

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
2-15-72

I think my stopping publication of SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW was the first major sign of the changes that have been occurring in me during the last year.

A deep-seated dissatisfaction. Maybe a subconscious panic. Middle-aged man's terror. Whither, Geis? Alone? You've got maybe forty years left, and then comes the final blackout, I suppose I thought—deep in the murk of that stew we call our minds...mine, anyway.

After I folded SFR I went hunting for The Woman I Will Spend The Rest of My Life With. In an odd way—I advertised in THE STAFF and in THE FREE PRESS and I put a couple ads in the SINGLES REGISTRY...or REGISTER.

Did I meet women! Around twenty, at least. It was an education. I learned, or relearned, a great deal about myself I had wished to ignore.

I cannot live with anyone. I am too selfish of my time.

I am a different person—I shift into different roles, different ego-states—depending on the character of the woman and her ego-state. Sometimes I was my Adult, sometimes my Parent, and sometimes (too often) I was my Child.

I'm neurotic, no doubt. Driven. Full of conflicts such as a need for love and closeness—and a need to be alone and to not let anyone get too close. A victim of the Puritan Ethic—and a rebel who wants to loaf all the time. A writer with skill and talent who could make a hell of a lot of money if he really wanted to—and a writer who has wasted 13 years writing sex novels because he was afraid of success, or of the temptations and pressures that a lot of money would bring...or who is programmed by his parents to be a so-far-and-no-farther success. Not very far, it seems. So far.

Meeting a lot of women and often making love to them is a strain, for me. I met a lot, went to bed with a certain percentage, found two women I dig.

But I won't live with anyone. Weekends. Once in a while during the week, depending. That's all the social contact and emotional closeness I can take—a compromise between my hermit self and my infant self.

Recently, in the past month, writing sex material has become an ordeal. I resist it. I delay, I become terribly tired while writing it, and I must "coke up" on coffee to drive my way through the daily quota. Today, for instance, I was given an assignment by the editor of Barclay House, in North Hollywood. A case-history to run 35 manuscript pages on the subject of Oral Marriage. Pays \$150. Three day's work. But I only got three pages done today. This publication was on my mind, and now I am typing this, ventilating, with the kind of enthusiasm and concentration I wish I could put to that paying writing.

No, not really. I'm about through with sex writing. I get the message.

I was obsessed with sex. (Not a confession, just the way I was, and still am, to a far lesser extent.) Obviously the obsession has faded and I can no longer abide writing that single-minded, repetitive fiction.

Why has the lust diminished? Age, perhaps. Maybe a subconscious clock has struck the hour of change. I hear and obey.

I don't know if I can sell what science fiction I'll write in the next few years. I'm going to write as well as I can, slowly. I have enough money to last four years even if I sell nothing. I'm going to give it my best shot...or shots.

I feel different now, as from last year. It sounds dramatic and trite—but I feel a kind of calm inside. The die is cast...that kind of thing.

Why RICHARD E. GEIS #1? Why another act of ego? Why that name?

Because I have been lying every night on my couch for at least five hours...every night...and during weekends, too, watching the pretty colors on the TV. And I cannot watch TV without keeping my mouth busy. Ice cream, candy, fruit, beer, screwdrivers, pretzels....

Lying there like a fucking zombie. Getting dull and fat.

And now I am number one on the Fantasy Amateur Press Association waiting-list. I may be a member later this week. And I've had the idea for a personal magazine of this make-up for years. And now it is time to do it. To save my mind from TV, to get my thoughts on a myriad subjects down on paper, and to provide myself with a vehicle for interaction with science fiction fandom, again.

RICHARD E. GEIS is the title because it is a personalzine, a diary, and a journal, and a place for letters of comment. It has little structure. It is published for my benefit, mostly.

No artwork, no outside contributors except, as mentioned, some interesting letters I can argue with, if some show up.

This zine is unscheduled. I want no pressure or deadlines. Those who receive it must understand that it may appear anywhere from each month to each quarter...or each year.

1971 has been a remarkable year for me. I've got all the subscribers to SFR paid off. Except Cindy Van Arnam. Where are you, Cindy?

It was a right move for me, to kill SFR. I'm happier in this format. Informal, no layouts, no pretense. I hope to be able to keep this up the rest of my life.

Wow, am I settling down.

You know, it was exciting for me to get this typer down off the shelf and roll in this stencil. Hello, out there! It's me! I'm back! YAYYY!

THE MAIL General Telephone sent me a notice of my phone
2-16-72 number change. It'll be in the new book, too. They
 are expanding and my old 451 prefix will no longer
do. New number is now 828-0556.

ANALOG I bought a copy of the March 1972 ANALOG at the
2-16-72 supermarket this morning. They've juggled the lay-
 out of the contents page; the logo is now sitting
on its head and the gray strip is on the left. Stupid. Is it
possible Ben Bova caused it to be changed to mark his assump-
tion of the throne? Or was it the art director's idea?

ANALOG is still flying high, it appears—stories by Pohl
and Niven and Schmitz. I'll make a stab at reading them to-
morrow.

THE WAR IN VIETNAM Sooner or later the American people
2-16-72 will have to accept the fact that the
 United States was beaten over there.

We are, therefore, negotiating from weakness. 'Winding
down the war', 'Vietnamization' and hooting indignantly about
our military men they hold prisoner is sleight of mouth to dis-
tract the public from the obvious truth.

We didn't want to win. Not really. We have no legitimate
business over there with an army, and we—the public knew it,
down deep. Instinctually. I think 'territoriality' was at
work: We were the strange dog encroaching on a home dog's ter-
ritory and we knew it.

And, of course it is a perfect example of the arrogance of
power. We Americans (to confound my argument above) seem to
believe (not so secretly) that we own this planet and that
everyone else is only renting.

PREDICTIONS An excellent way to measure your estimation
2-16-72 of reality is to make predictions and see if
 they come true. If you have a clear view of
yourself, of Man, and of the world, then your reading of the
future will be pretty accurate. If not...then your judgement
is warped.

Okay, I predict that the Viet Minh will grow stronger and
stronger in South Vietnam and eventually take over. This with-
in three years.

There will be another international monetary crisis in
1973, if not near the end of this year. We will not be allowed
to degrade the dollar by running 40 billion dollar deficits
every year.

Inflation, by the way, means printing money for which there
is no value in goods or services. What is commonly known as
inflation—rising prices and wages—is the result of print-
ing press overtime.

As a nation we have inflated ourselves out of recessions
and slowdowns since the Great Depression. Now we've reached
the point where we're hooked on the stuff and it is taking big-
ger and bigger shots of debt to keep us going. It wouldn't
surprise me to see a 100 billion dollar deficit in a few years.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST Here I am at this again
2-18-72 when I should be writing that
 case history on oral marriage. But
I promise myself I'll do the remaining five pages of the quo-
ta tonight, between 7:30 and 10:00. I wonder if I'll be able
to rationalize my way out of that?

I saw THE DEVILS this afternoon, Ken Russell's shocking,
absorbing, horrible, great film. The Mayfair Theater has a
new policy—49¢ until 7 PM, 99¢ after that. They've put new
used seats in the place, and finally repainted those scabrous
walls. They're running quality films now instead of the horr-
or and biker things.

On my budget 49¢ is a fair price. I don't mind not see-
ing the companion feature, THE FOX, which I had seen before.
I could and did convince myself I could spare two hours to
see THE DEVILS, but couldn't "waste" the entire afternoon.

THE DEVILS is a film that leaves you awed at its quality
and filled with a desire to be worthy of it. It strips men
to the core on the screen, and demands equivalent self-pen-
etration in the mind of the viewer. At least, it did me.

I came out of that theater with a question about myself
and this magazine.

How naked do I want to be? How much of an emotional and
psychological dissection of myself do I want to perform, in
public?

That opens a can of worms. I suspect that the measure of
my ego is the extent I will open myself to you readers.

Total ego equals total revelation. I'll give you no
shit about the basic reason for this magazine being self-
therapy. The deepest drive is selfish, but in a different
way.

It'll be nice if I can look back in a few years, and
learn from what I've written now, and if I've lost weight
and focused my faculties, and if my writings have incidentally
helped a reader or two use his faculties.

But this is a Performance. An act of ego. A look-at-me
exhibition.

I am enjoying this. With a smile on my lips and delight
in my heart I insist on total honesty. At least the totality
I am so far capable of.

All of this is preamble. Come on, Geis, let's get the
show going. STRIP!

What am I most ashamed of? Not that I had lecherous
thoughts about my mother when I was 15. Not that I prefer
oral lovemaking to intercourse. Not that I have frequently
wished my mother and father dead so that I could inherit a
few thousands or dollars.

No...I'm ashamed of wanting, hoping, I'll be able to sell
this magazine to enough people to permit me to live off the
profit.

God's truth! This irrational dream has been with me
from the first days of SFR, way back in 1955 or 6. The wish

keeps surfacing. It wriggled its way into the tail-end of my recent splurge of publishing SFR, and it is burbling in my mind now.

I will need about 8 to 900 subscribers. Sure. That will do, thank you, for a low-spending man like me to survive on. I dearly love the challenge. There is something buried in me which insists I be this way—living on the minimum, yet not in want. I have a color TV, a newly decorated apartment, a new bike (since my old one was stolen last month).

If my dream of living off my fanzine is the fuel that drives my fan publishing, then I accept it. It serves a good purpose, I hope.

So, there is my deepest shame. I finally confessed it. Thank, or curse, THE DEVILS for the revelation. It's a self-serving revelation, in any case.

A dollar a copy, folks, and about 65-70¢ profit per copy. I can live on \$250 per month.

And a cunning little imp in my mind whispers that I have to do this complete honesty bit in order to give the mag a certain morbid fascination and entertainment value, and to convince the readers I'm sincere!

I'm rotten to the core, Maude.

THE MAIL The Citizens For Decent Literature sent me a letter asking for a contribution and included form cards (requiring only my signature) that could be sent to Gov. Reagan and State Attorney General Younger which request a greater effort to put the pornographers out of business.

Well, I put all this into their convenient return envelope and mailed it back to them, sans a contribution.

They should save their energy. The porno market is dying, little by little. Certainly the pure sex book (without photos) is.

They can relax, anyway; I'm going, I'm going!

TELEVISION Picture this: Lucy breaks, accidentally, one of Desi's prize paintings. She fakes a robbery to avoid his anger. She is treated as a heroine and given an award for bravery.

Ah, but then Desi tumbles to the truth and turns the tables with a "robbery" of his own in which her favorite clothes are taken....

An ancient plot, I know, but we are asked to swallow it again because the characters are now SANFORD & SON, a cunning, infantile old black junkman and his not-too-bright son.

More and more, the characters played by Redd Foxx and Demond Wilson are coming over to me as a slightly modernized variation of AMOS AND ANDY. I expect the Kingfish to come in any week now.

It's just another fame situation comedy, this time in black-face. Once in a while Redd Foxx gets off a zinger, but that's all the honesty the producers will allow. I note that the screenplay tonight was written by Aaron Ruben. Black he's not.

BOOK REVIEW
2-19-72

If anyone wants to know why my book review column, "Science Fiction Review", is no longer appearing in the LOS ANGELES FREE PRESS, it is because when my friend Brian Kirby, then editor, and the staff left the Freep, to start their own paper, THE STAFF, he took with him a column's worth of book reviews (I presume, since he took with him a lot of other material by others intended for Freep publication) but, alas, the column never appeared in THE STAFF.

Since then, more and more, it seems that the editors feel that their readers don't read; book reviews are rare. Most space is devoted to rock and film.

So I am going to use one of those reviews here, only re-phrased; I find my "formal" reviewing style is deadly.

COLD WAR IN A COUNTRY GARDEN...is The Incredible Shrinking Man turned to spying for the British government. Well written, in two parts: 1. Getting used to being ½" tall; 2. Spying in Eastern Europe. Surprise—the Russians have a corps of shrunk punks, too. (By Lindsay Gutteridge, Putnam, \$5.95, 1971) It should be out in paperback by now.

MAIL The phone bill. I could get along without a phone easily enough. Save \$7 to \$10 per month. Would you believe the phone company wants yet another raise in the rates after getting a 25% or so raise just last month?

They've changed my phone number, too. I'm now 828-0556. *Grump!*

MOVIES Last night I went with a woman friend to see two horror movies: WHO SLEW AUNTIE ROO? and LET'S SCARE JESSICA TO DEATH.

A comment or two about the two films in a moment. First: about the Fox Theater where they were shown.

It's a 50¢—all admissions theater. A couple years ago the Fox chain made the decision to lower the price because they were drawing flies at \$2. per in that lower class neighborhood.

I hadn't been there since the change. Before, it was a nice theater, well run, with the usual mixture of people in the audience. Now it's 75% kids, most of them black, 24% college age, and you could count on the hands of one finger those who were over 40.

Noise, hooting, etc. Usual kid discourtesy and energy.

But what really disturbed me was the three (count 'em, three) armed uniformed guards who constantly walked the aisles, occasionally shining their flashlights into the rows (usually the side rows) to spotlight kids...doing what? I'm not sure. Smoking? The place was like a prison auditorium.

A sign of the times—and I don't like it.

In WHO SLEW AUNTIE ROO? Shelley Winters does her usual nice job of confusion-and-Evil in a slow-moving would-be horror film that uses the old Hansel and Gretel/Gingerbread house story line with some switches and botches.

Sir Ralph Richardson is delicious as an old con man medium who is fleecing Winters/Roo with the help of the butler and maid during faked seances.

As a horror film it isn't horrible enough, despite an auspicious opening scene.

LET'S SCARE JESSICA TO DEATH is a goodie, and though it uses the old young-woman-just-out-of-the-mental-hospital opening to keep the audience wondering if she is hallucinating again and paranoid, the ghastly truth slowly rises to the surface and the countryside full of vampires is horribly real in this modern day.

Great suspense and pace and tension. A sleeper bound to be honorably mentioned in the future.

DIRTY HARRY (which I saw in Portland last December before Christmas) is about an incredible detective in San Francisco who is a tough cop, yessir, and to hell with laws and departmental procedures. The end justifies the means in this loaded-dice movie; I mean, shouldn't there be exceptions to the law once in a while when it's so obvious to the audience that this psycho killer should be wiped out before he does it again!?

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
2-22-72

Mah fellow Amuricans, I come to yew with a heavy heart. I called George Karnookh at Barclay House this morning with mixed emotions. He gave me an assignment. "Young-Old Marriages."

Well, three days of hard work equals a couple-three weeks leisure later this year. I keep telling myself. But sooner or later I'll have to not call him and break the faith, baby. Once I become unavailable as a reliable, ever-ready writer, part of the informal staff as it were, I will be replaced, and probably permanently.

Just a few more.... Then (terror!) the checks will stop.

THE MAIL

2-22-72 How do you turn off a fanzine? I built better than I knew with SFR; I still get subscriptions.

Today a philosophy professor asked for sub info. Memphis State. Also, the Digest of Small Press Reviews wants copies of reviews of small press mags and books. Ha! No thank you. Not for SFR, nor for RICHARD E. GEIS. Also, The Combined Book Exhibit Inc. wants to include SFR in their next exhibit. For a price. Into the wastebasket.

Gas Bill. Aaaarrgh! \$6.98 for one month's gas? I'll freeze from now on!

And three fanzines. STANLEY from Stephen Goble; chatter, a smattering of news and a few letters. A happy little college effort.

LIZARD INN #2 from Dan Steffan.. Delivered to my home address. How did you get my private, top-secret place of residence, Dan? LIZARD INN is enthusiastic and moderately interesting. A bit too much art, but to be expected from an editor artist...or artist editor. I liked "Why I Don't Live in a Men's Dorm" by Lisa Tuttle.

And Bruce Gillespie's S-F COMMENTARY, which is becoming (or

has become) the heavyweight in this sercon area. Well-earned. It calls for a longish letter, since I have to reply to Chris. Priest concerning my review of his INDOCTRINAIRE. In my opinion an anti-reader book. Read it and see if you enjoy being ripped off, if you don't believe me.

TELEVISION

2-22-72

The SONNY & CHER COMEDY HOUR is a pleasant way to while away some time. Sonny is very good as a foil and Cher is similarly professional; good timing, personality, and under it all a genuine love for each other that makes it all work.

Good production values and good writing to back up the stars. Sonny and Cher are made for life.

But...picky, picky...she hasn't learned yet how to sing; she shouts, and if I were a pig I'd come running.

Cher is undeniably nice to look at but she had a bit of plastic surgery done on her breasts last summer (you can see the small puckered scars from the incisions under her armpits (about four inches down)) and now her mammaries don't have their former titilating jiggle and slight sag.

I miss that jiggle. As it is I feel cheated. She's wearing a built-in silicone bra. She sold out! Cher is putting on a plastic front.

THE MAIL Cont.
2-22-72

Bob Hoskins of Lancer sent me the latest Lancer releases, and I am grateful. I look forward to reading Bob Tucker's rewritten THE TIME MASTERS, and Ted White's STAR WOLF.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
2-23-72

Bad day. Not enough sleep last night. Watched Valentino in BLOOD AND SAND with M——. When She left I watched part of Carson. Learned Lana Wood has been married four times, divorced three. I can see why; great body but a bitch inside. Trivia.

This morning woke up with my left ear stopped up again. Third time in six months. The Eustacian tube plugs up for some reason and I must take Disophrol twice a day. 9:40 PM now and no relief. Odd, hearing out of one ear. "Hey? Speak louder, sonny!"

Coked up on coffee and tea and a caffeine capsule. Managed to lurch through 11 pages of "Young-Old Marriages," but didn't do a very good job, erotically speaking. On the other hand I could write a publishable porno segment in my sleep with my mind on Raquel Welch's tits while in an unpadded oil can during a snow storm while going over Niagara Falls at Midnight. If I had a good typewriter.

That much caffeine makes my stomach cramp. Another reason to stop writing porno. You say it, Geis, but you don't do it. Yeah. What happens to the budget if I have to see the doc about the ear? Also a teeth checkup in April. Should have a cushion. May have to pay more in 1971 taxes than I anticipate. \$10,400 last year. Where did it go? Trickle, trickle....

THE MAIL
2-23-72

J.J. Pierce's RENAISSANCE, Vol. 4, No. 1, arrived. Interesting reprinted speech...or printed speech given by Alex Eisenstein at the Secondary

Univ. of IV Conference. Title: SF On The Merge—Portrait of a Dying Art Being Engulfed by a Dead One. With Pierce cheering on the sidelines.

Curious thing is, I agree that good, old-fashioned story-telling is not appealing to the New Wave, Speculative Fiction, New Writing school.

The old battle between the self-indulgent young (usually) writers who want to experiment and do things different, and the readers who (mostly) want a good, well-told story with a satisfying, conclusive ending.

Writers are usually at the mercy of the marketplace. They resent it; they sneer at the "entertainment" reader. But he pays the bills.

I've always tried very hard to give the reader his time and money's worth. In porno and in fanzines. I'm a reader myself. I don't like to put time and emotion into a story and a character, as a reader, only to find that the writer has cheated me at the end with a puzzling, ambiguous, cop-out ending.

GRBIT 10 has a couple stories of this type. Oh, well-written, yes, and that makes the anger and disappointment all the more acute when those dribble-away endings show up.

Crucify Gene Wolfe for the Medusa's head of loose ends at the finish of his "The Fifth Head of Cerberus."

