help." and all but runs around the block to show how peppy she is. The picture was a marvelous study of what the modern miracle of television has done to itself.

"...the man in the gutter..." ---Bloch.

Going from the ridiculous to the sublime, the second picture was a wonderful adaptation of "Born of Man and Woman" by Richard Matheson. I believe the picture followed the story exactly, except as to dialogue, as no words were spoken except by the Thing. There were some excellent scenes in the picture: the Thing's hand reaching up to pull out the chain; the dank and eerie basement in which it lived; the drippings of the Thing; vague, shapless shadows being cast upon the basement walls. The sound was obviously done on a tape recorder after the film had been shot and then dubbed onto the sound track—once in awhile the sound lagged behind the appropriate action, but usually it wasn't too bad. The showing was a world premiere in the fullest sense of the word, as no one, absolutely no one, had seen the final print. It had been rushed directly from the developers to the convention. This ended the official proceedings.



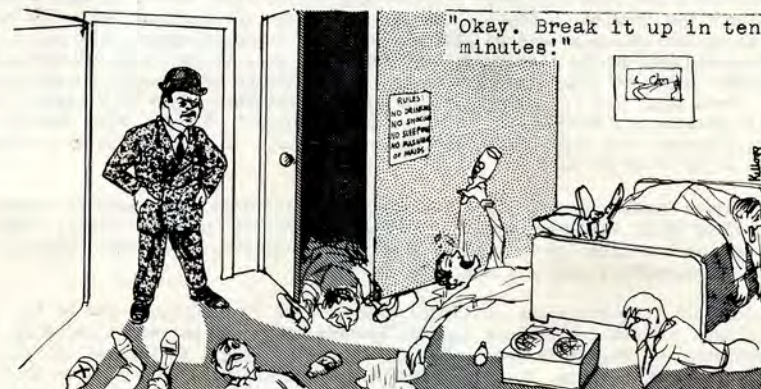
Somebody announced a party in Ron Ellik's room, 1018. This was true except for a minor detail—Ellik's room wasn't 1018. This I discovered through the involved process of kicking that door and then phoning the room and getting a non-fan on the line who didn't know what I was talking about and cared less. He was quite nice about it, though, and seemed used to that sort of thing. I went back down

to 318 to tell anybody there about it and ask where Ellik's room actually was. I found it was 1026, so we all went out to the elevators. There were about ten people there, so I decided to make the grandstand play I'd thought of only minutes before. After waiting a few minutes for the elevator, I picked up the phone and (holding down the button) said,

"Hello? Room service? Could you send an elevator to the third floor?"

It got a laugh, anyhow.

When we reached 1026 there actually was a party there, and it actually was Ellik's room. After fifteen minutes we were interrupted by the house dick who asked us to have it broken up in ten minutes, or some such preposterous thing. He seemed to want a tip for coming up, for fifteen minutes later he was back again saying the same thing a little more insistently. He didn't quite understand us and moved us all out into the corridor. Most moved right back into 1026 when the dick was gone, but I moved up to 1707 with someone who knew of a party there. I was told this was Kris Neville's room (Neville had also been a beernefactor at the '53 Westcon) but someone told me Tuesday it was the convention suite. It was a large room with lots of chairs and couches and about 23 people. This as opposed to Ellik's smaller room with the same number in it. In both rooms 3/4ths of the fans were drunk.



I got to 1707 about 12:35, and for a few moments just sat and looked around to see who was there. Boob Stewart had come up with me, but he became bored after fifteen minutes as it was an extremely quiet party and only served liquor; Boob was wary of the hard stuff after his previous night's experience. He left and I was about the youngest fan there, next youngest being Ellison, I guess.

Then Vorzimer walked in and we got involved in a discussion with Harlan Ellison about clothes. I casually asked Ellison how he got his money for DIMENSIONS, his good clothes, his trip out here, etc. He said that, for instance, he used good judgement in buying clothes and washed his own socks and other little things. Vorzimer then mentioned that he washed all of his clothes himself except his fancier stuff, which he had cleaned, but he ironed everything himself. Ellison mentioned that what he had on at the moment cost \$35. The door burst open and Art Rapp, Irene Baron, Dave Rike, Roger Sims, John Magnus, and one or two others walked in. Magnus left a bit later. This was at 1:05 AM, and when I counted again I totaled up 34 people occupying the floor space, and over half of that was taken up by tables, chairs, couches and lamps.

I looked in on a few of the two or three groups talking together, shot a pic of Ellison hanging Sims by his necktie, another pic of Art Rapp, Rike, and Irene Baron, the latter wearing a two-prop beanie. This picture shows Evelyn Gold going out the door, so I guess she was there too, although I don't remember her.

At 1:10 the younger Hollywood fans descended upon the group en-masse, along with Terry Carr and Boob again. Terry wanted to corner Ellison and talk over 7th Fan-

dom with him, but the topic got off onto the Jim Harmon Incident at Bellefontaine. Ellison gave a complete account of what happened, according to him, and it was very amusing. Ellison mentioned that Harmon is insecure, is always trying to make a good impression, etc. Ellison said, preceeding his recounting of the Incident, that Harmon was and is a good friend of his.



HARLAN ELLISON

Here was the first time I noticed for myself a little eccentricity of Harlan's which Terry had previously pointed out to me; the use of telegraph talk, the name given it by Carr which seemed to stick. Method of using telegraph talk is to omit pronouns the, you, I, most possessive pronouns, etc. at beginnig and middle of sentences. Examples would be: "Got to go to room 318 for a moment." "Could do it, yes." "Must have that for my collection!" (this last used often by Ellison) "Got to write article for PSYCHOTIC." "Cannot do it, sorry." System, when used by Harlan, is combined with appropriate wavings and gestures of pipe, which is carried holster style stuck in belt.

