

# INCLINATIONS

An Unprintable Publication

Supplement to SLANT 6

Winter, 1951/2



This supplement is for reader's letters and other items crowded out of the regular---I mean the main---magazine. (Who ever heard of SLANT being regular?) It's being sent to everyone who commented on the last issue and to some others we haven't given up hope for yet.

First, here are the first letters received and despatched after the last issue, giving the truth about THE SLANT SCANDAL?

Dear Walter,

Have some very serious news for you. Thought you would like to know rightaway. Vince and I today received through the post two magazines, professionally produced jobs, and with, I must admit, absolutely first class artwork and print set-up, and turned out in the best way I've lately seen any magazine dolled up. However, these magazines, obviously from a long established professional house---quality breathes throughout them---have the temerity to title themselves 'Slant'. Not only that, but impudently enough they style themselves as edited by one Walter. A. Will is at your address. Further, they claim to have artwork by a James White and a Bob Shaw. Since we are still hopefully waiting for SLANT to come along, these false claims do not fool us in the least. There is a certain doubt that they may confuse other readers of SLANT who are also waiting for their copies, but we know well enough the truth. I thought you might be interested, in fact you obviously are interested in a matter so close to your own interests. I do not see any professional editorial address, the publications claiming to emanate from Northern Ireland. What confounded impudence! The only thing that can be said is that they are of beautiful workmanship, a real credit to the publishing profession. However, I do feel that any publisher capable of such glorious work should not stoop to the inglorious ruse of assuming the name of SLANT in search of further circulation. I now notice that my own name is included, coupled with yours. Monstrous! Believe me, I shall not rest until I find the perpetrators of this affrontery and let them know, in forceful though restrained language, that the correct place for their publication is on the bookstalls and not sneaking through fans' letterboxes under the guise of an old and loved friend. Watch 'em, Walter.

Yours,

Ken ((Bulmer))

I may as well give my reply here, ostensibly for the sake of completeness, but really because I still rather like the multiple pun about the PMG, Sir Wilfred Paling.

Dear Ken,

Many thanks for your timely warning. I am aghast--in fact we are all ghosts----and in our search for the low creatures in this dark plot we shall leave no stone unturned. Apparently these fiends have not only published a transparent issue of lies, but have intercepted through collusion in high places the TRUE SLANT which was on its way to you by armed guard. We have sent telegrams of accusation to the Government. Well may the PMG be Paling, but his fencing shall be of no avail against our barbed wires. He bears the stamp of guilt on his face and before long our mailed fist shall remove him from his post.

Let us hope that the perpetrators of this bastardly outrage have not gone so far as to substitute for the original stories inferior efforts by ambitious neophytes such as von Vogt, Heinlein, etc. I should be glad to know to exactly what depths of infamy they have sunk, and perhaps if they have carried their attempts at verisimilitude so far as to substitute a questionnaire you would have it completed by your clerical staff?

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We got some sixty of these questionnaires back, about one third of them filled in and the rest filled out. It was interesting to see how those 40 American votes elevated Bulmer and Phillips at the expense of Kayer and Ridley. Here are the point scores. (The lower the better).



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There was a normal quota of humorous answers:

"Cover the cover here. How was it by you?"

"You've got the wrong Slant ol' man. 'Twasn't by me---Bonestell or White or somebody. 'Swonderful." --A.Vincent Clarke.

"She was still going by me, a trifle out of breath but struggling by me, gallantly blasting upwards." --Ken Bulmer.

"What is it? A track in a Wilson cloud chamber?" --Terry Jeeves. ((Never knew clouds used them, Mr. Teeves. Anything to do with flying saucers?))

"Reminded me of a piece of gift wrapping paper." --R.E.Briney.((Well, we hope you like the present issue.))

"Unusual. I am unable to decide if it was bad printing or a clever new artistic style." --Leif D. Ayon.((We feel the inbite of Ayenwit. The man has discovered our guilty secret.))

"What would you like to see in the magazine?"