And ask Kate Wilhelm why she built up expectations she knew she couldn't satisfy with "The Fusion Bomb."

I presume Damon Knight was Giving Encouragement to Edward Bryant when he bought and published "Jody After the War", a very sincere, faintly amateurish after-the-atomic-war story.

I'm getting tired of R. A. Lafferty's tales; style can only go so far. (Putnam, \$5.95, 1972)

Still in RENAISSANCE—

There's a Commentary by Daniel Dickinson titled "Silent Silverberg" in which Dickinson is angry at Bob for writing what Bob wants to write. Criticism strained through Dickinson's personal warps and woofs.

But as I have noted before, and as others have seen, too, Bob Silverberg is moving steadily into a kind of metaphysical s-f or fantasy series of novels.

Moving...clean out of s-f and fantasy altogether. His latest, THE BOOK OF SKULLS shows this direction.

SKULLS is a novel of character and an excellent one. Four college boys driving across country to find immortality in the hands of a hidden band of esoteric monks in Arizona. Alternating points of view, rich detail, convincing, plausible. Entertaining, absorbing reading, with the question always forefront: Is the Book of Skulls real, and is it possible to attain immortality with the monks, even at the expense of two of their lives?

Well, now, Silverberg cops out. True, he kills off two of the students and fulfills the needs of the Book rituals, but it's left to the reader to decide if the survivors are now immortal or simply deluded by their need to believe.

Silverberg is now concerned with Eternal Questions in his fiction. Bored with the usual in writing, he is now reaching into new areas, sometimes his reach is greater than his grasp, but whatthehell.

In the hands of a lesser writer this theme and plot would be a flat failure, because it depends so much on depth of characterization—layers and layers of realistic, convincing character and personality for each of the four boys.

A first class piece of writing.

In this case of a cop-out ending, Silverberg gets away with it because the reader (me) feels he's gotten his money and time and emotion's worth from the rich detail and insights-into-lives given in the process of the drive from east to west and the rituals. (Scribners, \$5.95, 1972)

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
2-28-72

Spent the weekend with G—
in Costa Mesa in spite of one ear
out of commission. Got a refill

of the pills and the ol' ear gave a POP and functioned once again Saturday afternoon after a walk on the beach at Balboa.

Balboa is a nice place, expensive, with quaint tourist-trap shops. I bought a plain wooden ring, nicely stained and finished, for 69¢, mostly because, having slipped it on my little finger, right hand, I could not easily get it off.

Didn't really want to go with G— this time because I spent last Sunday-Monday with her, and I felt crowded, emotionally, this time. Too much, too soon. But she's gone now and has a date with another guy, an actor, in San Diego, Sun.

He called her last night—this morning—at 3 AM. Considerate guy.

I resented her staying here this morning and early afternoon, to watch her favorite soap operas and an old batch of Chaplin shorts in between. Three whole days with one person is about my absolute limit.

Curious thing—last night I couldn't fully drop off to sleep; I skimmed. Whenever I got close to going deep, my whole body gave a spasmodic jerk and I was awake. Was in her spare bedroom, so I cannot blame it on my inability to sleep in the same bed with anyone.

I think I may be marginally spastic during certain psychological stress situations. Or epileptic. Some nerve damage could have been done my spine when the doctor dropped me when I was an infant (premature, two-pounds, fed with eyedropper, wrapped in cotton, skin coated with olive oil). When I turn my head now I can hear grating in my neck bones.

What stress was I under last night? Was it the ear medicine? Sex? (Had trouble having an orgasm Sunday afternoon with her. Rejection?) On the other hand she had the first clearly-defined, unmistakable orgasm I've been able to detect so far, amid all the moaning and thrashing.

Called George at Barclay House this morning and he had no assignment for me this week. Sounded discouraged; said he had to tell every writer who calls that sad story. Said to call next week. Maybe he'll be out of a job soon. I have \$1,000 due for porno work completed. That may have to last a long time.

I will LOAF this week if it kills me. Read those waiting books, see those 49¢ films, and exercise my ego with this fanzine. Play.

THE MAIL 2-29-72 Four books from Ballantine yesterday,

including SEED OF STARS by Dan Morgan and John Kippax. I have not been impressed with Dan Morgan or John Kippax in the past, but I'll start the book.

Also recently received John Boyd's THE ORGAN BANK FARM from Bantam. Will also start this one. No guarantees on finishing.

I may not finish Ron Goulart's new book from Beagle, PLUNDER. Took it down to G——'s over the weekend and read half of it, liked it for what it is—entertaining, diverting. Ron has taken the startling narrative hook and made it a way of life. 'The ape said, "I demand a retraction."' begins the first chapter, and each chapter is like that.

But I know it's formula fiction, and I know the only content is the wild, bizzare (would you settle for bizarre?) humans and aliens and mocking, pin-prick satire. Ron is a happy-go-lucky cynic. (Beagle 95210, 95¢, 1972)

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
2-29-72

I think I know what caused that sleeplessness and jerking Sunday night and the nervousness of recent days (jumping at loud noises and unexpected sounds): Disophrol, the stuff I took for my stuffed-up ear. The stuff has a lot of caffeine in it to counter the histamine which would normally make one drowsy. These pills are also time-release, which means I had that stuff working in me 24 hours a day. On top of which I drank coffee three-four times a day with G——.

Today I have a "perky" feeling of great energy, as if I had taken a lot of speed. But all I had was very weak tea this morning with breakfast. I had this same sensation yesterday and day before. Could be a carryover from the medication.

Slept well last night after a few twitches while going to sleep. No coffee or tea today. See what happens.

THE MAIL Letter from George Senda asking if he can stay
2-29-72 with me for a day or two soon during a trip down to L.A. Hope.

Note from G—— on Leap Year Day asking me to be hers and then saying only kidding. She knows I won't marry her.

An envelope full of clips from newspapers about sex and porno, etc. from John Boardman. Interesting letter by Joanna Russ published in THE VILLAGE VOICE, 10-14-71 analyzing American sexual mores with a scalpel. I can't resist a few quotes:

"...men must act and feel the role of predator, whether they like it or not; women must act and feel the role of prey, whether they like it or not. This is the clearest, rock-bottom expression of sexual politics."

"Men are not Beasts and Villains—but they do live sexually in an economy of scarcity (which their boasting proves). Their sexuality is at worst a necessity, at best honored and encouraged—only whom do they have to do it with? Women live economically in a sexual plethora—there are partners on every street-corner, that is if she wants to be abused and exploited, or at the very least, to feel abused and exploited. He must learn to coerce or bribe or shame or he probably won't get laid. She must remain reluctant, suspicious, and careful, if she is not to feel—and to be—coerced, shamed, or bribed. Few women have any idea of the exasperated thwarting undergone

by men surrounded by see-throughs and miniskirts who won't. Few men have any idea of what it's like to have to be attractive, unavailable but not too unavailable, chased, chaste, unaggressive and inferior, and yet not let on that you know any of this is going on. In short, a rotten mess for both women and men."

"The vicious circle of recrimination is one of the happy results of sexism; the villain is not either party—it is the unequal distribution of power between them. Or to put it more bluntly, sexual scarcity, guilt, female reluctance, and female hatred are the price paid for male privilege. Men's capability in the marketplace, their being looked up to by their dependents, their mommas' and secretaries' and sisters' and wives' and daughters' and female colleagues' and char-ladies' deference, their political and social muscle, their self-confidence. Such as it may be in individual cases, and those pretty ladies who pout at you from infinite numbers of billboards and those pretty ladies who dress to please you in the street—all this is the reason you are a Cad and a Beast and nobody will sleep with you."

I agree. And most winners in the sexual politics game don't want it changed. Those who have power (beauty or money or both) don't want to change the rules. And the rules are set deep.

Also received NOSTALGIA NEWS #13. No comment.

And OSFIC #25. It dies an undistinguished death with this, its last issue. Science fiction club magazines rarely seem to be of the highest quality. OSFIC was always (as I recall) well printed and competently edited. But it lacked that spark of vividness and personality that sets the best apart from the pack.

GREEN EGG Actually, I received this magazine of the
3-1-72 Church of All Worlds several weeks ago, and was impressed with its improvement since Tim Zell surfaced as its editor. Haven't had a chance to comment on the heavy content of this issue until now.

First, I wish editors of amateur or non-profit magazines would learn that no art is better than bad art. The cover of GREEN EGG #45 is bad.

But Tim's editorial is provoking and in its way dazzling. I must quote extensively from it.

"Other writers more eloquent and better versed in astrology than I have written at length on the significances of the Zodiacal Ages, and it is not my intention to repeat what has already been said so well. However, I would like to mention one aspect of this cycle that is often neglected: the ascending dominance of the archetypes. The Age now passing was the Piscean, which as we all know, was dominated for its entire two-thousand year duration by the Christian religion, now in its death throes. It is interesting to note that the early symbol of Christianity, the fish, corresponds exactly with the Sign of the Fish of Pisces. Moreover, the preceding Age was the Arien, and its epoch was in turn dom-

inated by the religion of the Horned God (Pan, Moses, Ulysses, Cernunnos) corresponding to the Ram of Aries. And before that it was Taurus finding expression in the Minotaur cult of Minoan Crete and the Sun-Bull religion of Egypt. And before that, Gemini, with the various cults of Sacred Twins: Romulus and Remus, Castor and Pollux, Nanabozo and Chakekenapok, Ohrmazd and Ahriman.

"Realizing, then, how these astrological archetypes have always found expression in the themes of their Ages, it comes as no surprise to note that the archetype of Aquarius, water, has spontaneously arisen in the early morning of Aquarius in the form of the ceremony of water-sharing and water-brotherhood originally delineated in Robert Heinlein's novel, STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND. It is perhaps also significant that this book was published in the fall of 1961, and that, by reckoning of Fred Adams of Feraferia, the dawn of the Aquarian Age was signaled by the great solar eclipse of Feb. 4, 1962."

"But one of the most important (in my mind, of course) new aspects of the Aquarian Age is the rise of new and archetypically appropriate religious symbols and themes. The early 1960's saw the emergence of a number of what we now call "Neo-Pagan" religions: Feraferia, the Delphic Fellowship, the Neo-American Church, the Church of the Awakening, the Universal Life Church, and the Church of All Worlds. The Council of Themis, a Neo-Pagan ecumenical council, currently lists 26 active members, and we are aware of many more emerging Neo-Pagan groups not yet affiliated. Concurrently, the increasing public interest in all phases of magic and occultism has encouraged once again the emergence of The Old Religion: Witchcraft—the Craft of the Wise. Many covens, both traditional and nouveau, are now becoming more or less public and disseminating once-hidden mysteries of the Wicca.

"All of these Neo-Pagan religions, in sharp contrast to the once-mighty faith of Christ now choking to death on its own bad karma (two millennia of persecuting non-adherents), express in common deep reverence for Nature, expressed in the deified personification of Mother Earth; Mother Nature, thus implying a commitment to life and worship in ecological (eco-psychic) harmony with the processes of living Nature rather than the dominance and exploitation of nature which has characterized all of Western "Civilization."

It would be interesting if some scholar could match Eastern religions with the old Zodiaccal Ages, to see if they match as the Western and near-East religions apparently do. If they do not correspond, does that destroy the theory?

I wonder if these Neo-Pagan "religions" are truly religions or actually signs of a kind of new Ethic searching for a vehicle. The vehicle obviously cannot be rationality; the believers obviously want emotion and faith.

At the moment the ground is being prepared. If there occurs in the next decade a traumatic regional or continent-wide ecological disaster, the new Ethic could find a focus and an amazingly wide acceptance whatever the religious box it is served up in.

The Western world is waiting for its new messiah.

I can't say I think much of the department titled "Editorial Giggies..." a steal from THE REALIST.

The most interesting article is "Undress Rehearsal For A New Religion" by Lawrence Lipton. His analysis of the basics of religion and religions and of our times is absorbing and persuasive. He, too, thinks a new Religion/Ethic/Morality is growing and will overcome.

The letter column is a different world, a view of a growing alternate culture and society.

In a way, I think the revulsion of the youth at our waste and arrogant manipulation of ourselves and nature is rooted in the Puritan Ethic which rejects the sloth of huge cars, big houses, mass production of junk—the whole throw-away economy that has developed in the last fifty years.

There is something immoral in such conspicuous waste, and Puritanism is the ally of the ilco-Paganism in many ways, if not its mother.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
3-1-72

Still have that "fizz" of energy. Slept five hours last night. No trouble getting to sleep.

Tried to do a few exercises today and immediately felt my back start to go out. Six toe-touches and... Did ten push-ups, ten sit-ups. Boy, am I out of condition! Will have to persist, though.

Trimmed my longish hair today, especially in front; I can't stand to have it fall into my eyes. I like it shaggy in back, though; mother hates long hair but does not comment when I visit Portland.

THE MAIL 20th Century Plastics, Inc. sent me a sample of
3-1-72 their "Double-Vu" vinyl sheet protectors. Fits into a loose-leaf binder. Er, it was sent to SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW, Attn. stationery buyer. Heh, heh. Several months ago the U.S. Pencil and Stationery Co. of New York sent me a total of four sample ball-point pens (Buy 125 —Get 125 Free). There are fringe benefits in publishing a "known" amateur magazine.

THE NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS was in the box, with an I.F. Stone article featured: "The First Full Analysis of Nixon's Vietnam Deception."

I am currently reading Dennis Bloodworth's AN EYE FOR THE DRAGON—Southeast Asia Observed: 1954-1970.

No doubt Nixon is less than sincere in his public stance re settling the war. But what I.F. Stone and some others believe, that Hanoi will be honest in free elections if only we stop playing propaganda games and trying to win militarily with air power and the South Vietnam army, that's self-deception.

Neither side is interested in free elections. "Free" elections in South Vietnam is a phony issue, a ploy, a public relations bit for the American people, and other idealists to wring their hands over. A facade.

When our side was winning, they refused to negotiate from weakness. They persisted in their war of attrition (also Westmoreland's strategy...until it got too expensive and took

too much time) and they won it. We have pulled out and they are now seeping back, rebuilding their infrastructure, and gradually winning back their lost power and territory. They will not negotiate now; why should they? They'll be happy to have us surrender South Vietnam if we care to in exchange for prisoners, but they're willing to fight on and win it all if necessary.

Along about November they'll be winning with embarrassing (for us) obviousness.

The Vietnamese want out from under foreign domination and foreigner-maintained puppet governments. Colonialism, in whatever guise, is dead in Asia. If they have to take a communist government to get free of us and rule their own land, they'll accept it. They are nationalists first.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST Exercises went well this morning.
3-2-72 No pain from my back. *puff-puff*

I'm beginning to feel uneasy about not-writing-for-money already. Nevertheless, I shall loaf until Monday.

Still wake up with the fizz-of-energy. Slept seven hours last night, feel good.

THE MAIL \$500 check from American Art Enterprises, Inc.,
3-2-72 payments for Brandon-Barclay work completed. I'll get another \$500 check next week, then zilch unless another assignment comes along. Hi-ho.

Also from American Art Ent. is the tax form showing I was paid \$9,050. in 1971 by them. Now I can go ahead with preparing my tax return info for H. & R. Block.

Unique Distributors in New York sent me a sex offer. "Dear friend: You are invited to join the most exclusive group of men and women in the world today: the sexual elite." Didn't finish reading.

Day-by-day, almost hour-by-hour diary-like letter from G— in which she is astonishingly candid and honest. She is dating other men, assures me I'm still the best at lovemaking. Of course. Fastest tongue in the West. She wants to reserve March 25-26 for a get-together. Fine.

LOCUS 108 arrived; Charlie and Dena Brown do an excellent job of news-review-information. "Notes From the Belfry" a column by Jack Gaughan is fine informal writing; he could get another Hugo as Best Fan Writer.

CITADEL #5 also arrived. 24 pages, 8½ x 11 photo-offset. Well edited, good layout. Geo. W. Proctor wisely stays in the background with Offutt, Jack Williamson and Richard Shaver in the foreground.

Andy Offutt in another "And then I wrote—" article, this time concerning a semi-porno novel titled THE GREAT 24-HOUR THING he is proud of. Well.... I've read his work, including EVIL IS LIVE SPELLED BACKWARD, or something like that, and he was all puffed up over that, too. It was a bad book. He's a prolific hack, essentially a typist, with delusions of skill and talent. He may mature. A fourth rank writer as of now.

Richard Shaver, in his article, asserts that his Shaver Mystery stories in the old AMAZING and FANTASTIC, under Ray Palmer, were based on truth. The man is mad.

BOOK REVIEW

3-2-72

I've found another excellent writer, always a golden-letter day. Excellent writers nowadays are hard to find—you always get the other kind.

Why hasn't it been said in fandom that John Boyd is really good? His THE ORGAN BANK FARM is of Hugo quality; adult, sophisticated, intelligent, gripping, with a wow ending. It has one of the most convincing final Black Moments I've ever read...and a wipe-out ending. A fine book.

A pedestrian title, though. I'll bet it's not the author's title. (Bantam, \$7049, 75¢, 1972)

Now that I've found him I shall have to get and read his other books.

(It would take five thousand words to do a proper appreciation of this book, and I don't feel up to it.)

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST

3-3-72

Many years ago I read a book by Jack Woodford—he of the marvelously informal, conversational non-fiction style—in which he mentioned that during the Great Depression struggling young actors and actresses survived in Hollywood on 5¢ per day...by eating a can of dogfood per day.

He asserted they were sleek and healthy as a result. He was deploring modern food and eating habits.

Now that my memory is stirred, I think the book was titled HOW TO, and I remember lending my copy to a young lady friend and never seeing it or her again. Hmmm. I wish I could find a copy.

In my second book, way back in 1960, I had a character named Rill who ate dogfood. She was a kooky beatnik.

All this is preamble. Today I bought two cans of beef chunk Alpo and....

What I did was heat it in a frying pan, add a package of stew seasoning, add water, add a package of macaroni and cook till the macaroni (small elbow) was done.

This evening I tried a bowl of this concoction. Arf, arf. I didn't like it.

So I wasted \$1.20 altogether. Live and learn.

I wonder if Burger Bits...?

I cast the figures and totaled the numbers this afternoon. I came up with some croggling items for the I.R.S. They may not believe me. 1971 was like this:

SFR income: \$1790.61 Writing income: \$9908.

SFR and writing debits: postage—\$566.; refunds—\$1418.50; supplies—\$378. Those are the interesting items.

Anyway, I have a taxable income of around \$7,000. Too high. I may have to pay a lot more than I've already paid in quarterly payments on estimated income—\$1,000.

I'll take the papers up to H&R Block tomorrow morning and get the final bad news.

Phyllis Diller is on DAVID FROST tonight; I must tune in to see her Magnificent Face Lift.*

*The TV GUIDE was wrong, she wasn't a guest tonight.

But—I decided to sample the TV-movie on CBS: "Heat of Anger" with Susan Hayward as a high-powered criminal lawyer.

It was the usual contrived, formula lawyer-defending-difficult-murder-defendant. But well done, and I got hooked. She's a very good actress.

James Stacy as the young assistant was credible and likeable. But did they have to name him Gus Pride?

Lee J. Cobb as Frank Galvin (formerly named Eddy Geist!) was fine as usual.

This may be a series next year, with Hayward and Stacy.