Both of these techniques and the oft-used phrase mentioned above were frequently satirized by Carr, Vorzimer, myself, and finally even Ellison. Naturally, only people who smoked pipes could utilize the latter maneuver, but a fork, pencil, or in case of necessity, even a finger will do.

At 1:40 Magnus knocked at the auxiliary door we were standing near, and he was let in. Ellison noticed a glum look on his face and asked why he wasn't enjoying all the festivities. Magnus relid that, "After awhile I begin to take it all rather objectively—you have to, to keep going past a certain point." "I know that," said Ellison. "Practice it myself as much as I can. I haven't had any sleep for (96?) hours, and all that's holding me up is No DoZ. Have to be objective."

"Well," said Magnus, "I've had to know this for quite some time, so I think I'm somewhat more objective than you are."

"I don't believe so." (They were both serious, not trying to be funny at all.) "I've been taught how to be objective by a real master at it, Dave Ish. D'you know that kid can become really objective? I don't mean objective, but objective!" Terry and I were busting a gut laughing behind their backs.

Ellison tired of this and gathered a group that included Magnus, Sims, Baron, Rapp, Betty Jo McCarthy, Terry, and I. We then went to a nearby restaurant for something to eat. Unfortunately, the booths only seated six and Terry and I were last in line. Giving them a sour-grapes attitude, we walked back across the street towards the hotel. We then noticed a large number of playing cards scattered up and down the street from the hotel entrance. Immediately we began looking for a ten of clubs to give to Bob Bloch, but to no avail. There must have been 150 of those damned cards on the street, we checked them all; we found four 8's of spades, four kings of hearts, six—count 'em—six nines of clubs, but not one ten of clubs! We concluded someone like Bloch must have thrown them out of an upstairs window just to frustrate fans like us. We stalked indignantly into the lobby hoping to find him and demand an explanation. The only person we found was Forry Ackerman, who, when we questioned him about it, put on the most innocent expression I have ever seen and said he knew nothing about it. This, of course, only heightened our

suspicions that it was a Big-Dirty-Pro-Plot. We found out a day later that the cards were from several pinochle desks Andy Nowell had thrown out the preceeding afternoon.

Several things happened hard and fast as we waited for an elevator. But first a word of explanation is in order by way of an introduction.

A bit earlier that evening when the group from 318 was walking along the hall toward Ellik's 1026, Pete Vorzimer heard a woman say to a man who was walking with her a few stens ahead of Vorzy, "I'll fill my handbag and you get three..." This aroused Pete's curiosity, but he thought no more about it until a few moments later when he noticed that when the house dick showed up to quiet down the party the couple got out of there as fast as they could, even squeezing around the h.d. himself in their rush. Vorzimer then announced that everybody should check their wallets and purses as two professional pickpockets had just been in the room. I personally didn't take him too seriously until a bit later when Terry and I, after going to our room for some flashbulbs on our way to 1707, were walking along the hall toward the elevator when we heard an interlineation. Turning the corner we found a man and a woman waiting for the elevator. They both acted quite potted...

"This is a very great second-rate hotel." ---pickpockets. and seemed to have a disdain for science fiction. The woman, a bleached blonde close to 40, sidled up to Terry and asked for a puff on his cigarette. Terry diplomatically declined and at last the elevator arrived. The couple, once we were on, waited for us to give our floor. Terry and I looked at each other, and he said, "Eighteen, please." There we went one way along the hall and they went the other. When they reached a corner we quickly doubled back and descended the stairs to the party in 1707. I didn't realize it myself, but Terry told me it came to him suddenly that they both fitted Vorzy's description and were probably the pickpockets. The plot thickens. End of flashback.



As we were waiting for the elevator in the lobby, one stopped and digorged Dave Kyle, Hans Rusch, Bob Bloch, and a few others. Kyle immediately asked us where we were going, and we said back to our room. As per usual I had to know why he asked. It turned out that the hotel was getting worried about the number of juveniles that were drinking hard liquor on the premises...although they had no qualms about selling it to them via room service...and about the noise the con was making at night. So worried, it seemed, that the hotel had been on the verge of kicking the Convention out completely until Dave Kyle had done some fast talking. Kyle had then organized a semi-vigilante fan committee to try and keep order and to prevent the younger element from showing obviously that they had been drinking.

"The worst case of this type," he said, "is the kid that will wander from party to party, from floor to floor, and elevator to elevator with a full glass of liquor in his hand, usually unmixed and without ice." He also mentioned a rumor of a 12 year old girl who had been running around the night before with a bottle...and I don't mean Pepsi-Cola. We promised to do our best to prevent that sort of thing.

Harlan Ellison and his group came back from the restaurant. He'd heard about the pickpockets and evidently mentioned them to the house officer. As he was waiting for an elevator then, who should come out of one but the man and woman who were suspected! Ellison immediately began lid-flipping and cautiously called them to the attention of the house dick who was nearby. After talking with him, Ellison walked over and surreptitiously walked up and down in front of the elevator a few times (the couple were just going back up again), meanwhile muttering, "That's them. Yes, that's them, I'm sure that's them. Yop, that's them." and so on. Then he walked over to the detective again and said, "Well, there they are. Aren't you going to arrest them?"



"Don't tell me what to do!" exploded the house officer, but a few minutes later he went up in an elevator with a few non-fans.

Terry and I talked with Kyle about how bad the hotel was for a few moments, and the elevator came back down. The house dick and the pickpockets all got out and walked over to the desk where the Assistant Manager began talking to them.

It was much better when it happened, what with Ellison melodramatically playing the part of the Innocent Bystander Performing His Civic Duty, and all of that. A few minutes later some cops arrived on the scene, and the house dick began asking for "...that little short guy in the white shirt." Ellison, meanwhile, had started talking to somebody very secretly and had gone up the service elevator. The pickpockets were seen walking out of the hotel a minute or so after that, and were never seen again.