THE MAIL A copy of PLACEBO #2, and the latest L.A. FREE
3-3-72 PRESS.

PLACEBO is edited by Moshe Feder and Barry Smotroff. They are earnest and undistinguished, but young. So is the material. I did enjoy the transcription of one of Ray Nelson's COSMIC CIRCLE Pacifica Radio broadcasts. He reviews/discusses Don Wolheim's THE UNIVERSE MAKERS.

Ray's article is not listed on the zine's contents page.

Take a placebo, Ray, and pretend it's an aspirin.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST Curses! I am back from the H&R
3-4-72 Block office. I owe about \$565 extra plus \$101 state taxes, and must in addition pay, as usual, an estimated tax by April 15th to both federal and state. So I must pay out close to \$750 in taxes, in addition to the \$1,000 already paid.

Aaaaa-i-i-i....

As more than one person has noted, it doesn't pay to earn money. You end up working for the government. Good God! I had a \$7400 taxable income and must pay \$1666 of it in direct taxes!

Listen, I'm going up to West L.A. and apply for food stamps. I have estimated I'll have to pay only \$200 this year in taxes while I write a few pieces of science fiction and Virginia Kidd tries to market them.

I can see I shall have to keep on with the porno assignments—if there are any. *Sigh*

THE MAIL Atlantic Advertising sent me a catalog of their
3-4-72 business printing forms and services. Tempting, but too late, fellahs.

Bank statement for the SFR checking account. Three checks, all refunds, one of which I mailed out in June! Why do these people keep these refund checks so long? There are over two hundred dollars worth of uncashed and undeposited refund checks outstanding. I'd like to liquidate that SFR account. I can use the \$300 minimum balance I have to keep in it to avoid a service charge. Well, along about June I'll switch the balance to my personal account and the late-depositors can write an anguished letter to me saying my check bounced. I'll write a new check for them then.

Letter from S— in Fullerton, a 19 year old girl I'll probably never meet, who responded to my SIAFF ad last year. She's in anguish over a boyfriend returned from Vietnam. She's not sure she even likes him anymore. Father Geis will advise.

Letter from Andrew Carimel in Canada who wants back issues of SFR. Ha. None left.

Russ Cardenal wants SFR info. "I have heard kind things about

your publication," he writes. "Please send me some detailed information about S-F Review. I'll be waiting, answer soon." He lives in Harvey, La.

Well, I'll send a postcard, I guess.

The Progress Report #1 of TORCON TWO arrived. I note that I am not yet a member of next year's worldcon. #3, for a supporting membership. Not bad. Okay. Bob Bloch is the pro guest of honor, and Bill Rotsler the fan guest of honor. I hope fandom has the decency to vote Bill the Best Fan Artist Hugo award for 1972 so he can be given it at TORCON 2. He has deserved one for a decade.

And a S.F.W.A. ballot. Amendments to the membership eligibility rules, and a proposal to raise the dues from \$5. to \$12.50. Fuck that. Cut the fat out of the SFWA BULLETIN. It costs \$1200 per year photo-offset. I fail to see why it can't be attractively mimeographed on quality paper with the use of some art on electrostencils and save at least six hundred dollars a year.

The fact is, a member of SFWA is better informed on books published and scheduled, market reports, and general info on s-f by subscribing to LOCUS.

the SFWA BULLETIN is a "prestige" magazine we could do without.

THE NEWS "RELATIVITY CONFIRMED, SCIENTISTS SAY" ran the
3-4-72 heading for the story in the L.A. TIMES. Two scientists went around the world twice, each in different directions, each with four atomic clocks, and they noticed a 40 billionth of a second difference. The eastward-bound clocks ran "slow".

Einstein was right. TAU ZERO is possible.

"COLLAPSE OF WORLD ECONOMY FORESEEN IF GROWTH GOES ON" A story on the front page of the 3-3-72 L.A. TIMES says. "The world economy is headed for collapse within 70 years—bringing widespread pestilence, poverty and starvation—unless economic growth is halted soon, a team of M.I.T. scientists and engineers said Thursday.

"They summarized and defended their findings—which in preliminary form have already touched off controversy—before a group of 200 political, scientific and industrial officials in a day-long symposium at the Smithsonian Institution.

"Indian Ambassador L.K. Jha, Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Elliot L. Richardson, and World Bank economist Hollis B. Chenery warned that any attempt to curtail economic growth around the world would create immense political problems, including heightened risk of war and revolution.

"But Richardson cautioned the other participants against taking the MIT study lightly. In a brief speech, he noted that despite liberal allowances for prospective technological breakthroughs and new resource discoveries, the computer-based "global model" developed by the researchers unswervingly concludes that economic growth is doomed.

"He urged that additional research be undertaken to test the MIT study's conclusions. Meanwhile, Richardson added, there should be stepped-up efforts to improve the technology of birth control and food production, which will be needed in

any case and which will be essential to implement any plan to curtail growth."

"The conclusion (of the study): These 'physical limits to growth are likely to be encountered in the lifetime of our children.'

"The study focuses on five major variables: the world's total 'nonrenewable supply of resources' (metal, rock, energy) plus the level of population, the amount of pollution, the rate of industrial output per capita and the amount of food production per capita."

The story is longer, but I can condense it. The optimum "model" of the future is a frozen world of no growth, industrial or population. But lurking still further in the future is the inevitable exhaustion of natural resources.

In short, no matter how it is sliced, the future is one of devastating social and economic up-and-down heaval. With the end result being a medieval-type technology which will gradually slip into stone age levels.

This is my reading of the future now, not the newspaper story evaluation.

As this Real Future sinks in, as the grim realities become inescapable, mankind's fanciful notion of space travel and conquering the universe will turn to hollow mockery and a painful joke.

It is obvious from the story above and Richardson's comments, that to restrict growth voluntarily will cause turmoil. To go on as we are will bring the same thing anyway, involuntarily. No escape. No way to avoid the grubby future.

What will happen to science fiction when this knowledge is accepted by the reading public?

We'd better start writing stories of psi space travel or visits by aliens or a really flabbergasting breakthrough in the electro-magnetic "space-warp" field.

We already are, of course, but the bedrock of a metal-poor, handcraft future precludes huge spaceships and the attendant technology.

THIS—NOW!—IS OUR GOLDEN AGE.

POLITICS—AND A PREDICTION

3-4-72

Muskie is a father image—
reassuring, solid, with an aura
of common sense and caution. He

would make a good President. Nothing spectacular. He's losing momentum.

Humphrey is looking a lot like Stassen to me, becoming an almost joke, a man whose time has come and gone but who won't admit it. Labor's boy; a strength and weakness.

McGovern is a loser. Midwest liberal lacks the credentials of family and money. Like Kefauver.

Lindsay has it all but is perhaps too late. If Nixon wins this year, Lindsay will be one of two men to beat for the 1974 Demo nomination.

Kennedy is lurking, waiting. Will accept a draft. Has a maybe fatal flaw—would you want this man deciding your fate as President, after behaving as he did when that girl drowned?

The other candidates are probably maneuvering for V.P. or leverage after the election.

PREDICTION: The Democrat Presidential Nominee will be either

Lindsay or Kennedy. Muskie will be stopped.

BOOK REVIEW

4-3-72

These comments on books aren't reviews or critiques, obviously. They're reactions; personal, out-of-balance, undiplomatic, and immediate.

With that understood, let me do my thing on SEED OF STARS by Dan Morgan and John Kippax. (Ballantine 02503-2, '95¢, 1972)

A writer can have a style that reads like a crippled man walks, but if he has plotted and structured his novel well enough, the dynamics of the carpentry will carry it.

Contrary—a writer with a singing style and a way with dialog can make a novel with an inferior, trite plot a joy to read; his prose is full of interesting detail, character, action.

And there are the writers whose ideas carry the reader in spite of wooden words and stick characters.

There are few pure types in these categories. There are very few writers of excellent prose who are also fine plot carpenters.

So, okay. SEED OF STARS is a commercial product. It has the structure, it has competent prose. It will satisfy most readers.

But after reading a chapter and a half I didn't want to continue. It's like watching MARNIX on TV. Okay for a time-filler, but if you can't stand to read mediocre s-f....

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST

3-5-72

Peel away another level of
motivation for my putting out
this magazine, and you come upon

a small, tender, pulsing blob of need for love. Each letter of comment is a morsel of love. Each subscription is a bit of precious affection.

I'm tempted to make a joke here, to take the curse off the above nakedness and vulnerability, but let it stand.

BOOK REVIEW

3-5-72

DENVER IS MISSING by D.F. Jones is a well-written ecological-disaster novel, a hybrid of the cycle of planetary disaster novels of past years (rising seas, lowering seas, heat, cold, world-wide plague, etc.).

In this one a HUGE underground vault of nitrogen is accidentally breached off the coast of California and with prevailing winds ends up diluting the oxygen over the United States and parts of Europe. Jones makes this disaster very real and immediate. Threading through this catastrophe is a fairly realistic romance formula. (Walker, \$5.95, 1971)

TELEVISION

3-5-72

Eve Arden has thickened in the waist but not improved as an actress since her OUR MISS BROOKS days.

Her role in the ABC TV movie "A Very Missing Person" as Miss Hildegard Withers was a bad joke. The premise that a retired teacher and amateur sleuth can solve crimes that 'puzzle New York's finest' is too too much. James Gregory as the detective she led around by the nose was clearly suffering. I watched about fifteen minutes of it.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
3-5-72

Shaving. Until a few months ago I could get a decent shave from an electric shaver. A Schick was the best for me, though I occasionally use a Remington now, when I'm in a hurry or when my face cannot stand to be blade-shaven so soon.

But last November or December my new Remington began to not shave me as well, and using the old Schick or the old Sears electric (a Schick motor and head in a different case) made no difference. It wasn't their age or dullness, it was my beard. Something had happened to my whiskers!

I never have gotten a blade-close shave with an electric, in spite of all the TV commercials claiming that possible. But it didn't matter—my beard didn't show that much or grow that much....

But now....a change. So I had to switch back to double-edged blades. And promptly started to bleed like a —

(Wild! I have a weird feeling of having written these words before! Is it only a plan to write this I remember? The above topic and opening seem weeks or months old in my memory.)

—stuck pig. Well, I scraped my skin a lot, especially my right neck. And upper lip. And I had those dreaded nubs!

I tried EDGE, the gel that turns to lather. I tried the "face saver" blades.

Ha.

In fact, I tried chromium blades, tungsten blades, platinum blades, stainless steel blades... And still bled and oozed precious bodily fluids.

But I learned. I learned that the Shave is a great American con game. No, I haven't grown a beard.

I learned that no matter which blade I used, I only got five decent shaves from it.

I seem to recall that stainless steel blades were supposed to give endless shaves compared to the old plain blue steel ones. And the platinum, chromium, tungsten blades were supposed to be God's gift to the American shaver.

All these new blades (and the regular introduction of new gimmick shaving devices) do is up the cost of shaving. The new blades and the new pressure can foams and gels make shaving ten to a hundred times more expensive than it used to be.

A triumph of advertising manipulation over common sense.

Remember when it was a rumor that the blade manufacturers were conspiring to keep stainless steel blades off the market because they lasted for hundreds of shaves and thus the blade manufacturers would go broke?

Then Wilkinson broke the conspiracy and started selling stainless blades in America and all at once Gillette and Schick came out with their own stainless blades, and since then the frantic competition has resulted in new alloy steel blades and "shaving systems" every few months.

And of course the electric shavers! What a planned obsolescence rat-race that has become!

So you know how I shave now? With an old-fashioned (shame, shame!) shaving mug, shaving brush and a cake of Williams shaving soap. The shaving mug is an old coffee mug; perfect size. The brush cost \$2.49 at Thrifty Drug. The soap, which will last at least six months, cost 23¢.

And my blades? I use Sears blades—stainless steel with a teflon coating. Thirty blades for 97¢.

And I'm getting five shaves, good ones, per blade. And I'm getting non-bloody shaves.

Somehow I feel there are a hundred areas in life where this lesson can be applied.

The simple, self-sufficient-to-the-limit-possible, low-waste, low-slavery-to-the-system life is my ideal.

For instance, paying rent bugs me. \$100 per month for this small single seems outrageous to me. Buy a house? Too expensive for me in a city, and I don't drive, so a small house in the sticks is impractical, if I'm alone.

Join a commune? Who would want a very private 44 year old nut like me? Besides, communes don't last very long.

How if I could find a group who would sell or lease a dab of land upon which I could plant a small mobile home, and with whom I could socialize a small bit each day, and with whom I could buy supplies during their trips to town... where I could get a decent number of TV channels...and where the mosquitoes weren't bad...(I HATE MOSQUITOES!)...I would sorely be tempted. If the group was stable.

I would want to buy a plot of land for independence sake. Tiny taxes. Low, low overhead.

A nation of renters is a nation of slaves.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
3-6-72

I called George at Barclay today—this morning—and he said nothing yet but call Wednesday morning. If I get two assignments this month and next I will be content. My original plan was to work in the vineyards of porno until the end of April, anyway. With this huge tax bill looming, it appears I'm stuck with it, if I do get those assignments.

I rode up to West L.A. this morning to see if I might qualify for food stamps. Out of curiosity and a bemused feeling that I might as well try...it could save me a lot of money.

County Social Services has a nice big building. But they do not have such things as informational booklets about food stamps or welfare. They are very jealous of their arcane secrets and regulations.

It is a rigid, suspicious, man-eating system they have developed. No information unless you are willing to actually apply for the stamps. No deviations from the ritual.

The initial encounter is with a counter behind which clerks routinely fill out a form—for everybody! It's a traffic sheet and I presume they get paid by the piece/person.

I was given two two-page forms to fill out. "Here's a clipboard and a pencil. Fill out the forms to the best of your ability, and return the clipboard and pencil to me. Keep the forms and come forward when your name is called."

The forms want to know everything, primarily financial and how long you've lived in California, and you'd better be ready to prove it, buster!

The clerks found it hard to believe I had never been mar-

ried and did not own a car.

When my name was called the clerk looked over my forms and asked if I had ever had welfare before.

I said no.

She turned pages in a looseleaf book, showing me types of welfare checks and vouchers. "Ever received any of these?"

I said again no, "I'm a virgin—" Heads jerked around. "... as far as applying for stamps or anything like this." No smiles.

So I have an appointment with a Mr. Hockson next Monday at 10:30 AM.

I am more bemused than ever.

Well, it's a good four miles round trip—good exercise on the bike.

THE MAIL A heavy day for mail. Book of the Month Club
3-6-72 wants to send me a double selection for April, but I will refuse. I probably should resign from the club, but I got THE WHOLE EARTH CATALOG through them, and who knows what treasures may come along in the future?

A letter from Z— who said she is getting horny lately and was reading my latest book, THE ARENA WOMEN (sf-porno) in bed with the full knowledge of her husband.

This is a tangled web of emotion and hangups we are into, she and I. Probably a good thing she lives so far away and that we may never meet. Still, the lure is there, after a couple years of correspondence.

Medi-Data, Inc. in New York sent me a "sexually oriented ad"—a catalog of porno books, films, magazines, the kind with redeeming social value in the cracks.

An appeal for funds from Stewart R. Mott and his new "People Politics." Mott is a millionaire, but he needs my money, too.

I need my money for "Dicky's Survival."

Richard Centing of the Ohio State University Libraries wants a sample copy of SFR for a "major exhibit on Science Fiction" for his libraries.

I'll send him a copy of SFR 43 and tell him the mag is dead.

Form 1040-ES; the 1972 Declaration of Estimated Tax for Individuals, from the never-forgetful IRS, complete with tear-out quarterly forms and envelopes.

\$200 is all you're getting from me this year, IRS! Thus do I defy thee! (Unless I get incredibly lucky.)

An SFR subscription from L.S. Dumbell of Port of Spain, Trinidad. *Sigh* I'll return the money order and send a copy of #43. Offer him a sub to RICHARD E. GEIS.

Two new book news releases from New American Library.

Note that scheduled for March release is SYBIL LEEK'S Astrological Guide to Successful Everyday Living. Ahmee, the effrontery of these witches!

Note also that Isaac Asimov is being reprinted again. This time LUCKY STARR AND THE OCEANS OF VENUS and LUCKY STARR AND THE BIG SUN MERCURY. (Written by "Paul French" originally.)

A demand from SSgt Oliver B. Murray II that I send a copy of SFR since he sent in 50¢ a while ago. So I'll send another copy!

F & SF

I bought a copy of the special James Blish issue today at Von's. It's the April issue. I am appalled at the shoddy printing and uneven paper trim. Also sad to see a switch to cheaper, thinner paper.

This could be the beginning of the end for this magazine. Once the physical reflection of quality goes....

Lousy cover, painted by Blish's wife.

THE NEWS

3-6-72 There was a shoe advert. on the back page of Part IV of the TIMES this morning. Freeman shoes. A buckled, big-heeled pair that look remarkably like women's shoes with overtones from the distortions of shape in THE YELLOW SUBMARINE.

But these are the newest fashions for men.

More and more the stylists have captured the young men and are now making them jump through seasonal fashion changes.

Well, seek ye your identity where ye must.

The Federal Reserve is dramatically increasing the nation's money supply...at a 12% per year increase.

That's a lot of inflationary pressure.

Add to that the infusion of 25 billion in straight debt by the government (which must be monetized by selling govt. bonds to banks, thereby increasing the banks' reserves, thus allowing the nation's banks to make loans to the amount of two or three times the amount of the new reserves).

That's a license to coin money for banks—they get paid interest on the govt. bonds they've bought, and get to create paper credit in multiples of the face value of the bonds.

Don't you wish you could do that?

See where all the inflation pressure comes from?

See why it's politically and financially wise to brainwash everyone possible into the belief that nasty labor unions cause rising prices?

High finance is a beautiful con game.

THE MAIL

3-7-72 A letter from G—, all psychologically naked, describing her weekend, unsatisfactory, with the actor in San Diego. She asks me the anguished question: "Is it a wrong feeling on my part, if I can't relax with every man that wants to screw me?"

She is very self-effacing, easily dominated, but resentful of the domination and her own weakness.

She pays too high a price in seeking love. So do I, usually.

A special edition of STANLEY (TAMU MSC, POB 4606, College Station, TEX 77840, 10¢) which is a kind of letter column and which is full of sound and fury of a local nature—comics fans vs. sf fans, feuds, etc. Stephen Goble is the man to blame.

((As you may note, I am instituting, beginning even, to print addresses and such when reviewing or commenting upon the zines received each day.))

A copy of NEW COLLAGE MAGAZINE, a poetry publication from Sarasota, Fla. Affiliated with a college or university, I

presume. This dedicated to William Hedrington, a recently died poet.

I'm not much for poetry, but I liked Hedrington's "Apple."
The dead litter so,
leave clothes in drawers,
old photographs, everything,
and go.

They are as thoughtless as children,
who will get up with the sun,
take an apple,
and set out for the world's end.

(Reprinted from Antioch Review, XXVIII (Winter 68-69), p. 449.)

(NEW COLLAGE, POB 1898, Sarasota, Fla. 33578, \$1.)

HAVERINGS #51 from good old Ethel Lindsay. Indominable. A listing and cursory review of current fanzines received. (6 Langley Av., Surbiton, Surrey, KT6 6QL, United Kingdom., \$1 for six issues.)

Got a letter returned by the P.O. from a box in Gardena which D— had last written me from. "Gome—not at this address" scribbled the mailman.