Terry and I finally managed to make room 903 and told Boob Stewart, Frank McElroy, the Nowells, Wégars, Magnus and Ellik what had happened. We tried to keep the noise down, but evidently there was a complaint from the adjoining room, for our good pal the house dick came up. This time he stayed until I had cleared everyone but the Nowells, McElroy, Boob and Terry.

We carried on a discussion for an hour about the lousy hotel. Andy Nowell was all for confronting the hotel with the fact that it had sold liquor to minors and could lose its liquor license (a very valuable thing), but this was generally vetoed. His plan was hashed and rehashed until we decided on a little sleep. All but the four who were to sleep in 903 left for the night. Terry, Boob, Mac and I all crawled into the double bed. After a few minutes Boob changed to the outside as he couldn't stand having his face near exposed armpits...or so he said. There were humorous comments for 30 minutes or so in which Ellison got cut to hell, then we all dropped off to sleep.

Thus ended Friday.

--TO BE CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE--

The Observation Ward



"I have finished reading the January issue of GALAXY and would like to comment on it."

"Ah....the great genius doth prepare to speak."

"Shaddup and listen!"

"So I'm listening already."

"I have to admire the inventiveness of Emsh; on the cover he shows a woman of the future being attended by a mechanical dressing table that looks more dangerous than dutiful. But whatever his intention, the little details of futuristic design he paints in are intriguing. I was fascinated by the leg of the table behind her; he extrapolated very strong plastics and came up with a table leg that looks very much like a drop of thick syrup as it falls to the floor. I also had to admire the woman's slippers; probably made of super tough plastic, they provide high heel support without the thin supporting spike one would expect. But I wonder a little at the many sharp and lethal-looking arms on that hair-dressing gadget; looks like one false move and the lady's neck would know the touch of that dagger poised at her medulla."

"Duh...what's a medulla?"

"In 'The Tunnel Under The World', Frederik Pohl threw together some of the most tried and true plot elements and came up with a damned good story."

"Yeah, but there were great gaping holes in it. It may have been entertaining, but it didn't hang together worth a damn."

"Shall we examine the story more closely?"

"By all means leave us peer."

"The reader naturally identifies with the hero, Burkhardt, who is presented as a living, breathing man. The reader then discovers, to his horror, that the hero has been living one day, June 15th, over and over again; it is

a tremendous advertising experiment in which he is but a pawn."

"The story unleashes surprise after surprise, shock after shock."

"Yes. And then comes the revelation that the people operating the experiment on the scene are but robots. Then in quick succession the reader is slugged with the information that the hero himself is a robot, that the entire city is peopled by robots with human minds—transplanted en-masse after the town was wiped out by a factory explosion—and that each night crews of other robots come into the city and drain the day's memories from the inhabitants so that a fresh experiment in advertising may start the next morning. By chance the hero is "missed" by the memory drainers one night and becomes aware of the true situation. Naturally the hero revolts against this and refuses to return to a state of unknowing forgetfulness, living the same day over and over; he refuses to give up his individuality, his precious self-determination."

"Here Pohl effectively smashes the reader over the head. The hero discovers that, logically, not only is the town and its people robotized, it is built on a table-top. He escapes to the outside of the city and finds himself looking upward into blinding light at a tremendous huge shape—a normal-sized human being, the Experimentor. The hero is a robot at best an inch high! The story ends showing the hero re-integrated. He has no memory of his revolt, no memory of the true situation. He awakens on June 15th as a sound truck on the corner blares out the beginning of another experiment, this time having to do with politics."

"My major quibble with Pohl is that the scientific advances necessary to install human minds in inch-high robots

which are made so realistically that a mind once installed cannot detect it, does not fit at all with the town and its diesel busses, sound trucks, and mention of "...the past thirty years of H-bomb jitters..." This places the time at 1984-5."

"Right you are. And the villain in the story, the Experimentor, plainly said the town was contemporary. It had to be if he wanted valid results from his experiments."

"The idea of a chemical plant blow-up killing everyone in town is pretty incredible, but even more so is the secret way in which the Experimentor's men got into the town and drained the brain-patterns of all the people."

"Hell, an explosion of that magnitude would be a major catastrophe; the Red Cross would be there, the National Guard would be there, and above all the radio and TV men would be there."

"The more you think about the story and subject it to critical examination the more it falls apart."

"The story was an entertaining but incredible tour-de-force. Plainly the science was jury-rigged to fit the plot."

"Plainly Mr. Pohl did a sloppy job when he went about willy-nilly pounding square scientific pegs into round steel-sheathed plot holes."

"Is it my imagination or do I detect a definite policy in this January GALAXY?"

"Oh, you mean that editor Gold believes his magazine's purpose is to entertain, period."

"I guess so. Certainly his use of large gobs of "humor" in each issue would seem to indicate something along that line."

"You wanna talk about the Jan. ish of ASTOUNDING?"

"Surely. I read it last week and I...my Ghod, I can't remember a single story in it. I really can't. Let's see now...I think there was a story by Miller, but I can't recall what it was about."

"Hellish, isn't it? It isn't your memory that is failing, kiddo, rather it is the policy of Mr. Campbell. He WILL insist on filling each issue with "message" stories. This man is out to save mankind if it kills him. He is, in contrast to Gold, not primarily interested in stories that entertain.... they must have the old "message". In fact, many of the items he puts into ASF are nothing BUT message; no story to them at all."

"Aren't you being a bit hard on him?"

"Possibly, but he prints so many forgettable stories. Seems like ever since he went on that Dianetics kick he's been using ASF as a vehicle for ideas on how to save the world from doom and destruction...as well as showing what that doom and destruction is likely to be. Mere entertainment is obviously secondary; gone are the days when Campbell was interested in presenting the best stories to be had.... we are now assaulted with such things as "Field Expediant", "Armistice", and "Without Portfolio" all in one issue."