She's a teen-ager, erratic, unstable, judging from her words and handwriting, 17 years old, who answered one of my ads in THE STAFF. Never met her. Probably never will.

REVIEW 3-7-72 There isn't much I feel like saying about Ted White's STAR WOLF. He writes very effectively; makes the reader see, feel, hear, touch, taste. Vivid, sensual writing. Realistic detail.

The story of ugly little Makstarn's quest across a burning desert in search of his father, and the mystery of his genes, in the company of an intelligent wolf, is gripping.

Ted then interrupts to add a story line involving Lorex, a man-like half-alien with wings, the Lothians who are telepathic and live inside the winged Araths in symbiosis, and Cilla, a young human tribesgirl who is destined to be Makstarn's mate.

The book is part of a series. Previous were PHOENIX PRIME and THE SORCERESS OF QAR. There are obviously more books to follow.

The desert ordeal was the best part of the book—raw survival in a hostile environment. Ted tends to overwrite in spots and dwell on the obvious as the reader fidgets.

BLISH 3-7-72 His MIDSUMMER CENTURY, a short novel in the April F&SF, and which he characterized as a "pure adventure story, which one doesn't see often in these over-earnest days." is an eruditely-told THRILLING WONDER STORY story of a present-day scientist whose mind is warped 23,000 years into the future where he is sucked into a computer brain which he shares with its hostile occupant, Qvant, a relic from the last rebirth of human technology, of which there have been four since the present time.

Struggle, escape into a psychic human tribesman's brain, capture by the birds, who are now intelligent and rival man for mastery of the planet, eviction, lodgings in still another computer.... I enjoyed it.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
3-8-72

Nice day outside. Called George at Barclay House and he said he had Larry Shaw's problem at Brandon House—over-inventoried. I'm to call next Monday.

I guess they are doing only a few books per month now, waiting for sales to pick up or money due them in the pipeline to come through.

Several weeks ago Larry suggested I send in an outline for a "regular novel" with lots of sex. Not the formula I've followed for the Dansk line he was publishing: shame and humiliation and forced sex.

Well...I'll keep calling. Mayhap I'll pick up an assignment now and then in the coming months. But I don't think I want to do a full porno book for Larry. Will start on "Canned Meat" next week if no assignment.

I feel no great panic.

THE MAIL 3-8-72 Gee, the Board of Directors of The United Nations Association of the United States of America cordially invites me to become a member of UNA-USA. Into the circular file!

An envelope from Eugene McCarthy. Unopened—into the circular file.

Marshall D. Ossey sent a dollar for two issues of SFR. Well, I'll send him a copy of SFR43 and 48¢ postage.

A copy of the April PLAYBOY. Good interview with Jack Nicholson—honest.

A package from P— with a cassette of herself talking, plus some cassettes of debates from conventions. Harlan and Harrison at the Baycon was funny. It's a pity we don't have Harlan to kick around anymore.

P— rambles with nothing to say. She'd like to go to bed with me but her conscience won't let her. That's been the basic situation from the beginning.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST 3-9-72 I'm capable of lazying my way through life, o yes, but it would be a form of emotional disease, a melancholy, a giving-up, and I'd likely die a sad, sick death. I'm itchy. I can't loaf anymore. To work! To work!

I came upon a lovely quote in AN EYE FOR THE DRAGON by Dennis Bloodworth: "...for it is one of the pleasures of life to deal with men whom the pious have written off as all rogue.

"It is the righteous who are to be distrusted. Ambassadors are professional liars, and no one can be more preposterously dishonest than a second-rate politician, unless it is a second-rate academic. Status is no guarantee of probity." (p. 181.)

THE MAIL 3-9-72 The last \$500. from Barclay-Brandon. It will be used to pay the bulk of my income tax next week. In one door and out another.

A letter from Virginia Kidd discussing technical matters of manuscript presentation, which I asked for. I'd like to meet her sometime. I think I'd like her very much.

THE UNBEGOTTEN by John Creasey received from Walker. This is the guy who has four hundred plus books published. Never read one of his books before, so will read this. It has a sf hook according to the jacket: "Not a single woman had conceived a child in months! Responding to this ominous report from rural physicians, Dr. Palfrey, fighter of evil extraordinaire, embarks on a desperate battle to prevent the extinction of the human race."

Also received from Pocket Books: HEROES & VILLAINS by Angela Carter. "A fantasy novel of love and savagery in a wilderness world of the future."

SOMEONE LIKE YOU by Roald Dahl. "Collected masterpieces of bone-chilling surprise."

THE GHOULS, edited by Peter Haining. "Eighteen spine-tingling monster tales that became the most famous horror movies." With an Introduction by Vincent Price and an Afterword by Christopher Lee.

THE JDM BIBLIOPHILE #17 from Len and June Moffatt, Box 4456, Downey, CA 90241, 50¢.

Outstanding for an article by David Stewart which accuses sacred JDM of being not morally concerned with violence, and JDM's Reply.

Part of the reply is as follows: "As to violence, I cannot see that there is more now than ever before. The one area where FBI statistics can be reasonably free from local police distortion is murder, and my almanacs keep telling me that each year there are fewer per thousand of us. Instant news is also, we must remember, an obligation to fill a preordained space. The front page and the half hour must be filled by either puffing up a half-measure of violence to fill them, or by compressing a double measure. Most of the indictments of our times on grounds of violence come from younger people, say 18 to 30. It is this age group which, for many reasons, is less well versed in the history of man than the preceding generations of this country. Because they do not know history, they sentimentalize it, view it all as quaintness, mythic, stylized and somehow sweet."

"The reality of Vonnegut's corpse mines in the moon-scape of Dresden are no less real than the tons of flesh rotting on the barbed wire of Verdun, the stench of the cities pillaged by Tamerlane, the heads of dead Goths on Roman pikes. Man is hair and sweat, bowel and membrane, frightful hope and fearful fright. When the priests of the Holy Roman Church sent word to the Pope through his emissary in Spain regarding the triumphant conversion of the Indians of Florida to the faith, they also mentioned that, by their count, after long and perilous journeys, there were three Indians left alive on the entire peninsula, and these three were living in the compound of the church at St. Augustine. This is so grotesque a revelation, it is difficult to remember that the Indians screamed, shat, bled and died in as much piteous confusion as did Lt. Calley's momentary wards."

TELEVISION Sometimes life is just one damn TV GUIDE after 3-9-72 another....

Thank God for Public Broadcasting, and NET. The BBC historical series and the old classic silent and early talking pictures

have made TV bearable and convinced me that it is better to sit home and watch non-commercial, uninterrupted best-of-the-oldies than go out and pay 49¢ to \$2.00 or more to see flawed newies.

And nothing can beat the quality of HENRY VIII or ELIZABETH.

Besides, the current movies will be on TV with commercials in a few years. Maybe they'll be cut a bit, but I've seen enough naked breasts and extreme violence already so I won't and don't feel cheated if a network censor snips a bit around the edges.

Chances are I'll see a naked tit or two (or a realistic beheading) on PBS in one of the BBC dramas.

I suspect that more and more people are realizing this. But I imagine the local movie theater will survive on the margin for years yet.

Sooner or later a network (or a local channel) will try to reserve 11:30 to one AM as an "adult" time slot and run R films uncut.

That will doom the movie houses for sure.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST I started CANNED MEAT yesterday, and I'm sure I'll change what I've done later. But I did five pages and loved it. No resistance. It's a challenge and I hope I am able to keep doing the best I can. I expect my best at the moment isn't so much, but we'll see.

The novela has little structure; it's a future slice of life tied up with a character development that leads to tragedy.

This isn't what I expect to do in the future, this type of story, but it's what CANNED MEAT is, so I have to go where it is. It exists and I have to cut it out of the rock.

God, that sounds arty.

I'll be happy to sell one book a year if I write three.

TELEVISION The NET Playhouse Biography last night of 3-10-72 Isadora Duncan (written, produced, directed by Ken Russell) was absorbing. Curious how she died—a scarf caught by a wheel hub...

I presume it broke her neck.

One time, in a laundromat, C— playfully tightened a towel around my neck, inadvertently cutting off the blood to my brain.

I lost consciousness. And here's the thing—I didn't know it until I regained consciousness. I was GONE. I was DEAD. There wasn't anything in my mind while my brain was closed down.

She said I bent over and seemed to be laughing, but then realized it was convulsions. About three or four seconds.

Since then it has always seemed to me that if criminals must be executed, that is the best way. No pain, no lingering. You just GO. All consciousness is wiped out.

Of course to the observer it would seem otherwise.

I think hanging (properly done) may be the best way, since a skilled hangman would know how to make sure that those major arteries to the brain are blocked by the rope.

THE MAIL The usual monthly offering of porno films, mags
3-10-72 and books from XXX Inc. Prices for magazines are
 coming down, I see.

An unopened envelope from LAWRENCE F. O'BRIEN. I couldn't guess what's inside.

Same for envelope from the VOTER EDUCATION PROJECT, Inc. Deep six for both of them.

Letter from Mrs. R.P. HOFSTETTER of Texas, who wants to know the SFR sub rates. She enclosed a self-addressed stamped envelope for her answer. Her I appreciate. A free copy of SFR 43 to you, nice lady!

IS NOTHING SACRED Dept.

News release from New American Library announcing EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT CHINESE FOOD by Helen Rosenbaum. (But were afraid to try?) The release reprints a letter received by Miss Rosenbaum from Richard Nixon. The text: "PERSONAL. # "Dear Miss Rosenbaum: # "Through the courtesy of Senator Jacob Javits, I have received a copy of Everything You Always Wanted To Know About Chinese Food. I am particularly pleased to have your book made available to me as I prepare for my visit to the People's Republic of China. # "With my appreciation and best wishes, # "Sincerely, # "Richard Nixon."

A dollar from Z— as my first subscription to RICHARD E. GEIS. A nice gesture and I appreciate it. She knows she'll get a copy regardless.

A copy of the latest L.A. FREE PRESS. A cover story about electronic surveillance. Teachers and black student organizations listened to. L.A. Trade Tech was bugged.

This will make all teachers and student clubs uptight and will result in diligent searches for hidden mikes all across California, if not the nation.

Deans and Principals now are playing the "security" and "intelligence" game by showing their own lack of those qualities. But spying on people is fun!

THE MAIL Letter from mom. She had been approached by
3-11-72 people from the Model Cities something or other who
 have millions of federal funds to spend fixing up
 substandard city houses.

She didn't think she qualified, really, but if they could maybe get her a discount on the paint needed when she decided to have the place painted...?

They leaped in—sent around an examiner and a city inspector and found she needed this done—and that done—and the wiring—and the plumbing....

This was around Christmas. I was there when the men came around.

You must realize that house is a nice looking house! Brick front, new roof, neat, well kept. Built in the late thirties or early forties. Solid.

Mother is the perfectionist, high-standards kind of person. The paint in and out of that house looks fine to me. Same for the wallpaper. But after five years or so she "feels" it's wearing out and besides she's bored with it, so....

A city inspector can go into ANY moderately old house and

find code violations, and the one who looked through mom's house had a vested interest; the federal money used would put a lot of Portland men to work, buy a lot of supplies.

In my presence he told her, in an aggrieved tone, that the toilet in the bathroom was only 14 inches from the bathtub. The current code distance is 30 inches, or some such added distance. The implication being that the house had to be restructured to make it conform.

We were incredulous.

So now she writes that the Model Cities grant went through and "they" are apparently going to put in formica drain boards (because the old tile ones weren't nice enough? They looked fine to me!), new sink and faucets (Not needed, believe me!) tear up the old linoleum (which is not worn or torn—she'd never allow it; it's always waxed and polished. Besides, it's long-wearing plastic stuff), paint the kitchen, and even put in a new stove (the "old" one, electric, worked perfectly.), paint the bathroom, fix the leaky faucets in the tub (at least they're not going to move walls and plumbing in order to move the toilet back from the tub), paper both bedrooms and paint the woodwork, fix all the wiring and basement plumbing, put a railing on the back porch, paint the house and lord knows what all.

Now, believe me, the house doesn't really need all this done! Anyone making less than thirty thousand dollars a year would be happy to live in it.

AND within sight of the house, right up 16th Street, are five or six far older houses, rundown, one a shambles, which are eyesores, occupied by blacks.

But mom is a widow, lives on social security, owns the house free and clear, owns her own car, has about 15,000 dollars in the bank, and so she is more worthy...and white.

Well, whatthehell, she and my stepfather paid a lot of taxes and now she's getting something for it. But the implementation of the Model Cities program in Portland, Oregon seems a bit warped.

All the above makes me wonder if I might not come out of my welfare interview Monday with far more than the authorization to buy food stamps which I seek.

A letter from G— in which she details her last few days' quota of minor disasters. She wails, "Why me?"
Because you're there!

SFWA BULLETIN #40. Badly printed photo offset, half-size, on thin paper. Again I say this could be mimeographed on good paper for half the cost.

And I'll get chewed for not writing a letter about this to the proper SFWA officer instead of carping in public like this.

But obviously the BULLETIN and THE FORUM could be combined in one publication or at least in one mailing, with minimal coordination.

ZOT #3 from Jeff May (1630 E. Division, Springfield, MO 65803. Free, a personalzine.) Good ditto duplication and Dave Taylor is a fair artist.

I liked the interlineation:

Most mimeod zines are the work of cranks.

In a small handwrit note on page two, Jeff asks: "Ah, how does one approach a BMF? Well... Hey, Geis! Are you there? Have you been getting ZOT? Want to keep getting it?"

I'll trade, I'll trade. Maybe Alter Ego will write him a note.

POTLATCH from Joyce Katz. (59 Livingston St., Apt. 68, Brooklyn, NY 11201. Trade, letters, and 35¢ under duress.)

Always interesting as I look for my name and a stab in the back. No, seriously.... A personal fannish fanzine. Well done.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
3-11-72

On page 16 of CANNED MEAT and it is now obvious that I'll have to include the female viewpoint character in order to get all the slice-of-life info into the story, and to add balance and depth.

The result will be a short novel instead of a novelette. I hear and obey.

My days are mostly the same. Routine of few human contacts. Getting to like it. I may end up a recluse yet. Mail is important. That's the most satisfying contact/link, and this zine will be the conduit.

It may be a while, but at this moment I think I could actually keep on this way indefinitely. I changed my thought in mid-sentence just then. I started to say: It may be a while but at this moment I think I could live alone as a true hermit—given daily mail service and good TV reception.

If I succeed in selling a couple sf books, and it looks like I can live indefinitely as a sf writer (having successfully made the shift from porno), then by that time, given the continuation of my current emotional tendency....

Whatthefhell—who knows?

TELEVISION
3-11-72

I adore ALL IN THE FAMILY. It is a sheer delight. Tonight Archy and Edith were off stage and the kids were left at home in order to give stage center to the hypocrisy and bigotry and plain old human frailties of the middle class liberal family of Edith's cousin, Maude. Just beautiful.

This has got to be the best series in ten years. Maybe in all TV till now. Several of these shows have been absolutely classic.

THE REAL DON STEELE SHOW on channel 9 at six PM is something else in its own right. It's the standard teen-agers-dancing-to-recorded-rock-and-featured-live-singers-and-combos format.

BUT with a difference lately. Steele has always had luscious cuties dancing on featured platforms and hanging on his arms making goo-goo eyes when he announced acts and such. These two girls are paid.

Lately the program has become a girl-watcher's delight as one or both of these pros works without a bra...and as more and more of the teen girls also dance without cups. Jiggle, jiggle, bounce the boobies! I do like to see exertion-stimulated nipples poking out.

The featured singer today, a solid black girl in a skin-tight purple silk top (no bra!) was nice to see. And one of the pro dancers had a free-swinging pair of jugs that had to be 38's at least. The rest of her was slim and trim. These girls do writhe and wriggle, jerk and hop very interestingly.

REVIEW

3-12-72

I have re-read Bob Tucker's THE TIME MASTERS and enjoyed it again, though I think parts of it were paced too slow, and Gilbert Mash's broad hints that he was thousands of years old and was known as Gilgamesh in pre- or marginal historical times seemed reckless for a man in his position (but good tactics for a writer needing to intrigue the reader). But I'm a sucker for stories of immortal or near-immortal characters.

Bob wrote well in 1953 and his up-dating is skilled.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
3-12-72

Spent a half hour this morning working through some social-cultural flaws in CANNED MEAT. Requires rewriting parts of the first and second chapters. "Privacy tubes" don't make sense. Have to keep Great Mother Computer in her place.

Pearl came over for a visit this morning. We talked about three hours. Our talks are mostly her exposition and my reaction in a few words. She's a brilliant woman stuck in a slowly deteriorating diabetic, possibly cancerous overweight body.

Her problem is her intelligence—she's bored with most people and she makes a virtue of complete honesty with herself and others. Which is why I can name her and discuss her with equal honesty, I hope. She doesn't give a shit.

I had given her a dozen books to read—sf books mostly—and she was not impressed with Ursula LeGuin's LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS; was curious about Norman Spinrad as a person because she thought BUG JACK BARRON had elements of power but was the kind of book you know is crap as you read but can't stop reading, liked his CHILDREN OF HANLIN which was serialized in the FREE PRESS and THE STAFF; did not like Phil Farmer's THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST, thought he was trying to impress with erudition and only gave himself away as a phony; thought WHAT'S BECOME OF SCREWLOOSE by Ron Goulart was mildly enjoyable; declared Robert Moore Williams a nut from the evidence of LOVE IS FOREVER—WE ARE FOR TONIGHT; liked NEBULA AWARD STORIES #5, especially Harlan Ellison's "A Boy and His Dog", was impressed with his appearance on the TV show MANTRAP on which he condemned the show for being divisive, and felt his strong drive was attributable to his 5' 4" stature—"Five-foot-five men TRY HARD to compensate, but five-four men are DRIVEN!" ; thinks I'm hostile to women because of arm-fucking scenes in CAPTIVE OF THE LUST MASTER and THE ARENA WOMEN, among others, and from other evidence, but liked THE ARENA WOMEN somewhat; thinks THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF JACK WOODFORD shows Jack to have been a warped person, not hip as he used to think himself; liked NELL KIMBALL—Her Life as an American Madam by Herself, edited by Stephen Longstreet.

I suppose at base I am hostile to women. I owe it all to my dominating mother. *whimper* Love me, love me, you bitch! *whimper*.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
3-13-72

Curses! Foiled again! The rule is, about food stamps—
But let me tell what happened when I kept my appointment at the L.A. County Social Services build-

ing....

I arrived on time and checked in with the traffic clerk, took a seat and observed.

A tired blonde with a whiskey voice complained that she couldn't fill out the forms because she didn't have her reading glasses. She finally asked people nearby, "What does that line say, honey?"

A large proportion of the applicants were young, students, or hippie types. Others old, in their sixties and up.

Finally a young man with a mod haircut came out of the employees door and called my name. We walked down a hall to a cubicle. Small wooden table, three wooden chairs.

I gave him my papers showing my financial situation. He eyed the list of bank accounts. "This here—is this seventy dollars or seven dollars?"

I looked. "Seven hundred."

His eyes widened. "And...these...twenty-three hundred...and forty-four hundred...and...?"

"Yes."

He looked incredulous. I explained I simply wanted to know the basic qualification rules and had had to go through the system because no one would tell me anything.

He nodded and agreed the procedures were idiotic. "You can't have more than one thousand dollars in the bank. Come back if you lose all your money."

And so we parted. I to my bike for the ride home, he to deal with the real poor.

And to top it off, I called George this morning at Barclay and he gave me an assignment: YOUNG-OLD HITCHHIKING. We agreed I would do the "reverse" case history—a young person picking up an old person. The other four case histories in the book will be older picking up younger.

So I will be busy for three or four days, prostituting my talent. Yay!

THE MAIL CANTICLES FROM LABOWITZ from Gary Labowitz, POB 3-13-72 15727, Philadelphia, PA 19103, 50¢.

Ninety percent amateur fantasy fiction. The fiendish desire to quote lines from this stuff is too strong to resist.

From "The Escapist" by Ray Nelson: "You can sit with a globbly on a hilltop from sunrise to sunset, gazing with unfocused eyes at the creeping shadows and changing colors, and neither of you will say a word the whole time or even feel the urge to say a word. Isn't that wonderful?"

From "The Kingdom of the Air" by Darrell Schweitzer: "STOP!!" Everyone recognized that voice and froze. Absolute silence reigned as all eyes gazed upon the figure standing atop the King's cabin.

"Father!" Thillic gasped, spitting blood and a few broken teeth."

And: "Iyar's face was contorted with rage. 'Stop it! Stop it! I am King still!' He shook his fists in futile defiance. The crowd laughed at him, then began to shout curses. Someone threw a rung from a broken ladder at him and struck him on the forehead.

"The old King staggered and fell forward, dropping to the deck with a thud. The crowd drew back from his still form in

horror. Even if deposed, it was not right for a King to be slain thus. The cheering stopped. Everyone looked uneasily at his neighbor. Quickly the crowd began to disperse."

The COSMOPOLITAN NEWSLETTER (Committee of Small Magazine Editors & Publishers, POB 703, San Francisco, CA 94101). Tips, news, opinions, laments, and a listing of the membership. I note that SFR is not among the living in the list. Properly so. Should I rejoin and enter RICHARD E. GEIS? I like a good joke. Why not?

Golly! BUSINESS WEEK has reserved a complimentary copy of their new Executive Portfolio for me...provided I subscribe to a trial year of 52 issues.

A letter from Bob Stahl saying he's glad I'm returning to fanac. Also: "Am I right in assuming it will be another return for PSY? Dug out what few copies of the old PSY I have—10, 15, and 17-20 a few days ago and have been re-reading them. Very nice, if I may be post-complimentary. I particularly got a kick out of reading incredibly purple prose from the pen of Harlan E. If I ever meet him, I'm going to whip them out and demand an autograph, at no uncertain risk to my small defenseless body."

An appeal for funds from the NAACP. I'm on a lot of lists.

An airmail appeal from John Martin in England asking for help and advice.

He moans: "I've recently taken on the task of editing ANDURIL, the bulletin of the Tolkien Society in Britain. ...I wish to make ANDURIL a magazine that will contain artwork, articles, reviews, poetry, short stories maybe, anything in fact, of interest to make members sit up and take notice, and none of this need necessarily be about Tolkien, anything dealing with the fantasy genre is permissible."

He has a copy of SFR 43 and a couple earlier issues, was amazed at the wellknown authors who wrote for the mag, the artwork, and the quality. His question: "How, oh how did you do it???"

The answer is blowin' in the wind...whatever that means. To be honest now, without being a total egotist, I can only say that apparently there is something about me which clouds...er...clouds men's minds.

Hard work, John. Talent, skill, cunning, depravity; all these go into good editing.

Give each writer the best display you can. Send them complimentary copies. Be fair. Be honest. Be my love for no one else can end this yearning....

I don't know what to tell you, John! You either have a talent for editing or you don't. You'll find out by putting out a few issues. There are no arcane secrets that Big Name Fan editors guard with their lives.... (Well, you might sacrifice a virgin ((male or female)) to Bob Bloch while intoning a ritual from a Lefty Feop story.)

John Martin's address, in case someone wishes to contribute, is 27 Highland Drive, Bushey, Herts, England.

Do you have to be told to turn the page?

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
3-14-72

So much for fine intentions; I
have neglected my exercises for three
days now, doing only a few situps

during commercials at night while lolling on a pillow on the
floor (Lying on the couch gets boring, and I scrubbed the couch
cover recently to get the fart-sweat smell out of it, so want
to keep off it as much as possible when naked. Yes, I often
lounged around naked at night.).

Cut out one of the coupons in today's paper that offers to
send info about an acre of land in northern California (Modoc
County—up in the extreme north-east) for \$1495. (\$40. down
and \$20. per month forever) and offers to build a shell cabin
on an acre for a shade less than \$5,000.

But I threw it away. There would be mosquitoes up there,
and I'd likely be too far from stores for a bike, especially in
winter, etc.... Just a dream.

A small house near a small town near a big city is the best
bet.

Did six pages of "Youn/Old Hitchhiking" today, and may get
a few more pages done, but no hurry; I have until next Monday
if necessary. Interested in the Florida primary results tonight
and the Lakers' game.

THE MAIL As I get a lot of quotable letters of comment
3-14-72 in subsequent issues, I may edit this recounting of
every item of mail—like the offer of Periodical
Exposition Displays to show off SFR for a mere \$35.

Or the Southern Christian Leadership Conference's request
for funds. Same address label (by computer) as was on most of
the other recent begging mailings.

A letter from John Millard, Chairman of TORCON 2, thanking
me for my membership and correcting me on a minor matter re the
Progress Report #1. Also expressing interest in subbing to
REG. And: "I'll be at the L.A. Con in September, will you be
around?"

I don't know yet; depends on how reclusive I feel, and on
transportation. The hotel is about forty minutes from here by
bike. And I won't be able to afford a room. And I get tense
and uncomfortable around gangs of people.

Well...maybe those who are especially eager to meet me (and
they're due for a disappointment) will be able to drive over
here for an hour or so. That sounds The Mountain Must Come To
Me-ish, but there it is. I don't mind meeting people in quiet,
sane places, but I feel trapped in a convention where I'm unable
to leave when I want (as when I'm dependent on someone to drive
me home, and must wait till he's good and ready).

An offer of porno films and magazines from Denmark via Ger-
many. They will ship airmail from non-scandinavian countries
to avoid the extra-attention given by U.S. Customs to packages
from Denmark, Sweden.

Prices are down, I note.

A four-page diary-like letter from G—. She picked up a
man in a supermarket (or let herself be picked up) had coffee
with him and invited him to her place that night. Sure enough
—she got screwed. Enjoyed it, but not sure she had an orgasm.

As she suspects, she tries too hard to come. Ends each
letter with a plea-command: "Again I didn't get any mail,
from you or anyone! Damn! Write me."

Am I jealous? No. I'm mildly surprised at her continu-
ing promiscuity, after a history of few dates when young and
limited sex with her husband all during her married life.

She's trying to enjoy sex if it kills her! And, of
course, she is looking for a new husband.

A letter from Abigail Siner, a freshman at the U of Wisc.
who is researching s-f magazines and wants sample issues of
SFR for study.

I'll send her a copy of SFR 43. At this rate my dwindl-
ing supply of that last issue will be soon gone.

The 1971 Final Nebula Ballot.

I suppose Bob Silverberg will get the ^{novel} award for A TIME OF
CHANGES, which I don't believe is one of his best novels, nor
of top Nebula quality. He has a penchant for often avoiding
straight-line story development. In CHANGES he opened the
story very near the end and told the bulk of the story in a
long flashback, thus bringing in variety of plot structure
for him but wiping out most of the suspense and tension for
the reader, making 80% of the story an often dreary chore and
anticlimax. What kept the reader going was the intrinsic in-
terest of the strange culture and society of the colonized
planet, but it was all rather academic.

I'll vote Abstention for all categories this year. I
find I haven't read enough of the nominated stories and nov-
els to vote intelligently.

PHANTASMICOM #9, from Donald G. Keller and Jeffrey D.
Smith. A giant issue of 92 pages, counting covers, which has
exhausted them both. With this issue Keller bails out and
leaves the editing of future issues to Smith who vows to
publish slimmer issues in the belief he will last longer, and
he is right—if he is not already burned out.

For all its length it has few outstanding items...or mem-
orable items, I should say: Rotsler's rock cartoons, "The 20-
Mile Zone" in which James Tiptree, Jr, a professional sf writ-
er, discusses the wisdom of writing books and stories with
enough content to merit or require a second reading—do read-
ers want to "work" that hard?, and two long book reviews by
Ted Pauls who has a keen judgement but who writes like a man
who enjoys building brick walls, whatever that means.

This issue of PHANTASMICOM is 75¢ from Jeff Smith, 7205
Barlow Court, Baltimore, MD 21207.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
3-14-72

The phone rang and it was Z—
asking that I change her initial in
these pages to X—, or "Madame X".

Happy to oblige. I have no desire to cause an identity to be
discerned or embarrassment to ensue.

If the other women in my life object, I'll simply not re-
cord that aspect of my living in these pages.

She called again a while later and asked if I sign "Love,"
at the bottom of letters to other women, too. She admitted a
slight jealousy at the knowledge that G, M, C, D, S, and...uh
...R exist. I'm mildly crogged, myself.

THE MAIL LOCUS 109. I see that "Media Notes" is grow-
3-15-72 ing larger and larger each time. S-f in TV, radio
and the movies is no longer a sometime thing.

Letter from "Madame X" asking what she asked yesterday by
phone—change the initial! Also suggesting I circularize the
SFR subbers to drum up subbers for REG. Trouble is, it would
cost about \$60. and I don't want to spend that much.

Also she wrote: "No need to spend time or trouble actually
making a plaster cast. I have had loads of fun just dreaming
about having one ((of my thrillingly erect penis)). The real-
ity couldn't be half as much fun as the dream I am sure. (Al-
most.)"

Too bad there aren't some nubile young plaster-casters go-
ing around making intimate casts of BNFs, authors, editors....
Their fanzine would be interesting.

The March 23, 1972 issue of THE NEW YORK REVIEW of books.
I.F. Stone's analysis of Nixon's China visit is worth reading.
The key quotes for future reference are:

"Mao is a pentagon bonanza. The dimensions begin to appear
in the fiscal 1973 posture statement delivered to the Senate
Armed Services Committee by Admiral Moorer, chairman of the
Joint Chiefs of Staff, right after Laird's appearance. Ad-
miral Moorer thought it would be 'useful to note the current
deployment of all Soviet divisions and tactical air units.'
He told the committee, 'Of a total of 160 Soviet divisions
and about 4,300 tactical aircraft, about one quarter is or-
iented toward China.' That means forty divisions and more
than 1000 tactical air units which would be available against
the West if there were no Sino-Soviet split. It is no wonder
that old anti-Chinese Communist hands like Joe Alsop are de-
lirious about Nixon's romance with Mao, indifferent to the
broken heart Nixon left behind him in Taipei."

"China's slim industrial base reduces her weight in the
military balance. This is particularly true in the case of
nuclear development. There is a wide range of non-nuclear
industrial and electronic machinery and technology that
would make a crucial difference in the tempo of her nuclear
program. Already, as Laird notes, 'the Chinese missile
threat encompasses most cities and other area-type targets
in South and East Asia and a substantial part of the USSR.'
The Pentagon believes, he continued, 'that the Chinese could
begin deployment of an ICBM with a range of 3,000 nautical
miles or more, capable of striking all or most of the USSR,
by 1975.' But 3,000 nautical miles would only be a third of
the way across the Pacific.

"All this opens the widest—indeed the giddiest—perspect-
ive yet for the Nixon Doctrine. This is a new name for the
old idea he has taken from John Foster Dulles of providing
the equipment so that Asians can fight Asians for us, at fire
sale prices and coolie wages. What if it be applied not to
the relatively few Viets, Thais, Khmers, and Meos, but to
China's teeming millions, fearful of a Soviet first strike
and eager for weaponry to defend themselves?

"This is the card that old poker-player Nixon is taking
with him to Russia in a few weeks to the biggest poker game
of his career. This is the card with which he hopes in the
Kremlin to conclude the first phase of the SALT talks and per-

haps other matters as well. If Canning, with what became
the Monroe Doctrine, hoped to redress the balance of the
old world with the new, Nixon can redress the world milit-
ary balance by threatening to rearm China if the Soviets do
not come to terms. The Pax Americana may be in the process
of acquiring the world's most populous state as client. This
is the innermost meaning of the Peking visit and the coming
Kremlin talks."

We shall wait and see.

POLITICS It's astonishing how Muskie can "suffer a set-
3-15-72 back" by "only" getting 48% of the Democrat vote
in his territory, while Wallace can be triumphant
and victorious with 43% in his territory, Florida.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST I put a report on SFR and an
3-16-72 ad for REG on half a stencil and
mailed it off to LOCUS last night.
I should have an idea of the response by the end of April.

I've been thinking more and more of buying a small house
somewhere. But no hurry. Not this year, unless I sell my
s-f efforts quickly at good prices.

Of course, if I see a way to cut expenses by buying a
house....

THE MAIL My bank, Security Pacific National, so con-
3-16-72 cerned that I be able to pay my taxes on time,
has sent me, with my monthly statement, blank
Master Charge checks pre-printed with my name and address,
made out to the collector of Internal Revenue, to the state
Franchise Board, and to the county tax collector. All I have
to do is fill in the amounts required, sign my name, and all
is well—at 18% interest!

Sorry, but I paid my taxes two days ago with personal
checks at no interest.

Geez!

THE WASHINGTON MONTHLY wants me to subscribe. \$5. for
seven months. I think I will, and get my bonus copy of IN-
SIDE THE SYSTEM.

So, too, does the SATURDAY REVIEW. I can remember when
this was THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE and it reviewed
books and nothing but books. I refuse their kind offer. I
wish there was a book-review zine published that did nothing
but.

Book of the Month Club, Inc. is now starting THE COOKBOOK
CLUB. Will wonders never end? No.

THE NEWS Two stories in the TIMES this morning which
3-16-72 interact nicely.

"Vice Chairman J. L. Robertson of the Federal Reserve
Board told the Independent Bankers Assn. that the media are
'being used to undermine the credibility of everyone who
represents authority' and are jeopardizing national security.
Robertson, a former government lawyer and FBI agent, said,
'We must not permit our country to be immobilized and rend-

ered defenseless by media manipulation."

And—

"CAMDEN, NJ—FBI informant Robert W. Hardy, the chief government witness against 28 persons in a Camden draft board raid, has signed an affidavit saying he was a \$60-a-day agent provocateur whose leadership was essential to the raid."

"The affidavit alleges that the FBI broke a promise to make arrests before the raid could be carried out. And it quotes the FBI as saying that 'someone at the little White House in California' wanted the raid to 'actually happen.'"

The media are being used, alright. But it backfires sometimes. In this case our government, at the highest levels, wanted to buttress the Berrigan prosecution with a manufactured, nicely timed draft board raid.

It seems that with the ITT case, and others, where top government officials are caught lying, that they are willfully manipulating the media to discredit their own credibility!

Robertson was referring to McGovern, Lindsay, etc., "whom he declined to name" and accusing them of 'manipulation' because they are telling the country to reorder its priorities and to cut the defense budget. If the media reports what they say it is manipulated. Strange logic.

And note his words, 'We must not permit...' Not 'We must resist...' or 'We must argue against...' This is a man who thinks he and his class are the rulers of America...and he's right. He simply erred in making it obvious.

Tonight Nixon went on TV to proclaim that busing is wrong and misrepresented the orders of the Federal courts in his argument. He is going back to the old Southern argument of "Separate but Equal."

Fine cheap politics. What he proposes is of questionable constitutionality. He argued for an act of Congress to stop bussing and another act to make all schools equal, saying that a constitutional amendment would take too long—18 months at the least. How long does he think it will take a Democrat-controlled senate and house of representatives to pass these bills and their constitutionality to be decided by the Supreme Court?

No, it was a cunning, and obvious ploy to take Wallace's big ammunition away, to gather the south (and most parents) to his election-year bosom, and to pressure the Democrats.

Nixon is a skilled politician.

The only thing that will beat him is a deteriorating economy.

THE MAIL
3-17-72

Got a very cool little letter from G— which ended with: "When I see you on the 25th, I hope you will extend to me, the courtesy of explaining the snide remark you made in your 3-12 letter. It hurt me deeply, especially coming from you."

As I recall, I commented on her picking up a man in the supermarket, or allowing herself to be picked up....

I see now it was the wrong phrase...and reveals to me a lurking jealousy and a strong element of double standard. I have no right to be jealous or to paint her dirty for spontaneously responding to somebody who approached her. God knows I've gone to bed with women within hours of meeting them, and

once within half an hour. I certainly didn't then or now think myself a soiled or "easy" man.

Of course, she might be hurting because she accepts the double standard and feels guilty.

And I might have subconsciously deliberately chosen a put-down phrase in order to drive her away. Or in retaliation for her deciding to wait a month before seeing me again, even though I'm glad—on one level—it will have been a month.

Sometimes I think Lem's SOLARIS is actually a description of the human subconscious.

The Tyson-Rose Company of Guttenberg, NJ sent me a catalog of their products—garments made of latex rubber.

The inside cover has a Short History of Rubber Clothing.

I quote: "By the late 1920's rubber fashion garments were openly on sale in Germany and the United States. In America, the two great centers of rubber-wearing were Florida, in the two towns of Miami and Palm Beach, which even then were fast becoming millionaire's paradises and inevitably, Hollywood, Calif. If a starlet of the time wanted to catch the eye of a producer, she appeared at the Brown Derby in a rubber dress. We can't quote names, but we know of one famous and glamorous, German star who in this way gained the attention which put her in the top of the film business for 30 years.

"In England, a white evening dress in rubber made its appearance on the stage of a London theatre in 1932 and caused a sensation. It even extended the run of what was otherwise a very mediocre production.

"However, the invention of latex rubber sheeting, which is strong, stretchy and practically indistructible has transformed the rubber garment industry. Earlier rubber when vulcanized had a strong odor and tended to crack badly. Unvulcanized rubber literally rotted in a short period of exposure to the air and light. But latex sheeting, which is just pure rubber, with the necessary pigments and fillers added, and treated with a process which prevents it from rotting and perishing is a material which is ideal for its purpose.

"Today, latex rubber sheeting, in a wide range of colors and thicknesses, is made into most attractive fashion garments by manufacturers who design and make specially with this material every year, in the U.K., U.S.A., and Germany, in particular, tens of thousands of men and women are coming to appreciate the special qualities of clothing made from rubber. It certainly 'induces a free and healthy perspiration'. Which in itself is good for people living in cold climates, cleaning and invigorating the skin. It 'feels' nice, which is important to people living in an insecure world where some fool is liable at any moment to pull the string which will blow us all to kingdom come. And for some reason, this material worn next to the skin is pleasantly stimulating."

The prices of these rubber garments are high: a torso swimsuit, \$24.50; knee-length tights, \$22.95; bloomers, \$19.50; hotpants and bra, \$23.95; 18" gloves, \$8.75, etc.

When Pearl was here last Sunday we happened to talk of

the underlying psychology of rubber clothes. She thought the appeal could be traced back to rubber diapers, while I thought it might be the tightness and constriction and "security" such armor gives. Could be we're both right.