"Even the lead novel, "The Darfsteller", was lousy with message."

"Yeah. All of the issue except one short story was nothing but this "Man must learn to live together" line that (with variations) has been the pet theme of Campbell for years and years now."

"I personally agree with him a 100%, as I suspect do all his readers. Does he have to keep bashing us over the head with it all the time?"

"I dunno. I'm rather glad he did not succeed in reviving UNKNOWN. He probably would have insisted on putting the "message" into that too."

"You remember "On The Care And Feeding Of Pigs" by Rex Jatko in the December issue?"

"Sure do. Remember thinking, among other things, that Rex Jatko was a pretty obvious pen name for someone."

"What got me was the way the story was rigged so that it wouldn't offend anyone. It seemed obvious to me that in order to appear in ASTOUNDING (for that matter, in ANY science-fiction magazine) the story had to have a reluctant hero; the young man could not act like any other youngster on a newly settled, brawling planet. He had to be the son of a very religious man, and he had to have archaic moral ideas (even for now) about sex and such. And, of course, the idea that he was to have more than one wife is excused, explained, justified, and generally shown to be necessary time and time again."

"Yep, ol' fearless Campbell really went out on a limb...it was ten inches off the ground and he was equipped with a tenfoot ladder and a parachute in case the two foot thick limb should break under his weight."

"You exaggerate."

"Anyway, you get what I mean."

"Leave us say he hedged his bets."

"Hmmmph."

"I have to laugh, now, at the way he seemed so sure the story would rouse hot words in all quarters. Everyone I know wasn't inspired to incandescent

debate; everyone felt the plural-wives perfectly alright in the light of racial survival."

"That story didn't break any taboos in science fiction, it instead confirmed them. It is now firmly established that sex in science fiction is permissible if there is no enjoyment thereof; the heroes must be dragged in to intercourse with toothsome wenches! Talk about pussyfooting around...."

"Of course the story is logical and fairly realistic (anyway, as realistic as science fiction is allowed to be) within its framework of postulates, but it still all too obviously showed the rigid taboos which formed its skeleton."

"I'd say it shows the marks of the

mold into which it was forced."

"Say it again, brother! It sure was odd that the planet just "happened" to have an estate that was perfect for its eventual use, and just "happened" to be guided by a high-minded, pure-and-ethical-type, well-educated, noble-type, 100%-altruistic-type, paragon-type man. The story is one long series of "just happened" which try my credulity to the breaking point."

"Yup. As you said: 'the story was rigged.'"

"I wonder if Campbell ever thought of having the young hero something other than pure white Protestant? A powerful story could have been written if he were colored."

"Tak. Even old dare-devil Mines at Standard wouldn't have dared that!"

-----Richard E. Geis

Recommended Fanzines

BEM...Mal Ashworth, 40 Makin Street, Tong Street, Bradford 4, England. Quarterly; send a current U.S. science fiction magazine and you'll get a copy of BEM.

COUP...the coup group, 14 Jones Street, New York, N.Y. Bi-monthly; \$1.50 per yr. This one is chock full of raw bloody meat. Content, man, content!

DESTINY...Earl Kemp, 3744 N. Lark Street, Chicago 13, Illinois. Quarterly; 25¢.

DIMENSIONS...Harlan Ellison, 55 East 13th Avenue, Columbus 1, Ohio. Quarterly; 20¢.

FANTASTIC WORLDS...Sam Sackett, Hays, Kansas. Quarterly; 35¢

GRUE...Dean A. Grennell, 402 Maple Avenue, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. Quarterly; Pay when you receive the magazine; the price varies with its size.

HYPHEN...Walt Willis, 170 Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast, N. Ireland. Bi-monthly; 2/25¢.

INSIDE & SF-Advertiser...Ron Smith, 111 S. Howard, Tampa 6, Florida. Quarterly; 25¢.

LYRIC...Jim Bradley, 545 N.E. San Rafael, Portland 12, Oregon. Bi-monthly; 20¢.

OOPSLA...Gregg Calkins, 2817 11th Street, Santa Monica, California. Irregular; 15¢.

PEON...Charles Riddle, 108 Dunham Street, Norwich, Conn. Irregular; 10¢.

SKYHOOK...Redd Boggs, 2215 Benjamin Street, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Quarterly; 15¢.

VARIOSQ...John Magnus, Jr., 9312 Second Avenue, Silver Springs, Maryland. Irregular; 10¢.

WAD...Curtis D. Janke, 1612 S. 7th Street, Sheboygan, Wisconsin. 10¢.

A one-shot, perhaps the best I've ever seen. Get one while they last.

The Psycho

UTOPIA 14 by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.; BANTAM BOOKS, 25 West 45th Street, New York 36, N.Y.; paperbound, 35¢

This dystopia of the near future was published first in hard covers under the title *PLAYER PIANO*. Although the theme is science fiction, the literary structure is that of the main-stream serious novel. (The routine science fiction novel has become so stylized in structure and characterization that many critics refuse to consider such works as *BRAVE NEW WORLD* or *1984* as science fiction in spite of their themes.)

The story begins before the book opens: America, faced by superior Russian and Chinese manpower in World War III, turned to robotization and self-operating machines. After having clobbered the Comies and set up a world empire, the conquering heroes return to find the country run by engineers and bureaucrats...and no jobs. If past history were any guide there would have been a mutiny in the armed services which would have shaken America to her foundations. But somehow the masses in Dystopias are always more gullible than in real life; there was only local rioting, sabotage, etc., easily put down. The mass of adult males grew content either to serve in armed services or in the Reclamation & Recreation corps. Only a few were discontented.

One of these was Dr. Paul Proteus. His discontent may have been due to a social conscience, but more likely because his wife, Anita, was an ambitious woman who had tricked him into marriage. Paul was a chief engineer at Illium, New York, with excellent chances for promotion. The trouble starts with a visit from Ed Finnerty, one of Paul's classmates, a brilliant inventor, but regarded as eccentric. Ed had disgustingly resigned an important position in Washington. Anita thought him a commie tramp after he and Paul spent the evening at a cheap tavern and meet people on relief.

Bud Calhoun, one of Paul's assistants, loses his job because he invented a machine that does it better. Then Paul is given the long coveted opportunity, but only if he will frame Ed Finnerty and others in a bogus communist plot. He refuses and is forced to resign because of "disloyalty to progress."

Paul is gradually sucked into the underground which has been built around the fraternal orders by Ed Finnerty and other leaders. The underground tries to seize power, but only succeeds in a few cities of which Illium is one. The authorities, either not wishing to make martyrs or not trusting the armed services too much, starve it out by blockade. The book ends just before the surrender.

Besides the main plot, there is a series of episodes concerning a visiting Asiatic spiritual leader, the Shah of Bratpur, who wanders on and off-stage accompanied by his escort, Dr. Halyard, insisting on misunderstanding even the clearest explanations of American life. The reader gets the idea that the Shah's misunderstandings are largely due to a gift for observation and a shrewd knowledge of human values and human nature. Halyard has quite a time trying to pump official propaganda into this kindly but cynical visitor.

Is this book a true Dystopia, a future which Mr. Vonnegut thinks possible, or is it a satire aimed at certain types of right-wing propaganda?

The Shah of Bratpur, wandering on and off-stage spouting comment like a Greek chorus, is a type of character not found in any true Dystopia. Episodes like Calhoun inventing himself out of a job (a jab at mechanical progress) or Anita committing adultery because her

Noah W. McLeod

Analyst



husband lost his job (a slap at the modern woman as idealized in woman's mags) look like satire.

Plainly satirical is the tale of

the soldier who went berserk because his wife was unfaithful, and so won the Congressional Medal of Honor. The language in this novel is uninhibited at times, but only when it heightens the satire. Even the plot against Finnerty which caused Paul's downfall may be a satire on the professional ex-communist.

UTOPIA 14 is a very good book and is unreservedly recommended.

THE GREEN MILLENNIUM by Fritz Leiber; Lion Books, Inc., 655 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y.; paperbound, 35¢.

Fritz Leiber is the editor of *SCIENCE DIGEST* and might be expected to write extrapolation of the Heinlein type, but all his works I have read have been in a lighter vein strongly tinged with satire. Leiber can do extrapolation well when he has a mind to, as some of his shorter pieces prove. The carefully worked out social and political background of *GREEN MILLENNIUM* is very good extrapolation indeed, even if the plot is a zany thing verging on the impossible.

Phil Gish, a young white-collar worker, was unemployed because robots had cut down the need for office workers. His favorite pastime was peeping at young women in a neighboring wing of his hotel. One morning he awoke with an unusual feeling of well-being and found a bright green cat sitting in his room. At first he thought the cat was a strayed pet, but quickly found that both Fun Incorporated and the U.S. Government wanted it. The government thought the strange cat a Russian trick; Fun Incorporated needed a hostage to prevent a crackdown against the use of robots in low-class brothels.

Fun Incorporated got the cat by a trick. Phil, again playing Peeping Tom, saw a young woman stripping in her room when she revealed the hooves and hairy body of a satyr. Phil consulted a psychiatrist, Dr. Romadka. However, the doctor's beautiful but violent daughter quickly ended the session. A cross between a gangster's moll and Joan of Arc, she led Phil quite a chase. They are captured by Fun Incorporated but escape in the confusion of a raid by Federal law officers. Then Phil nearly lost her when she surprised the satyress, Dytie, in his room. The final explanation is that both the green cats and the satyrs come from the eighth planet of the star Vega. The green cats are marsupials with hypnotic powers which they use to spread goodwill.

The idea of marsupial cats is not too impossible. In the Sparassodont marsupials South America had a long series of cat-like and hyena-like carnivores for fifty million years. If they had hypnotic powers they certainly failed to use them on their wolf and racoon enemies who came swarming down from North America when the isthmus of Panama raised itself above sea-level. All that is left of the Sparassodonts today is their skeletons in museums.

Satyrs are more difficult. It seems nearly impossible for an animal to have hands on its fore-limbs and hooves on its hind-limbs. The hoof is essentially an adaptation for four-footed running. When an animal keeps its fore-feet free for grasping, the gait is a jumping one like a kangaroo. The ecological adaptation ascribed to the satyrs, that of hooved animals reaching up to pull branches down from trees, was tried; it produced the chalicotheres, horse-like animals

with claws on all feet. Except for apes and man, only very primitive mammals have hands: the tree shrews are primitive through and through, the lemurs and tarsiers are hardly better except for brains and eyes...all three groups existed while the dinosaurs were alive. The racoons are far older geologically than the dogs; the civets more ancient than the true cats. By the time hoofs were developed the feet had lost so many bones that evolution to a hand was impossible. I am surprised that Leiber tried the satyr gag. Intelligent elephants or racoons would be far more credible.

The off-bosom dresses and other daring garments which the women wear in THE GREEN MILLENIUM are logical developement in spite of the Federal supervision of morals depicted. In the past few years the tendency has been for American women to wear less and less and yet become more and more inaccessible to mere everyday males.

The idea of female robots serving as harlots and mistresses is old hat; it even appears in Greek mythology. Nor does Leiber make particularly clever use of it.

Fun Incorporated is a sound extrapolation of the tendency of the underworld to adopt big business methods and take over lawful amusements.

Technological unemployment among the white-collar groups is apt to become increasingly common as electronic computers, billing machines, etc. are increasingly used. The strict supervision of morals is apt to come into being as people turn more and more to religion.