Perhaps the hidden appeal of the skin-diver's wetsuit is the real reason for the popularity of that sport.

POLITICS The Wallace vote in Florida was obviously a pro-
3-19-72 test vote; most people are sick and tired of the
 way things are going in and around this country, in
every class, from left to right.

The voters are using Wallace the way the French people have used the Communist party—as a warning to the Establishment.

If Wallace spoke without an accent and looked like Lindsay, he'd really be trouble. His major liability is that he looks and sounds like what he thinks.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST Thinking more and more of being a
3-19-72 hermit, with or without companions.

But I want all the creature comforts that I have become used to—TV, utilities, a newspaper every morning, moderate weather, the sounds of people around me (but not intruding).

Bruce Pelz called...Friday, I think, and asked me to a party at his place down on 15th St. I thanked him, but when the time came Saturday night, I didn't go.

I always feel out of place and subtly ignored at parties, except when I play poker at one. But poker is a device for me and some others to function at a party. It's a copout.

Of course at Bruce's get-togethers I'm not one of the social in-group, I don't really know anyone to really talk to, so....
whimper

THE MAIL I didn't answer S—'s last letter and I feel
3-20-72 vaguely guilty about it. I want to simplify my life.
 Or weed out the pointless contacts. And I don't see
anything in the future for she and I except a desultory correspondence. She's a mixed-up girl, wary, aggressive, defensive. What the hell would I do with her if I did "capture" her with my keen mind, wise and witty sayings, and aura of maturity?

As for D—. I doubt she'll write again. It's been months. Same for C—, who hasn't called for a couple months. I expect I'll hear from her eventually, though. Her new roles as Mother and Wife have claimed her, more and more.

So I am down to G—, M—, and Madame X. I don't count R— who lives in Holland and who corresponds via tape cassette every now and again.

Got a letter from G— today. I am once more "Dear Dicky, Sweetie," with the "y" and "Sweetie" amended in ink after the letter was typed, I suppose.

It seems that my 'snide' remark in a previous letter was not the 'pickup' reference, but something else—which she again does not detail. I'm in the dark. Well, she'll tell me and I'll confront my sin, come Saturday.

My TORCON TWO membership card. I'm #397. The wall next to my phone is becoming papered with convention membership cards.

B.C. #1, a personalzine published by Railee Bothman, 1300 West Adams, Kirkwood, MO 63122, and Leigh Couch, #1 Cymry Lane, Rt.2, Box 889, Arnold, MO 63010. For trades and comment.

They alternate with chatter and discussion. Of interest is Leigh's recounting of a discussion about "How Do You Define a Fan?"

More people I'd like to meet someday. But not at a convention.

Postcard from THEATRE DU GRAND-GUIGNOL DE PARIS of New York asking for a sample copy of SFR and advertising rates.

Electric bill—\$12.92 for 58 days.

Press release from New American Library announcing a "hot" item: MARIHUANA—A Signal of Misunderstanding, the Official Report of the National Commission on Marihuana and Drug Abuse. To be released and sold 24 hours after the Report is issued by the government.

About four years ago, Brian Kirby mentioned a bet with someone that pot would be legalized in five years. It may be six or seven, but who would have thunk, four years ago, that Important People would be advocating legalization of possession of small amounts for personal use? Only certain wishful thinkers, most of us would have said. Me included.

Pot may be in the position of pornography soon—okay to 'possess and pursue' in the privacy of your own home, but don't give any to the kids! An interesting legal hypocrisy: Don't expect to legally buy it or sell it.

Would you believe a Cancer Society slogan: "If You Must Smoke—Smoke Pot"?

A review copy of THE OVERMAN CULTURE by Edmund Cooper, (Putnam, \$5.95).

I'll read it soon. But thoughts about book publishing sprout like weeds in my mind. This is a hardback, of about 60,000 words tops, and is priced at \$6. That seems a horrendous price. How many copies are actually sold? Very few, I imagine. Most copies probably go to reviewers and libraries.

I was toying with the idea of self-publication a few nights ago. Jack Woodford, in his THE LOUD LITERARY LAMAS OF NEW YORK (Vantage Press, \$2.50, 1950) advocated it (and did it) and gives good reasons and arguments why you should self-publish.

I could do it easily enough: publish a sf novel of my own by mimeograph, use good paper, use the new plastic covers and plastic spine bindings, and... Who would buy it? A few fans, a few collectors. I could run 500 copies, number them and autograph each one. Price it at five dollars per copy and if the edition sold out I'd profit by about two thousand dollars.

THEN I could probably sell it to the "professional" publishers. Or run another private edition.

THERE'S A LOT OF IFs in the above.

The basic thought and attitude of a sf fan-reader toward this kind of self-publication is—if it's any good a regular publisher would publish it, therefore it's probably a lousy novel, and I won't be a sucker.

A fair assumption unless he knew I could write and had read reviews in the fan and professional magazines praising the book. And even then few would actually plunk out five bucks for a mimeographed novel.

And yet... The temptation... The idea of Doing It My Way, of doing it all—writing, printing, selling my own work on a private, handcrafted, underground, non-Establishment basis appeals to me immensely.

It's self-delusion. It's ego-tripping. It's Beat The System. It's the non-conformist's heaven.

And I may actually try it one day. Better to establish my credentials as a pro writer with several regularly published sf novels first... But that's a copout. The purist in me wants to do-it-now.

The realist stomps the idea.

But...if I WAS a hermit, in a small paid-for house and had five-year's money in the bank....

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
3-20-72

I called George at Barclay this morning—no assignment this week. So it's back to work on the sf novel.

As a mattera-fac, one assignment per month, for rent-food money, would suit me fine.

I'm down to 172½ pounds. I stopped eating bread last week.

"If publishers had to pay ten percent to God they would have let the Bible go out of print long ago." —Jack Woodford.

"Dr. Edmund Berger, the eminent New York psychiatrist, says: 'I have never encountered a normal writer, either in my office, or in private life, or in studying the life histories of writers. I doubt if anyone has met such a phenomenon as a "normal" writer. Normal people just don't feel impelled to write.'

"They don't feel impelled to write because they can't. They wish to be entertained by people with eccentric imaginations. That is the point the editor, reviewer and publisher can never understand. 'Why can't writers be the same sort of clods we are?' they wail, decade in and decade out, century in and century out. If writers were like reviewers, editors and publishers, obviously nobody would read them."

—Jack Woodford.

THE WAR
3-20-72

The AP writer in Saigon has a sense of humor. The first two paragraphs of his story as printed in the Sunday TIMES read like this:

"Government soldiers beat back an assault by hundreds of North Vietnamese troops between Hue and the A Shau Valley, killing 180 enemy with the aid of air and artillery strikes, the Saigon command said today.

"The announcement said there was no complete report on South Vietnamese casualties in the action Saturday."

JACK WOODFORD
3-21-72

Jack is dead now, of course. He died last year. A short obit appeared in the L.A. TIMES:

"Williamsburg, VA (AP) Josiah Pitts Woolfolk, who published hundreds of short stories and a dozen or more novels under the name Jack Woodford, died early Sunday at Eastern State Hospital.

"In the late 1930's, he wrote mildly pornographic novels un-

der such titles as "Sin and Such," "White Heat," and "Love in Virginia."

"In his later years he fell on hard times. He was convicted of mail fraud and served a term in a federal penitentiary.

"Officials said Sunday his body was unclaimed. It will be turned over to the state for burial."

He was a tough, uncompromising old bird. He was 71 when he died. He always liked to brag how old he was in his non-fiction books.

He wrote a pocketbook about his stay in prison that was published by a fourth-rank outfit in Chicago. (Who also published two of my books.) In that book he never mentioned why he was sent up.

I once had a story in an issue of ADAM or SIR KNIGHT or THE ADAM READER (I forget) in which he also had a story. I was proud to be in his company....because he taught me the basics of writing and plotting in his how-to-write books. WRITING AND SELLING is the best known, but his PLOTTING is more valuable—and I have a copy. It must be out of print. I also have his WRITER'S CRAMP, THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF JACK WOODFORD, and THE LOUD LITERARY LAMAS OF NEW YORK.

Hail and farewell, Jack.

THE MAIL

Complimentary copies of two books from Barclay House in which I have a case-history: THE TEENAGE SEDUCTRESS and LOVE IN THE FAMILY. I always like to read the other case-histories in these books and compare them to mine. Honestly, I think I almost always do the best job.

Review copy of H.G. Wells' THE INVISIBLE MAN from Popular Library. No copyright, only "All Rights Reserved". What the hell does that mean?

The latest gas bill, but I think from now on I'll omit mentioning these type things.

A lovey-dovey letter from G—. Still won't mention my sin, but was delighted by something I wrote in my last letter. Win a few, lose a few.

Card from David Lawrence of Guanajuato, Mexico. Says he's a published writer/poet esp. interested in S.F./Fan. & a prospective contributor...wants a sample copy of SFR. Umph.

Big postcard showing Ayers Rock, the world's largest monolith, in Australia, from the Australia in Seventy-five Committee. "Thanks for the use of your name in our Noreascon ad. I'll buy you a drink at LA CON if I can find you!"

Signed by Robin Johnson and John Bangsund, Bill Wright, E. Hanelfretel(?), John Foyster, and Clinton McGowan(?)

And I thought my signiture was hard to read.

Ayers Rock, by the way, is very large and very orange.

TECHNOLOGY AND HUMAN AFFAIRS, Vol.3, Number 5, a slickly printed publication of the Illinois Institute of Technology, quarterly, edited by Irene Macauley, which features "Stonehenge: An Historical Reconstruction" by Leon E. Stover, an associate professor of anthropology, and Harry Harrison....

and "How I Built Stonehenge" by Leon E. Stover.

The first item is excerpts (2) from *STONEHENGE*, a novel by Stover and Harrison, to be published simultaneously by Davies in London, and Scribner's here next month, that is, April.

Now then—

The excerpts show a stiff, formal-historical prose. Publishable, of course, because Harry Harrison's contribution was to make it so.

The premise is made clear in the following article: Stover thinks (or speculates) that Stonehenge was a kind of symbolic government site for the ancient tribes in that section of Britain. He feels an Egyptian with stone know-how built it to glorify chiefs and warriors, for political and economic reasons. Mediterranean power politics, the British tin mines and a design to make one nation of the warring island tribes were the elements.

Stover puts down the astronomical theory to explain the meaning of Stonehenge's function which was published in Gerald Hawkins' *STONEHENGE DECODED*.

Stover says, "Opposition to Hawkins is almost universal among archaeologists and pre-historians." and "Hawkins can be dismissed with a simple historical observation: Not even the Babylonians, the most advanced astronomers of the time, had yet predicted eclipse predictions by the middle of the second millennium B.C."

Yes, but— I saw the TV documentary which explained and illustrated Hawkins' theory...and it seemed to work: the sun did shine through the proper gap and so on as the astronomer said it would. Empirically, wasn't his theory proven?

It's okay to say the local tribes couldn't have built the stone structures and couldn't have known enough math and astronomy...but there it is—it functions.

I suppose the two immortals are the ones who built it. It's time for Bob Bloch and Bob Lucker to admit their true roles in man's development.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
3-22-72

M— dropped over this morning for a few minutes before seeing her doctor. She is having a relapse into

the severe hypoglycemia she had a few months ago. She tries to do too much—college courses, working and, last I heard, beginning tennis.

Now that ol' devil, low blood sugar, is dragging her down again. Most authorities feel the disease is triggered by psychological pressures.

In M—'s case I suspect that's true; she's the detached personality (as am I) who represses or suppresses her need for closeness and belonging. And she has had a lot of failure.

I think I may be safely in love with her; "safely" because she keeps me at a distance. How we would work out in closer proximity I can't imagine.

When I first kissed her I thought I had fallen into a vat of warm honey. That extreme reaction has cooled, but she still knocks me out. We rarely make love. She is a dream in bed, though, and has beautiful orgasms.

She may be depressed now because of a falling behind in schoolwork or financial problems.

But she caught me in bed reading the paper. I dressed in

the bathroom while she looked through the TV guide and looked at my copy of *THE SHAPE OF FURTHER THINGS* by Brian W. Aldiss (a review copy sent last year by Doubleday...and only now am I getting to it).

When I emerged, she asked me about the Aldiss book.

I wasn't then far into it—to the point of his discussion and speculations on the importance of REMs and dreaming during sleep.

I showed her the graph on page 25 which shows the lengthening periods of dreaming and the shallowing of sleep as the hours pass.

Aldiss quotes scientists who theorize that from experiments in interrupted dream and interrupted non-dream states it is possible that at least some psychoses are the result of a brain's malfunctioning dreaming mechanism...if one accepts that apparently "dreaming" is when the brain sorts out the previous waking period's input of experiences. If the brain doesn't have this housekeeping time it becomes cluttered, disorganized and, in time, to one degree or another, insane.

And that, perhaps, is the real reason we must sleep—so that our brains can sweep up and put new flowers in the vases, as well as wash the socks and put away the toys. Resting the body, it seems, doesn't require that much time in bed, with our lower minds busy while our consciousness is unplugged.

M— had to leave. She will probably come over Friday night to watch *POTEMKIN* with me on Ch. 28. I look forward to a few kisses and a pleasant two hours.

Now, I read further into Aldiss's book this afternoon, and he led me into this, which I consider now to be the key to understanding the contradiction that is man:

"The construction of the human brain is complex not only in physical structure but in temporal development. The consciousness dwelling in it lives in the equivalent glass-and-steel skyscraper, erected in a few record-breaking weeks; when we look inside the skyscraper, we find it has been built round a primitive little monastery, while the monastery itself is constructed on the uncouth stone remains of a druid's circle. To put it in more precise terms, the phylogenetically modern cortex or 'grey matter' is the outer layer of the brain; it enfolds the limbic system, which consists of a brain that has much in common with mammal brains, folded about a still earlier brain that has much in common with the primitive brains of reptiles.

"These three evolutionary layers of the brain are labelled neopallium, paleopallium and archipallium. Professor Paul MacLean, who has developed a theory of the emotions based on a study of the brain, calls them neocortex, mesocortex and archicortex; these are the terms I use here, for they are the terms used by Arthur Koestler in his book *THE GHOST IN THE MACHINE* (1967), a brilliant speculative essay which advances MacLean's theories, and a book on which I lean heavily."

"The human brain is thus seen to be a curious structure. Inside the essentially human, an alligator lies within the embrace of a dog. It is with this polygenous maze that we

go ahead and challenge nature and the fates."

"We do well to remember that the neocortex is a very recent development: not much more than half a million years old. Moreover, it has developed with amazing rapidity (there is nothing to indicate that its development is over). We remain close to our origins. And that statement has a meaning that bites when we know that we still carry those origins, or atrophied versions of them, about in our head.

"Although this speedy development of the neocortex has (now literally) rocketed our species to success, it carries its penalties. For one thing, the neocortex and the limbic brain both retain certain areas of autonomy which sometimes come into conflict. Phylogenetic confusions arise; the phantom of a claw may always lurk in an outstretched hand."

"Natural processes employ economy of means; it would have been wasteful to create a new order from the old mammal order—a new order with a new brain; instead, homo sapiens stumbled into being with a 'tumorous overgrowth', as one anthropologist puts it, on an old brain.

"It is this brain of ours that Koestler calls jerry-built. Pointing to a paranoid streak in human history, he claims that 'schizo-physiology' is built into the species; at times, and especially at times of crisis, the two halves of the brain, modern and archaic, pull different ways. Something was sacrificed by the so-speedy development of the neocortex; insufficient neural connections were established between the two phylogenetic epochs. As a result, there is inadequate hierarchic co-ordination between instinct and intelligence. From this weakness, mankind's historic troubles flow: wars, rapes, rivalries and violence."

It seems that we are born with all the elements of neurosis built-in. Thus dies mind-over-matter. Thus dies the spirit-over-flesh. Why fight the 'animal' within? Why not come to terms with it/them?

A few days ago (before reading Aldiss) I bought a book by Samuel I. Greenberg, M.D.: NEUROSIS IS A PAINFUL STYLE OF LIVING (Signet Q4796, 95¢).

Greenberg is a disciple of Karen Horney. He divides neurotics into three basic types: The Compliant type, the Detached type, and the Aggressive type.

These are the three ways neurotics cope with their fear and anxiety.

It's a good book as far as it goes. I had a few reinforcing insights from it and I think most anyone would profit from its reading.

Greenberg says that 80% of Americans are neurotic to one degree or another, and he often repeats that we are all mixtures of healthy and neurotic personality and character elements.

There is one paragraph which gets to the guts of it:

"At the deepest level, according to Karen Horney, is the basic anxiety of being 'isolated and helpless' in a potentially hostile world. It is the terror of being abandoned and powerless in a world full of dangers. It is the equivalent of feeling impotent, inadequate, inferior, unlovable. At its core is the feeling of being so worthless that people will have nothing to do with you." "Beginning in childhood, underlying anxiety forces the child to build up a series of de-

fenses and to develop in the distorted way which we call neurotic."

MY basic, core neurosis is this: I do have a certain degree of lack of coordination and skeletal malformation. I can't endure it! My ego cringes at my imperfection. Clothes never hang quite right on me, I walk oddly, and I hate to have people look at me.

So I get tense when I'm "exposed" to people, especially in public. I feel inferior physically and so try to compensate intellectually.

I feel so unworthy I arrange my life so that women usually don't find me very good mate material. Yet, of course, there are opposite, healthy yangs to the neurotic yins. I'm like a yo-yo sometimes; moving toward love, then rejecting it, wanting friends and contact, and running toward the hermit life.

I could go on and on...and probably will in future issues of this magazine.

But I want to comment briefly on the above quote from the book: if most people are neurotic, then a man who is strong, who can stand alone, who is an overdog, a winner, this man will appeal to all the neurotics as a hero.

And if he were to be immortal! Ahhhhh....

So now we know why a hero is best in a story, and what elements to incorporate—the bedrock of a good story which has endured, unchanged, since man began—a central character we wish we could be, the perfect image we cherish of ourselves while we avoid and run from the imperfect reality. Give us neurotics a superman and we'll love him as we cannot love ourselves.

(As a matter of fact, I have plans for a series of sf novels about Roy Kunzar, the one immortal man. He will live a hero; strong, masculine, keen of eye and mind, etc.

This is a nearly foolproof formula; it takes a very, very bad writer to butch it—but of course there are a lot of very bad writers around, in sf especially.)

There is a tabulation of HEALTHY VS. NEUROTIC qualities on pages 68-9 in NEUROSIS IS A PAINFUL STYLE OF LIVING which I think would be of interest now and in future:

HEALTHY	NEUROTIC
1. courageous	1. fearful
2. realistic	2. given to wishful thinking
3. disciplined	3. can't wait, wants immediate gratification.
4. good judgement	4. goes to extremes
5. fresh outlook, open minded	5. prejudiced, close-minded
6. spontaneous	6. driven, compulsive
7. flexible	7. rigid
8. assertive	8. hostile, vindictive
9. loving	9. clinging, dependent
10. zest for living	10. apathetic, impoverished
11. sincere	11. self-deceiving, fragmented
12. feels deeply	12. "numb," half alive

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| 13. self-respect, dignity | 13. vacillates between arrogance and self-contempt |
| 14. orderly | 14. inconsistently orderly |
| 15. good relationships with people | 15. exploits or is exploited |
| 16. productive and creative | 16. wasteful |
| 17. oriented toward growth | 17. oriented toward fame, prestige |
| 18. good sense of identity | 18. alienated, "a stranger to himself" |

I look at the above list and I have to say yes to both sides, almost every number. Some more, some less, all at once. Hey, look, I'm complicated!