THE GREEN MILLENIUM is one of the best light science novels of the year and would make a good movie.

One plot in science fiction I have never seen tried is the effect of terrestrial pests, such as mice, ants and flies on the fauna of other planets. Imagine a race of super BEMS of god-like intelligence on the verge of extinction because an ant-borne virus is invariably fatal to the intermediate larval state of the fifth sex. As John W. Campbell said in an editorial last year, certain terrestrial life-forms would pull some nasty surprise parties when turned loose on another planet. Another question arises: what effect would an alien environment have in the mutating of animals from Earth?

What science fiction needs is more plots dealing with biological problems, particularly the interacting of environment and alien life-forms.

Phil Farmer gave us a masterpiece of the biological novel in THE LOVERS. The great (?) Horace Gold rejected it because he was afraid of offending the religious prejudices of his readers. GALAXY has recently become nauseating because of the exclusive choice of plots based on para-psychology and on other border-line social sciences. Gold would have rejected such masterpieces as ODD JOHN and SIRIUS because Stapledon used real biology and sociology. Even Lysenko could probably do better as the editor of GALAXY.

That's all for now, folks.



Section Eight

"DIG THIS CRAZY LETTER COLUMN"

James Broschart, Rural Route #1, Towanda, Pennsylvania.

Dear Dick,

I am happy to see that a number of fans are developing a taste for pactsarcds. Around this area they are catching on like wildfire — especially in the summer, with the tourist trade. We've even had representatives from the big postcard companies, and once they realize the sales potential of pactsarcds, these companies are sure to regear their presses to pactsarcd production.

I am also pleased to report my progress in petitioning the government. They are even now setting up machinery to reproduce pactsarcd stamps by printing the face on the glue side, and putting the glue on the face side. (If you follow.)

In closing, I am going to drop a hint to you pactsarcd users. Be on the lookout for the latest development: pactsorcds. You know — just like pactsarcds, with one major change: where pactsarcds are merely postcards turned around, pactsorcds are postcards turned around and upside down.

| ((Gad, why didn't I think of that. You'll make a fortune!))

Robert W. Lowndes, 241 Church Street, New York 13, N. Y.

Dear Dick:

Thanks for the kind words about FUTURE & SFQ; they'll continue to be as good as I can make them, though no one will get rich on them, I fear. Am considering putting Knight's book reviews back into the former, with the next issue (#28). As you may have suspected I like a good bevy of departments in an sf magazine (the October FUTURE is an example of what I mean by that), and I tried them to see what would come from it. Well, I don't know. Running the departments — adding them, that is — did not up the amount of mail I received on each issue, nor did it help circulation as far as we've been able to find out. Cutting them out certainly did not hurt circulation; on the other hand, although the mail bag is consistently lighter these days, the sales reports are much better. Due to better stories, etc? Very possibly; I think there has been a measurable improvement — but, where does that leave me? It seems to leave me with the (tentative) conclusion that readers and fans departments do not make for better sales, do not apparently induce any sizeable number of people to buy the book who would not have bought it anyway. Further, dropping the departments does not hurt sales; that is, if some fans were buying my publications only because of the fanmag reviews, etc., and stopped doing so once these were eliminated, then their absence hasn't been noted. And finally, I have not been on the receiving end of a flood of mail urging me to restore the departments.

The best sales we've had in a long time have been of issues without departments. This isn't conclusive, of course, but...well, what would you have thought?

The October FUTURE SCIENCE FICTION and SCIENCE FICTION STORIES #2 went on sale fairly close together, and were on sale simultaneously for quite a while. FUTURE was a real handsome-looking job, with really good paper, which made the artwork sing. It had what I thought was a good line-up of stories and all the departments. SCIENCE FICTION STORIES #2 was on a much cheaper grade of paper, but also had what I considered a good line-up of stories, but no departments whatsoever. It was withdrawn from sale, since we'd decided to make it bi-monthly, at least a month before FUTURE. Returns show that while both did well, SFS did so

much better that it's left us somewhat dazed. What, we ask ourselves, is the point in risking investments in high production costs, as we did with that issue of FUTURE. When an issue of SCIENCE FICTION STORIES which cost far less sold much better. Sure, we haven't lost -- but you stand to lose shirt, underwear and false teeth if a fancydan issue like that FUTURE doesn't sell. Since both books sold for the same price, you can see that SFS did not have to sell more copies than FUTURE either to break even, or to show a profit; the point I want to stress is not only did it make a better profit -- but it sold more copies!

I ask myself, might FUTURE have sold better if we'd just loaded it with stories and nothing else?

((Humm. Your experiences at Columbia seem to indicate that your readers would prefer more fiction for their money, which means cutting out the reader's departments as well as the fan departments. And yet other editors are adding such departments to their magazines: AMAZING at last report was adding alonger letter section and fanzine reviews; X SCIENCE FICTION is supposed to have a full slate of departments, and I read somewhere that the revived SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURES will have fan and reader departments. IMAGINATION has had fan reviews and a reader letter section for years, and UNIVERSE just recently brought back Rog Phillips as fanzine reviewer. There is also a report that STARTLING STORIES and THRILLING WONDER STORIES may be persuaded to reinstate "The Frying Pan", a fan column.

There must be good reasons why many of the pro-mags are courting the fannish favor after spurning the fans during the boom. It may be that your magazines are attracting a different type of reader...or something. For if the tentative conclusions you mention are correct ones, then it would seem that the editors of the above mentioned magazines are making foolish mistakes. Hmmm....))

Bob Kellogg, University City, Mo.