THE MAIL the BODE BULLETIN #4 from George W. Beahn and
3-23-72 Cuyler W. Brooks, Jr. at 713 Paul Street, Newport
 News, VA 23605. 10¢.

Interesting for a photo-offset photo page showing that Bode has a mop of curly hair, that Jeff Jones is a very lean, long-haired young man. No comment on Albert Schuster, Berni Wrightson and John Mansfield.

Ahhh...a dollar for the first issue of this magazine, from R.P. Daniel Say. Clever opening: "Dear Mr. Geis, (-enstein)"

Yas, the mad Dr. Geisenstein has created another monster! From the same laboratory that brought you PSYCHOTIC and SFR! Now, fans, now—RICHARD E. GEIS!

"AArrrrgh! Urrr..." *clomp - clomp - clomp* and so out into the world.

A thin book of poems by Karl Edd, Ph.D. titled BOOKER I. Self-published by Karl, on a small hand press. I like to see this.

Why, I remember Karl from the good old days of the Beatniks down in Venice West, when Big Daddy Nord was king and the Gas House hadn't been leveled yet by conniving citizen groups.

We lived in the same building, Karl and I—19 Wavecrest—and he painted and wrote and I wrote....and he introduced me to Pearl....

I lived in a two-by-four apartment that rented for \$50 a month, I think. Wow. Memories.

But, Karl, I don't like these poems; they strike me as do-goodish liberal and incredibly presemptuous in their imitation of Booker T. Washington's poem style and theme.

One dollar from Karl Edd, 212 So. Broadway, Denver, Colo. 80209.

THE MAIL An invite from Bill Evans, Secretary-Treasurer
3-24-72 of FAPA, to join. AT LAST! After all these years
 of slowly climbing the waiting-list....

16. 1 10011 1001

THE ECONOMY I get so BUGGED by this continuing, all-
3-24-72 pervasive equating of inflation with rising
 prices and the cost of living.

They are not the same thing!

A rise in prices does not even equate with a rise in the cost of living, necessarily.

Have I blown your mind?

And Nixon comes on and unctuously puts down Meany for walking off the Pay Board and as he implies, running out on his duty to help curb inflation!

Jesus! The bigger the lie the easier it must be to tell.

Somehow, in the past twenty years or so, 'inflation' has come to mean rising prices. Everyone accepts this. No one questions it. Combatting inflation now means fighting price and wage increases!

Which is like saying that in order to keep the painted figures on a balloon from getting larger faster we should resist the stretching of the rubber. Never mention air input.

The so-called 'wage-price inflationary spiral' is snake oil, a con game vested interests (government, corporations and big unions) keep playing because they all have to have inflation (a constant dilution of existing money value) in order to keep the economy going and keep the system from collapsing.

I'll illustrate my points:

If a huge union forces higher wages from a corporation or a whole industry, which forces the employers to raise prices, this will raise the cost of living for everyone else if everyone else has to buy that product or service...if the money supply is stable. A few people are getting a bigger share of the same size pie.

But what happens when the pie is pumped up by air or water? Actually, the pumping, expanding of the money supply comes first.

Inflation means inflating the money supply. Nobody can do this except the government. It is done by deficit spending. Deficits are moneys spent which no one ever earned.

If a government expands the debt/credit (money) supply to the point where a pound of steak that cost \$1. per pound in 1965 (let's say) costs \$2. per pound in 1972, seven years later, the cost-of-living HASN'T CHANGED if the consumers have received an equal increase in wages and salaries.

Look at it this way: an Australian bushman spends, say, half his working day gathering just enough food to stay alive. That's a very high cost-of-living.

That equates to you having to spend (if your wages are \$30 per day) \$15. per day just for food!

Cost of living is, at bedrock, how much work you have to do to "buy" your needs and luxuries.

Actually, most of us have had a lowering of our cost of living over the years.

But to get back to the unearned, printing press money (debt/credit) the government keeps pouring into the economy—the problems come from unequal distribution of this phony wealth. Many groups get the shitty end of the stick.

Once more: INFLATION is pumping unearned, "paper" money into an economy.

COST OF LIVING is how much work is required to get what is needed to live. If it took an hour to buy a pair of shoes in 1902, and it takes an hour now, the cost of living as far as shoes go, is the same, no matter what the numbers are on the pieces of paper used to make the exchange.

RIISING PRICES AND WAGES are the result of inflation, the consequence of inflation.

The Republicans used to know all this and carp aplenty at

President Roosevelt. But since they won with Eisenhower (and ran deficits) and are now running the most God-awful, ruinous deficits in peacetime history, they don't mention it anymore.

They're in league with the Democrats who in turn are so far into the 'planned deficit' philosophy (if you 'plan' inflation that makes it alright) that they can't view the Republicans' deficits with alarm in any honest way.

Well, it's all leading to an international monetary crunch again, as we continue to generate rivers of government printed counterfeit money into our and the world economy. There's a glut of inflation dollars abroad.

(And how nice to rip off the other central banks! They bought billions of dollars to maintain the value of our money against the "speculators" (who are no fools—some of them were American owned and directed subsidiaries of U.S. corporations)) and our government promptly refused to pay gold for those which might be presented to us for conversion. We say on the one hand that gold isn't important, and refuse on the other hand to get rid of what little gold we have left by honoring our promise to redeem our money in gold to any foreign government who wants it. ((We have, of course, long since refused to redeem our paper to citizens. And our "silver" coins are now all debased.))

Our inflation, which we have exported around the world, has permitted many U.S. corporations to buy up (and build) multitudes of businesses in Europe and elsewhere.

We have bought large sections of the economies of other nations with phony money backed by the integrity of the United States government and then reneged by refusing to honor that money and now officially devaluing it by 8%.

And bet there'll be further devaluations.

We are governed by liars and scoundrels. So what else is new?

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
3-27-72

Yes, M— did come over Friday night last and watched POTEMKIN with me.

The movie, silent, made in 1925 in Russia, is by today's standards crude and propagandistic. But it has power. It has so much basic, naked suspense and involvement that it is in a way humiliating to be affected by its obvious manipulation.

M— has a deeper discouragement now and sadly mentioned that it would have been better if she had not been born. I am seeing, I think, the shape of a life-long, deeply set, deepening neurosis.

She can't make it in this country, not with her present command of English and knowledge of this country. She persists in unrealistic attempts to write, to force her bad play upon this country by now writing a screenplay version.

She is playing the pathetic lost soul role, which strikes a chord in my emotions since it echoes my yang-like childish need to be cared for and protected.

She wants to be free of obligation and claims on her by others and she wants to be able to do as she wishes—without working. Well, no, she wants to work in TV, but her TV experience in Finland is meagre and not appropriate in this country.

The thing is, she has charted a course which insures continuing failure, persists in it, and refuses to change it. -26-

This kind of rigidity and faith-in-self is admirable in one who has talent and the tools to use that talent. M— has neither, and I think her persistence is rooted in a loser life-plan.

Anyway... She hinted Friday night that she'd like to use my old b/w TV to watch Ch. 28. So I loaded it into her car, carried it into her apt, hooked it up and lo, a very snowy picture (her location at the base of a hill makes any reception without a tall roof antenna very bad.) But she got good sound, so she will watch/listen to the basically talk shows.

Kiss of thanks, smile, hug. Ah, my heart was full, I had done a good deed, I had pleased her.

Yes, then Saturday morning G— came to visit. Her problems are worse, too. An astonishing array of psychosomatic illnesses, money problems.

I found out what my written sin was: I had said in that letter that she felt herself a failure as a wife, mother, lover because her husband had divorced her and gone to a woman who liked sex. She had been rejected.

She hasn't accepted that she is neurotic. She is almost naked of self-analysis and insight. Obviously, else her "illnesses" and physical complaints wouldn't be so strong; she can't yet ventilate enough or defuse all that buried, suppressed and repressed anger, guilt, shame, anxiety, tension.

The situation Saturday night after we got back from seeing WILLARD and TALES FROM THE CRYPT (she dotes on horror movies) was interesting:

She was sleeping on the twin bed/couch, I was sleeping in the pull-down Murphy. Again I couldn't sleep (a few spasmodic jerks and crescendoing muscle tensions plus a brain that wouldn't stop or slow down) and so I heard her sleep for an hour, then awake. About 3 A.M. she whimpered and moaned.

She sleeps with a heating pad on her stomach (it helps relieve her "ulcer" pain). She has all kinds of pills—"digestion" pills, "Nerve" pills, etc.

I asked her what was the matter. She replied that her chest was bad—like somebody was sitting on her chest, and her throat was closing up, and her stomach hurt.

She asked me to rub her back. She came to the bed and I started giving her a light rub.

Her pain wouldn't stay in one place. Upper back, lower back, upper left thigh, neck, arm, top of her head...

She took a "nerve" pill (a tranquilizer, but she refuses to call them that) and went back to bed.

Day and night she periodically presses her palm into her stomach and sometimes mentions the pain.

She likes to drink wine, which I would think bad for an ulcer.

Saturday we made love. She skimmed dozens of climaxes and had two orgasms—this without benefit of her usual need to get bombed on wine first. Sunday she got bombed and had one orgasm which was masked by much thrashing, panting, moaning.

I wish I could somehow tune in on women's senses while

making love to them.

G— recently had a \$300. medical checkup to find out what was wrong with her. Doctor couldn't find anything functionally wrong. She has a strong heart.

I had expected she would stay Sunday night and return to her place Monday morning, but she left around nine-thirty Sunday evening...and I went straight to bed and slept till six this morning.

(When I was holding her in my arms after we had made love, Sunday, she had no pain anywhere. She needs to belong to someone.) (Why do I "pick" women like this?)

(Sunday we were going to drive to Hollywood Blvd and see the stars set in the sidewalk and inspect the footprints and hand-prints and signatures set in concrete at Grauman's Chinese Theater, but she had left part of her car's electrical system on all night and the battery was dead.

(So I pushed the car, with her steering, up the alley and along the street to an open service station. Let me tell you, I was wiped out. My heart was chugging, my legs were jelly, and I was, for a minute, sick to my stomach. Thought I'd had it. Visions of cardiac arrest, dropping dead...headline in LOCUS... but the old ticker was not strained, I survived and was fine thereafter. We went to Hollywood, saw the sights, etc. But if I wasn't a bike rider with good legs, and didn't take vitamins, notably Vit. E, that exertion would have killed me.)

Called George at Barclay this morning—no assignment this week, so I'll make a lot more progress with the RAW MEAT conversion, which now appears to be shaping up as a short novel.

MOVIE REVIEWS TALES FROM THE CRYPT is good hardcore horror fare, for those who dig the macabre and the grisly. A full liter of blood, a full measure of gore: I liked the human heart left to complete a valentine poem...and the corpse wished alive by his wife (but she forgot his veins would be full of embalming fluid).

The movie is based on stories originally published in the comic magazines TALES FROM THE CRYPT and THE VAULT OF HORROR.

WILLARD is softcore horror; more characterization and story structure. The real reason for the movie's success is not just that Willard trained rats to kill for him, but the skilled photography which sustained the willing suspension of disbelief which permitted the illusion that the rats—at least one rat, Ben—was a veritable genius rat capable of premeditated murder in his own right.

It reminded me of that A. Bertram Chandler story that appeared in ASTOUNDING long ago, about the rats that developed high intelligence due to mutation as they lived their generations in a spaceship's hull.... They, too, killed their "masters."

Ben killed Willard for revenge. And a voice-over at the end of the film tells of a sequel to WILLARD, to be titled BEN. That should be interesting. Just think—a rat as hero.

TALES FROM THE CRYPT is out in paperback now, in a novelized form by Jack Oleck. Bantam S7439, 75¢

Also received from Bantam is STAR TREK 6, adapted to story form by James Blish. (S7364, 75¢) Sorry, Mr. Blish, I just

can't read these. They're stripped too clean and move too fast and simply for my taste. That's no criticism of you; damned good job of conversion.

I'm appalled at the realization, though, that this prose accurately reflects the pace and depth and quality of the STAR TREK television episodes...aimed at a ten-year-old.

TELEVISION ABC threw two new pilots into the works 3-27-72 tonight, to see if after they were run up the flagpole a viewer would wave.

I watched WHEELER AND MURDOCH, a private-eye story in which Jack Warden with incredibly bad lines and a wig teams with Christopher Jones who sports long hair and a stone face and is supposed to be a 'boy' and looks 35.

The story was set in Seattle in the rain and deserved it.

I didn't watch the following pilot, NEW HEALERS, starring Robert Foxworth.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST Madame X called today and we 3-27-72 chatted for a few minutes. We talk easily and have fun; wonder what it would be like face to face? In spite of myself I suppose I keep nursing a guttering little flame of hope or illusion that maybe she is The One.

THE MAIL XXX, Inc. sent their latest circulars. In- 3-28-72 cest seems to be a big seller now in the novel and non-fiction books.

The usual magazines, including apparently some old pocket-sized photo-booklets of "spreads" 3 for \$5.

Interesting blurbs for their offered films: "Don't pass up this flick!!! Really unusual sex practices!!! A beautiful gal and guy who know how to have fun! Have you ever heard of a Golden Shower? See it in all it's golden glory!!"

"BIG Dick and his gal, Pussy Plenty, star in a film you'll really get worked up on everytime you see it!!"

At \$28. per copy I won't see it.

A circular from PREVENTION magazine offering a 10-month subscription for a mere \$2.87. Okay. It's deductible if I use it in this magazine in any way.

An airletter from Dave Piper in England wanting to subscribe to my new fanzine. Thinks it's to be PSYCHOTIC. I'll write and explain. He'll still probably sub. Nice guy.

Three issue sub from Andrew Cartmel in Canada. Well, I see I'll have to set up procedures and such again. But I don't mind at the prospect of a profit this time around.

A mail-a-bill from my TIMES dealer. \$10.50 for three months daily and Sunday.

It just occurred to me! This is now tax deductible since I use the TIMES as reference and for quotes in this mag. Glory be to Ghod. Too bad I can't deduct the cost of the food that fuels my brain during the times I write and think professionally. That might make an interesting case for the tax courts.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT DEPT.
3-28-72

From THE SHAPE OF FURTHER THINGS
by Brian Aldiss (Doubleday, \$4.95):

"When H.G. Wells was a lad, he saw how science could liberate him and thousands like him from the misery and circumscribed living of the lower middle-class. It did liberate him. But science was then somewhat of an outsider in its practical aspects; from being the pursuit of the Royal Society, it had become a left-wing activity—undermining the established order rather than supporting it. Science was only just winning its battle against religion, which until then was king of the castle (Wells's revered teacher was Thomas Huxley who spoke out at Oxford on Darwin's side against Bishop Wilberforce in the great debate on evolution).

"Applied science has now climbed into the empty throne from which it deposed religion. It is in danger of becoming another tool in the hands of reactionaries, just as religion was in Victorian and Edwardian England. It could breed its own Royal Society.

"There are many enlightened men who would not have it so; but, ever since politicians took control of the atomic bomb, the days when science was on the side of 'the little man' that Wells used to talk about have been numbered. From being an outsider, impure science has climbed to a position where it can have no time for the other outsiders. We are due for a new sovereignty that may prove more deadly than the last."

Questions present themselves: how long will Science last? Will a force of illogical and irrational nature come to power which is now "left-wing" or underground? Will Religion come back?

THE MAIL Letter from G— in which she mentions, "The
3-29-72 only time I wasn't in pain — when I visited you, was when I was snuggled in your arms, I felt very content then, does that explain it, or what? Tell me."

To which I wrote back today: "You'll have to accept that your pain and tiredness is psychosomatic; as you point out, when in my arms (when held close, when loved, when protected, when you belong to someone) your problems go. Tensions are drained, all is well.

"But when actually apart—when actual physical contact is broken—your troubles surface again."

She is astonishingly innocent of self-knowledge and insight. Will she come to dislike me for rubbing her nose in it? How precious is her pain to her? It's probably a multi-purpose mechanism to gain her attention and sympathy, and to punish herself.

Wonder what I'll do if she wants to read this magazine? I don't think she's ready for this kind of comment, would recoil and be angry.

I may be using this as a sure-fire G— killer. But I like her, and enjoy her company for one-day periods. Her constant pain and malaise are a drag, though.

Maybe she uses the pain (constant mention of it) to keep people at an emotional distance and to cool off thoughts of a long-term relationship? Who wants a sickie?

Ahhh, the maze....

MOEBIUS TRIP #11 and #12 from Ed:in C. Connor, 1805 N. Gale

Peoria, ILL 61604; 2/\$1.

Sometimes I'm objective and fair in reviewing fanzines. Mostly I am; but sometimes I feel bitchy. Tonight....

MOEBIUS TRIP has, suddenly, it seems, transformed itself from an also-ran genzine to a stodgy, serious-constructive also-ran genzine....

As an editor Ed Connor is earnest, energetic and unimaginative. Well, that's not bad. He publishes some good stuff such as "The Obscure Life and Hard Times of Kilgore Trout" by Phil Farmer.

And next to it he publishes something sophomoric like "Some Thoughts on Abortion" by Cy Chauvin. News, fellows: that debate is over now—you're beating a dead fetus.

Yes, in his way Ed likes to encourage controversy, so he prints the likes of Mike Glycer who loves to stumble around in Big SF Issues and Important Questions. Every time, Mike steps into potholes, goes under and drowns.

MOEBIUS TRIP #12 (March, '72) is valuable for its long article on Stanislaw Lem (which few will read, it's deadly) and "Richard Matheson: An Unfinished Interview" by Paul Walker.

As for the letter columns... With up to 80 letters of comment to draw upon, you'd think Ed could edit for the best parts. Trouble is, he don't know what the best parts is.

That's it. I've got to go wash off my hatchet now.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
3-29-72

I've known for a long time that I write far better than I talk. My thoughts come together easier when I sit at a typer. I focus better. And seeing my previous words helps me.

Today I had to have a filling replaced, it having come loose six months after insertion. I was told my usual dentist was no longer with the firm. Then I learned he had "passed on." Soon after finishing my teeth in September, soon after buying a new house and getting married (for the second time) he became ill and died around Christmas last. Three months.

A big, glowing, vital man in his early forties or late thirties.

It was a shock to hear. Cancer he didn't know he had.

BOOKS I NEVER FINISHED READING, AND WHY
3-30-72

After reading John Boyd's THE

ORGAN BANK FARM, I thought I had found an ignored genius, at least a first-class writer who was ignored in fandom because he hadn't been or wasn't now in fandom, or didn't care that fandom exists... Anyway, I scanned my long book-to-be-read-someday shelf and spotted THE RAKEHELLS OF HEAVEN by John Boyd.

I snatched and started to read. The opening was fine. Then... He asks the reader to believe that 1890ish religious beliefs are alive and well 300 years later, and that a Christian prig, one of two young men in an interstellar exploration probe ship is so gung-ho for God and Heaven that he tries to impose his beliefs on a clearly superior race of humanoid aliens.

A vehicle for satire, okay, okay, but I couldn't swallow

that premise. There had to be a better way, a future religion that had approximately the same dogma...anything but that frozen old Midwest puritanism preserved whole and unchanged.