Dear Dick,

Saw an article in the NEW YORKER (Dec. 4) that you and your readers will possibly be interested in. Well, it wasn't exactly an article; more of an editorial ("The Talk of the Town"), wherein a section of the AMERICAN EVERYDAY DICTIONARY (Random House) dealing with vocabularies is discussed. It seems that "It is possible to make a rough guess about anyone's probable vocabulary range if his reading habits are known." and to back it up they produce a chart showing the number of words you need to know if you read certain publications. The chart itself is as follows:

| | | |
|----------------------|-------|--------------|
| Sunday TIMES | ----- | 40,000 words |
| NEW YORKER | ----- | 35,000 " |
| ASTOUNDING S-F | ----- | 30,000 " |
| N.Y. HERALD-TRIBUNE, | | |
| WASHINGTON POST, AT- | | |
| LANTIC MONTHLY and | | |
| HARPERS | ----- | 25,000 " |
| FORTUNE and TIME | ----- | 20,000 " |
| NEWSWEEK | ----- | 16,000 " |

Now, the fact that us ASF readers are so high up on the list should have some significance. Exactly what it is escapes me. But I throw it to you to ponder over. Incidentally, the NEW YORKER editors themselves seemed to be somewhat illuminated by the list. "For years," they say, "we've been reading FORTUNE without understanding it, and the reason is simple: we know too many words."

Egods, man, you better go easy on Bradley. He seems a little put out about your recounts of his escapades. But I don't really think Jim is quite as nettled as he seems. If a guy can't be famous, he might as well be infamous. It might be a handicap, however, when he applies to conventions in the future. At any rate he's not the sloppy, besotted foam-guzzler you paint him to be. As an old drinking buddy of his, I rise to the defensh. ((I know, that's the yeast you can do.)) He's a clean-cut, clean-living, clean-thinking, red-blooded American souse, and can out-guzzle the best of them!

Let me add a little more to the Bradley fable. Walking into his room is like an excursion into...into...words fail me. Just let me say it is a fascinating experience. Anything and everything can be found there, from fencing foils to slugs. It's a world apart. He even had a light rigged up once to flash on and off at irregular intervals from behind a bookshelf. You would be sitting there listening to records or tipling peacefully, when something would interrupt your blissfully blank state of mind, and you would become troubled. Finally, after many frustrating minutes, your mind became aware of what was wrong in the scheme of things. As soon as you discovered the discrepancy in the room's lighting system, Bradley would give a dry chuckle and roll onto the floor, tears oozing out of his eyes.

I would like already to take this opportunity to tender a big bronx cheer to Peter Graham. Hmmp! I and Bradley the same person -- Ghod forbid! I merely attended high school with the chap. When he and Malc Willits started DESTINY a few years back, he asked me to do some drawings for him. He knew I was interested in stf because we both used to draw rockets and bems in art class. When we graduated (52) we parted ways, but I saw him again at night school classes of the Portland Art Museum last spring, and he told me of his new rag LYRIC. By luring me with vague promises of renumerative returns and sparkling contacts, I was tricked into drawing for him and I have remained chained to the lure of the press ever since. And by the bye, I do read stf and fantasy.

((Then there was the time Jim Bradley wept. Perhaps it was a memory evoked by a stray word or the tune being played on the phono, but tears filled his eyes and he wept. I remember how you quickly ~~leaped~~ leaped forward and held your glass beneath his dripping chin, collecting the precious tears, not losing a single drop---pure alcohol.

Then there was the time he cut his finger on a recalcitrant ~~bottle~~ beer bottle cap and you said "Quick, the bucket, he's bleeding 100 proof." and I said "Don't suck the wound, Jim, you'll get drunk!"

Yes, Bradley is a real dill...he's been pickled for years.

Perhaps in a later issue I will tell the story of Christmas Eve - 1954, which had a cast of dozens, featuring Bradley, Kellogg, and Me.

I wonder if a large part of that 30,000 word vocabulary rating for ASF isn't technical terms from the science articles.))

H.L. Gold, 505 East 14th Street, New York 9, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Geis:

If you're trying to set a record for misstatements about me, ease up -- you've made it.

Sprague de Camp's contribution to "None But Lucifer" had nothing whatever to do with the ending. The story had to be cut for single installment magazine appearance and there were a few spots that Mr. Campbell felt needed lifting. Mr. de Camp did the job in two weeks, adding three chapters at the same time. I'd spent about six or more months writing the story and was too close to it, certainly too close to do the cutting and patching job as quickly. We knew -- who didn't? -- that war was coming in Europe very soon and it was a matter of getting the novel out before Hitler marched. Mr. de Camp made it, whereas I would have noodled the thing around until it was too late. He did insist on half the byline, true, but our private agreement is that I am to get sole credit hereafter.

In the same article, mention might have been made of the amount of collaborating I have done. It's a fact that very little has been in s-f, which accounts for about 5% of my total production, but I have had several million words published and broadcast as a result of collaboration...about a quarter of my work. In s-f, I have worked with Robert W. Krepps mostly, though our sales were generally to the slicks.

McCain's solution wouldn't work, as he suspects. ((In reference to "The Padded Cell" in PSI #17 --REG)) Best way is for one to write the first draft, the other to rework and polish. I understand the Kuttners, however, take turn-about -- when one gets up, the other takes over, thus keeping the typewriter at near melting point. I've also split up stories, each collaborator taking half; it's not bad,

but the piecing together without a seam has to be done by one or the other. There are many methods, as you can see. Each team has to experiment to find the best for them.

The accusation that I require "too many...aliens (to) be humanoid" is downright silly, in view of the enormous variety I've run. No point in listing the stories. McLeod should have taken a glance through the back numbers before sounding off. Naturally, it's his privilege to sound off without doing so, but why give readers a cockeyed and totally invalid slant?