Satire is a fine weapon to use in exposing hypocrisy and self-delusion, but too often the message has been heard before, and seeing a dead horse being whacked one more time is tiresome.

For instance, Chapter Four begins: "After my shock at the sight of Red's shorts wore off, my heart exulted. Here was an opportunity to gain Red's compliance. Not two hours on this planet and he had been undrawered. He was married and adultery was a sin. He was a space scout, and commingling with an unclassified alien female was statutory bestiality—a misdemeanor violation of Navy Regulations. Literally and figuratively, the Lord had permitted me to catch Red O'Hara with his trousers down."

Philip Jose Farmer's *TIME'S LAST GIFT* lost me early. I found myself starting what seemed to be a potboiler and decided I didn't want to boil any.

Several scientists in a time machine go back to 12,000 B.C. One is a pretty young woman. She is a professor of genetics and zoology with considerable training in botany and meteorology.

When they spot an inhabitant of the time: "I'm so thrilled," Rachel said. "Our first man! The first human being. A Magdalenian!"

And the writing was utilitarian, bland, commercial.

(Ballantine 02468, 95¢)

The Boyd book was a Bantam Book (\$5479, 75¢)

THE MAIL The mail is remarkable for what didn't show up.
3-30-72 I was looking for the \$150. check from Barclay for
 the case-history I did two weeks ago. No show. I'll
hope for tomorrow. I was counting on it to pay April rent and
utilities and food.

SANDERS #17, Dave Nee, 977 Kains, Albany, CA 94706. 4/61.
News of conventions, Nebula nominations, books, comics, people,
theater—all sf oriented. Mostly West Coast.

SF COMMENTARY #25 shows that Bruce Gillespie has come a long
way and is now an Editor, has increasing stature as such and as
a sf critic in his own write, and produces the best regularly
appearing serious sf fan magazine in the world. #25 is the
equal of *SPECULATION*, certainly.

Of special interest is Phil Farmer's reply to and analysis
of Stanislaw Lem's article of a few issues back, "Sex in Science
Fiction."

Sandra Miesel and Bruce Himself give two views of Poul Ander-
son's *TAU ZERO*. A point both perhaps missed, of a technical
nature, writing, is that Poul's style and dialog used was what
I might call "European"... ..As if the book had been writ-
ten by a writer not totally at home with American. The prose was
subtly stiff and foreign. He had his characters (now I've final-
ly homed in on what I want to say) speak English as if it were
their second language.

And that had to be deliberate. WHY he did it I don't know.
Why, Poul?

THE MAIL No check today. *Sob* Have to ask George about
3-31-72 it on Monday when I call.

An Easter Card from mother. Short note added: "Hope
you have a happy Easter and go some place with one of your
gals. I think of you always. You are a Wonderful Son. I
love you— Mom."

She's really a fine woman. Every few months I'm tempt-
ed to move back up to Portland and make her last decade of
life a bit happier. There is that child in me, lonely,
crying for mommy.

Moving up there, into that house, or into a house close
by, would be okay. Seems like every six or so years I move
back to mother, then, after a year in Portland, come down
here to L.A. again.

But the next time I move it'll be into a house, and for
keeps. (I could make an apartment out of the party rooms
in the basement. She'd like that. But....)

Kevin Suffern wants to subscribe to SFR. *sigh*

Thick, bulk-rate letter from Ralph Nader, addressed to
SFR; he/they want money. Down the tube.

Letter, short, from Madame X. Nothing important.

GADS! A questionnaire from the U.S. District Court for
possible jury duty in downtown L.A.! This was sent to my
box, dig? So my name wasn't taken from the voters' rolls.
Must have been from a list of businesses, since I am still
legally doing business as SFR. (They want solid, conserva-
tive types.) I'm sure they won't call me; I was persecut-
ed/prosecuted by the federal government in 1964-5-6 for ob-
scenity writing, though they called it conspiracy to pub-
lish and conspiracy to mail, etc.

I was actually a small fish they included in indictments
which included nine authors, editors, bookkeepers, sales-
men, and the publisher and his wife. They were after Mr.
Luros and used all us others to cripple his operations.
They brought a case against us in California in 1964, on a
county level, lost it, and by devious means, brought the
same case (same magazines, same books, same charges) to a
grand jury in Iowa, got an indictment, and put us on trial
in Sioux City for three or four months...and eventually
lost that, too. The trial judge voided jury convictions
of all but Mr. Luros, and an appellate court acquitted him,
too. The government never tried to "pick it's spot" again.

So I am not exactly prime juror material, I should
think, in the eyes of a prosecutor. I know what dirty pool
they play.

If I am chosen to be on a panel, though, it means a
long bus ride downtown each day (up to an hour-and-a-quar-
ter) or (if I feel up to it) a two-hour bike ride. 15½ mi!
I'll fill out the form and we shall see....

The book of mine they thought obscene was *THE THREE-WAY
APARTMENT*; very tame by today's standards...just six years
later.

Stanley fleishman and Percy Foreman, two of the finest
attorneys in the country, were our lawyers. I have a copy
of a reprint of an article from *TEXAS PARADE* about Percy,
upon which he has written: "11-5-65 S.C. Iowa. To Richard
Geis, one of America's great writers. —Percy Foreman."

Smart, perceptive man, Percy.

I sit here naked at five of ten at night and I have just spent 30 minutes looking through THE FANARCHIST which David R. Grigg imposes on the world, and I think David should not do it to the world. (1556 Main Rd Research, Vic. 3095, Australia. 30¢)

His zine is not in the least fanarchistic. It is mostly dull and sophomoric. The cover is nice—but he stole it—it is a print of a medieval scholar writing a letter.

On the extreme other hand I have spent hours this afternoon absorbing what is probably the most care-fully produced fanzine going—ENERGUMEN #11.

Mike and Susan Glicksohn, I bow to you. You have earned and deserve a Hugo this year...and I'll probably vote for you if SFR isn't on the ballot. (Well, hell, it might just sneak on!)

I note a certain amount of contemplation of the navel in this issue, a controversy or two, clever blurbs with the articles and columns on the contents page, a well-edited letter column, choice short quotes at the end of it from also-ran locs, good layout, a lot of Rotsler art....

Good Ghod—these people are publishing PSYCHOTIC without so much as a by-your-leave!

But of course PSY was never this well duplicated.

I find it perfectly in keeping with fandom's taking-Bill-Rotsler-for-granted that Mike Glicksohn can use four fine Rotsler cartoons and five full-page drawings in a portfolio, and then write a Hugo recommendation suggesting a "dynamic new talent" and not mention Bill at all.

As Bill mentions in his letter in this issue, he gets 40 to 50 fanzines a month and almost that many requests for artwork. He tries to send something to all the zines that interest him and are decently reproduced. And the written and unwritten law re Rotsler art is 'Use what you like and pass on the rest.' I've done it and others have...since 1948!

He should have a Hugo. He should have two or three by now. But he doesn't ask for his art back after it has been used. So that makes it "cheap" and undervalued.

I have five choice full-page Rotsler originals framed, hanging on my wall (along with one Tim Kirk, two Gaughans, two Steve Fabians, one Christopher, and one print of The Machineries of Joy which I colored and shaded with pencils over a period of six months).

Seems like there'll always be a "dynamic new talent" who will make a splash in fandom over a one or two year period—Tim Kirk, Alicia Austin, Grant Canfield, Steve Fabian—and good old Bill Rotsler will be passed over again...and again...and again.

I note that the Glicksohn's have been running a \$120. deficit for each issue and are now asking 75¢ per copy. Worth it. 52 pages plus heavy covers plus the Rotsler portfolio.

Glicksohn, 32 Maynard Ave., Apt. 205, Toronto 156, Ontario, Canada.

BOOK REVIEW

4-1-72 Jim Bouton's spin-off of his best-selling, hilarious, honest, eye-opening BALL FOUR is titled I'M GLAD YOU DIDN'T TAKE IT PERSONALLY.

This sequel isn't as funny or long or as absorbing, but Bouton writes as candidly as ever, with his naked psyche hanging out in defensive quivers and wistful yearnings and tough, flip, lefts to the chin.

He isn't afraid to tell-it-like-it-is. He makes me wish to

hell he could get elected to Congress and write a book about what goes on there!

In this book he tells how much he made off BALL FOUR... and how much he should have made. He thinks his hardcover publisher screwed him, and he had a top agent to represent him!

Sometimes I think writers are destined to be screwed by publishers. I've had a novel literally stolen by a publisher; I submitted the ms., waited, waited, queried, no answer, and then discovered that he had published it! No contract, no payment.... Then he went bankrupt.

Barclay House and Brandon House, for instance, owe me perhaps thousands in royalties, but it has been years since royalty statements have been sent out. The only way to get a statement is to go to a lawyer and have him force the corporations to respond by threatening suit, I was told by a highly placed former employee.

Why don't I? Because Brandon and Barclay are owned by Milton Luros, and Mr. Luros footed all the bills during those California and Iowa obscenity cases we were involved in. My defense and upkeep and airfares must have totaled at least \$25,000.00.

I'm not going to be a chintz and ask for royalties. He can have them. It makes me feel better. I often wish he would pay me, but... *shrug* I figure we may be close to even by now. As even as we'll ever be.

But it shocked me that a large New York publisher would rip off an author as described by Bouton, in this day and age.

I imagine every writer reading this can tell horror stories. Every agent, too.

THE MAIL NEWS FROM NEW AMERICAN LIBRARY arrived. The 4-1-72 April edition, with a rundown of new pbs they'll be publishing.

Interesting: GILGAMESH, translated by Herbert Mason, Jr. (MY1135, \$1.25)

GALACTIC CLUSTER by James Blish 14965, 75¢
THE SEEDLING STARS by James Blish 14964, 75¢; and four DAW books, a Norton, a Joseph Green, a Brian W. Ball and an A.E. van Vogt...all 95¢.

These are all I checked off to receive as review copies.

The latest issue of the LOS ANGELES FREE PRESS. It's becoming more and more a magazine (as is THE STAFF) with a more political slant and less emphasis on rock and local counter-culture.

THE NEWS Baseball players have struck the owners. I 4-1-72 wonder if they all realize how easy it would be to get along without baseball? For the country, that is, easy.

I wonder, as the South Vietnamese army retreats and fucks up and retreats, I wonder if Nixon wishes he'd had the guts to negotiate on a realistic basis with North Vietnam while he had the chance—when he had an army in the field. Now—too late. Looks like the plug has been pulled and "Vietnamization" is going down the drain, leaving a

scum of lies and self-delusion in the tub.

No wonder Wallace has an appeal: he tells people a \$20,000 home in Alabama is taxed \$90 per year and if he's elected President, he'll see that property taxes are cut in other states! Stop throwing tax dollars away on wars and foreign aid and welfare and ever-growing bureaucracy. In Wisconsin a \$20,000 home is taxed \$700 per year!

Jesus—I'd vote for him, too, in a primary! Give those free-spenders in Washington (and the state capital) a scare.

Looks like McGovern is also picking up protest votes.

The "fight against inflation", meaning controlling wages and prices in today's obfuscatory nomenclature in Washington, is leading us to give up more and more liberty. This country is sliding right into a form of state control of everything and everyone...with the labor movement right in there leading the parade...with Nixon. Control this, control that, control those, BUT don't control the cause of inflation.

I'm not going to beat this drum anymore. It's a circus, watching it happen. Sad. Sickening.

There's a bill before Congress now that proposes that all 5-year-olds be given Social Security numbers, and be fingerprinted.

DON'T BE SURPRISED if Nixon imposes another wage-price-profit freeze along about September, to last until after Christmas. It would help him during the campaign and on election day if "inflation" was on the back burner and out of sight.

It appears that a life full of high social stress may make you more susceptible to cancer. A study of disruption of "place" in a chicken pecking order showed that in social chaos the tumor rate went up.

People, too, like law and order in society. And most are happy in a rigid class structure provided life basics of food, shelter and sex are available.

Most people will avoid too much freedom; they're afraid of it. Tell them what to do in a way that saves their face and is "acceptable," and they'll love you.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST

4-1-72

It may be the lack of other people in my life. Except for a Von's grocery clerk in the morning, and people on the street as I ride to the Post Office, I just don't see people in my life.... Which explains why I am again thinking of going back to Mother. (This loneliness feeds into CANNED MEAT, which has that element of isolation...written about three years ago when I was still with C—, or she with me.)

I need someone close, but not too close.

Of course, moving to Portland, to Mother, sort of wipes out women from my life....a not altogether dismal prospect. The convoluted depths of my "real" motivations here are staggering. I know I've never, at base, wanted to be an adult. I've rejected "manhood" consistently. Maybe I should simply come to terms with it and be a child on one level and stay with mom till she (or I!) dies?

This may pass. I'll wait, of course, till I go up to Portland in July. But it would solve a lot of problems and scratch a lot of itches and deep yearnings.

The question I ask (and the one anyone will inevitably ask) is: if you need company, why don't you go out and find it?

No! I want my mommy!

(And she wants me!)

But I don't like the idea of being around when she inevitably gets sick.... (Dying, sometimes slowly, as an invalid, is a lousy business. But it's the price you pay for being young once, without care.)

I put up a Miniline in my bathroom today—four nylon clotheslines that pull out from a plastic and metal wall case and hook onto hooks in the opposite wall. Very neat. \$1.49 plus tax. In three months it pays for itself as I do washing in a bucket and hang it over the bathtub. Save 60¢ in a laundromat.

I enjoy this self-sufficiency kick, and cheating the system. Whatthehell.

Do you get the impression I'm a weird person?

4-2-72

Pearl came over this morning before I was ready for her. She caught me in bed in my robe, unshaven, reading the paper.

She showed me her new Audi (which she scraped soon after buying, against a wall, while turning into a parking area, because she was used to the shorter Triumph she used to own, and if you complain about this sentence I'll hit you).

Also brought along a thick folder of letters received from sex-mad men who responded to the ad she and a girl friend put into the L.A. FREE PRESS Personal classified. They (letters and their writers) are sad, pathetic, funny, appalling...an education. (Some send photos of their pride.)

She should package these and use them as the core of a book, but won't.

She read Silverberg's BOOK OF SKULLS and thought it good, but also felt he had concentrated too much on characterization and slighted the story. She liked Boyd's THE ORGAN BANK FARM, which I had also lent her.

She is perking up, looking better, still beating her breast about how easily bored she is, and how tiring meeting new people is, but still meeting them and leading an interesting life.

She thinks I play a role with her—"host, intellectual, nice guy." But it's just that I'm not emotionally involved with her, so nothing is engaged in my roiling sexual-identity-ego-state pot of psyche soup. If she took off her dress all kinds of shit would hit the fan. (Not really. I wouldn't mind eating her, would dig giving her an orgasm or two. But she doesn't really dig sucking a man (at least me) and I feel I'm imposing. Anyway, we've decided—without-talking-about-it that we won't go to bed again. Just good friends.

CULTURE NOTES

4-2-72

I almost think that FROGS, a new horror film from S. Z. Arkoff and J. H. Nicholson, is a puton. The ads show a giant frog with a human wrist and hand hanging out of its mouth. And on the

radio a somber, apocalyptic voice intones, "Today the pond—tomorrow, the world!"

It stars Ray Milland.

In fashion there is developing a new "thirties" look for women. I have read that styles—hemlines—presage economic conditions. Low hemline—depression; short skirts—boom times.

Also, women's slacks have taken on a loose, full look. I wonder if this is a signal that men's pants will turn loose, too? Will the baggy look be back?

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST
4-2-72

I've been watching THE SHOES OF
THE FISHERMAN on CBS tonight. Anthony Quinn makes a barely credible

cardinal and an incredible pope. But the rituals and the Vatican are fascinating.

I'm emotionally anti-Catholic because of their stupidity re sex and birth control, but intellectually neutral.

That said, let me turn to the basic purpose of this stint at the typer....

An article in the L.A. TIMES today: "'Present Shock': We Can Take Only So Much Reality," by Colman McCarthy.

A quote: "People are thrown into mental or present shock much the same as are victims of physical shock. They are battered by some forms of external reality; mental shock results in a reduced flow of emotions that the mind normally needs in order to respond humanly.

"The person in shock in the 20th century is one who is constantly learning of so much tragedy, horror, chaos and absurdity that he can no longer absorb it. He becomes numb.

"Who can absorb all this? Even without it, people must contend with private tragedies—perhaps a meaningless job, a failing marriage, undisciplined children, poor health, debts.

"The person who is asked to take on all these burdens—but can't—does not necessarily become confused or even mildly depressed. Instead, something else happens, much worse: The motors of the emotional life stop running. The emotions can be carried no further, taken to no new ground of empathy or understanding. What a character believed in a T.S. Eliot play is true: We can stomach only so much reality, then we sicken"

The above leads me to think that there may be an emotional rejection of news that threatens us with shock—and the resulting turned-off numbness. Thus the unwillingness to believe the truth about American atrocities in Vietnam, the need to dehumanize "gooks" and "natives".

And—the need to seek, to have, entertainment, distraction. Maybe fictional violence and tragedy are ways of defusing and draining the heavy load of real death and destruction in the world?

Maybe if violence were eliminated from TV, movies, fiction, we would all turn into zombies under the impact of brutal reality.

Can that explain the popularity of Mickey Spillane and THE GODFATHER...and THE WILD BUNCH?

Does this principle apply in the spheres of sex, sports, religion?—all necessary retreats from terrible reality?

So, is it wise to be contemptuous of people for "indulging"

in these distractions? Newspapers, TV, radio are two-edged swords of communication: vehicles of 'Present Shock' and present tranquilizers.

If people watch a lot of HEE HAW and BONANZA it's because they need it....after the daily dose of Cronkite.

It gets complicated by the fact that people—the human animal—are curious and have often a seemingly morbid need for news, and will run to the scene of an accident.

We're sure as hell a mass of contradictions. Gloriously imperfect.

MORE BEAST
4-3-72

I've been exploring what moving back to Mom and that house would entail. I'd have to be "the man of the house" and stop being a guest. Would have to in effect be my mother's husband without sex.

Serious limits to my freedom, and I still find I haven't totally given up on finding The Woman. I can see buying a house in Portland, but that rain....

Somehow, I surmise I'll go through life in a turmoil to one degree or another. Making a lot of money would solve some problems and create new ones, or open up old ones that were closed off by lack of money.

I want/need a woman who will be a mother substitute and who loves giving and receiving oral love. She has to be able to drive, and should have a job, mostly to get out of my hair during the day. She should be ideally, a fan, and interested in nutrition.

Advertising brought weird women to my door. So has blind chance.

I will continue to stumble through life with an open fly and an open mind. (Shouldn't one of them be closed?)

I called George at Barclay this morning. He say not this time, but has hopes for next week. And so do I, and so do I. Damn, forgot to ask about the check!

Continued Next Issue

RICHARD E. GEIS is edited and published by Richard E. Geis
One American dollar per copy. P.O. Box 3116
Santa Monica, CA

All letters of comment are liable to be published, in whole or in part, so please mark DNO (Do Not Quote) on those parts you wish kept private.

No artwork or advertising will be accepted.

RICHARD E. GEIS is published irregularly (whenever at least 32 stencils have been completed) for the Fantasy Amateur Press Association, for trade with other magazines.

All rights to all non-Geis writings are hereby assigned to the writers.