I had no idea that Dean Grennell has to apologize for being a friend of ours. The items above are mere grouches; this one calls for a much stronger emotion, I'm not sure what, but decidedly not pleasure. We're doing a job as best we can and our sales indicate it's a competent one, to put it modestly, and we also, being friendly people, like having friends. Don't you? We'd be glad to add you to our pridefully long list...as well as all other fans who care to be friends with the Golds. If that's something to be ashamed of, I'd like very much to know why and correct it.

((Chalk up one editorial lesson of great value for me. After this, great alarm bells will sound in my brain a la Pavlov whenever I start being personal in a discussion or debate.

The following letter from Terry Carr should make you feel better. He says:))

Terry Carr, 134 Cambridge Street, San Francisco 12, California.

Dear Dick:

McLeod's reviews: Dick, I'm sorry, but this is one writer who has never failed to bore me, and this time he adds quite a bit of annoyance to that reaction. Some of his statements, disregarding even his often crude writing, seem awfully silly to me. Speaking of saucers, he says "...the prophet Ezekiel saw one..." Mighod, how foolhardy can a person get? I've heard it bandied about recently that the Bible contains references to flying saucers, but this is the most baldfaced reference to it I've ever seen. In the first place, the wording in the Bible is so vague that fifteen different meanings could be gleaned from almost any single sentence in it. Yet McLeod comes right out and says that this is what was meant. What Ezekiel saw could have been any number of things, not necessarily a saucer. This sort of statement of opinion as fact is even more sickening when he says "...he (Gold) is requiring too many of his aliens to be humanoid." Oh, I'm sure that H.L. sits down at his typer every time he gets a story with a non-humanoid alien and types out a searing attack on the author of same, demanding that he bear in mind in the future that GALAXY's policy is humanoid aliens. Come now, McLeod! Gold prints, for the most part, what he can get, not necessarily what he wants. If the writers who submit to him seem to have a predilection for humanoids, that's not necessarily Gold's fault. Possibly he has brought it on himself with his sociological stories, which place the accent so much on humanity, but I sincerely doubt that he did it intentionally. Gold knows as well as you or I that a magazine without variety isn't likely to sell many copies. And another thing: McLeod's "this reviewer this" and "this reviewer that" impresses me as being unnecessarily forced and unwieldy.

((It's pretty obvious that nobody, but nobody, can make irresponsible or inaccurate statements without being called on them. That is as it should be.

Now, everybody turn to "The Psycho-Analyst" this issue and read with a critical eye. No prize is offered for the letter pointing out the most McLeod goofs; that would be a dangerous precedent.))

Now we are at the lamentably early end of the letter column. This is regretted far more by me than you, I assure you, for I have but recently received letters from Redd Boggs, Dean Grennell, Curtis Janke, and Jim Schreiber that I want desperately to print, but will have to wait til next issue. Probably by the time the magazine gets back in printed form from the photo-offset people there will be others. I can only beat my head against the wall (underneath the handwriting) and vow to do better next issue.

—REG



A Bit of Hebephrenia

Arthur Kober, co-author of Wish You Were Here, was vacationing in a remote mountain village in Oregon this past summer. While strolling through the countryside he stopped to pass the time of day with a native named Jim Bradley who was rocking on his cabin porch.

"I suppose," said Arthur

amiably, "in an isolated place like this it's often hard to get even the bare necessities of life."

Bradley switched the tobacco from his left cheek to his right. He spat comfortably. "You're mighty right, stranger," he said, "and when you do get it, 'tain't hardly fit to drink."

d-ar mr Gise,

a friend (fiend--ha ha) of mine named Pteer Gram told mee th at you put owt a "mag" like he does called SEETEE or something

He livs in Fairfax too. This por town has lots ov troublers.

Aww, he sez sez that I shud sned to your for an "ish" of your "ma". he says that youl sende on to me fore ~~that~~ freee.

anyHow, i write qwite a bitt. He said (Pteer Gram did) tht my tipe of stuf is whate you lik, nad (drn-that shuodl be "Dna"9 that iff I SENT YOU SOME OF MY STUFF TYQT TOU WO&D oopps, ISM sorry. -of mi stuf that you would ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ mite rint it. I Lasufed at himm btu he sed he wzs werius, nda taht I should t-e YOU THAT.

I'LL SEND YOU AN ohh danmet. Column (? in a dwe dayz & affte that is ptiened 'that sud be "Pitured" ILL SEND YOU

aNo-ne r o ne. Darm s kip s on mee e.

GOD DAM it

W. Kober
WILLEY WOBBER

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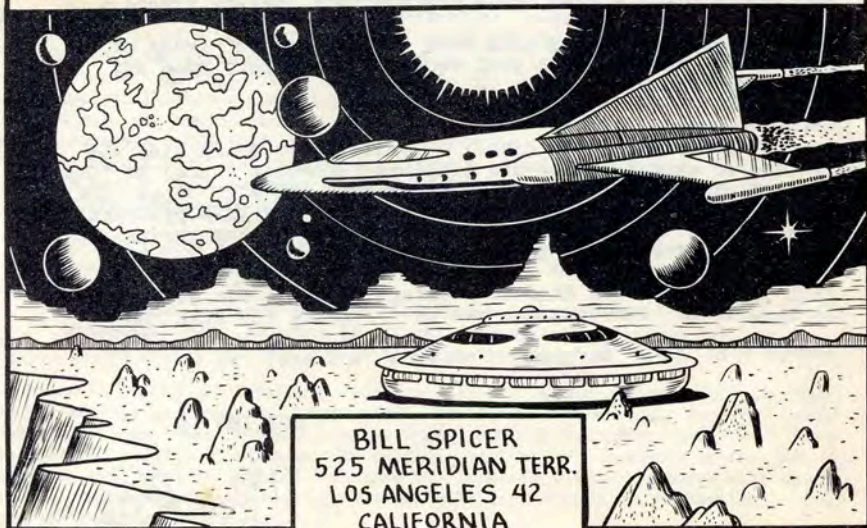
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