"Sanity." --Derek Pickles. ((We have no place for that.))

"Fish and chips." --Vincent Clarke. ((We've no place for that either.))

And many others too humorous to mention.

Jackson's yarn, like everything he has done for us, was overwhelmingly popular. PETER RIDLEY's comment was typical:

"In conception and workmanship far and away the best in the issue. The characterisation of the protagonists is quite exceptional in fan authorship. I especially admire the passage in which Mrs.Rigden came from the kitchen to answer the door."

Obviously an architect. Among the non-fiction Fansmanship was put out of joint first place (disregarding tactful praise for The Prying Fan by our tactful readers) only by late votes from America, where few people have yet been exposed to this type of humour. Most people who liked it at all put it first. ERIC FRANK RUSSELL, for instance:

"....I think the Fansmanship Lectures amused me most because, like all top-grade humour, they have a basis in truth, enough to lend bite. I also liked Ermengarde without quite knowing why, unless maybe it's her air of sly naivete.

...I've two quibbles. It is said that GALAXY is better than aSF, which cannot be a statement of fact, but can be a fair statement of opinion. My own opinion is different though I don't pretend that it is worth a sou more than anyone else's. Only fantasy mag I consistently enjoy more than aSF is Boucher's F&SF. I put GALAXY third on my list, in which place it's hard pressed by a couple of others.

The other quibble is dianetics. None of the criticisms on this subject I've discovered so far (and there has been many) is a genuine criticism. All content themselves with satire, wisecracks, abuse, or wittily expressed pieces of scepticism. Yet the subject can be effectively countered in the only proper way, namely, seriously. Dozens of effective arguments can be brought forward. For example: If there are engrams capable of reduction, there can never be any 'clears' in any positive sense because the thesis that postulates engrams also---by logical extension---postulates earlier, pre-conceptual engrams, or inherited pain-recordings. The theory that postulates the necessity of getting basic-basic cannot therefore make an arbitrary convenience of the matter by selecting a halfway mark, and declaring that basic-basic is there. If it should be that the engram-theory is itself correct, then it is being inadequately applied, and it will be found that so-called 'clears' ultimately will display a whole host of new aberrations born of pre-conceptual engrams still being coddled along with their gene-. A real 'clear'---assuming that there could be such a person---would have to be one who has managed to reduce all engrams, perceptic or inherited.



And again. There is no positive and final way of determining rationality. All efforts to identify it...boil down to precisely the same useless technique, i.e., that of measuring the subject by the yardstick of oneself. ...Way back, I wrote a yarn based on the notion that nobody knows he is sane or can prove it in any decisive way. I think Ron Hubbard has made a tremendous try at killing that idea. Alas! I think he's failed.

To date, I've asked about twenty M.P.'s (the last one Tom Driberg) how they know they're sane. So far, not one has been able to dig up a reply.

EFR may have a point there on dianetics. To quote Jackson on the same subject, "Too many people have pre-conceived ideas."

Another of Ermengarde's admirers, SHELBY VICK, writes:

"I was so carried away by Ermengarde Fiske's New York Letter that when I managed to struggle back I composed a poem. Poem:

Ermengarde, my Ermengarde  
To you I warble like a bard--  
A bard that flits from yard to yard.  
Do you have flits, my Ermengarde?"

Naturally I passed this affecting piece on to Ermengarde, who says:

"I loved Shelby Vick's poem. I have had young men writing poetry to me before (well two anyway. One was a psychologist who'd had his nose broken while playing football for Georgia Tech; you probably won't realise the absurdity of this, but intellectuals, like psychologists, simply do not engage in sports here---it's not done, unless it's done badly, when it's permissible; anyhow he became an intellectual late in life. The trouble with people writing poetry to me is that if they read it aloud, I do tend to laugh, which does destroy beautiful friendships) but none so beautiful as this. The poem, I mean, not having seen Shelby Vick--who sounds vaguely medicinal. ((Mind you don't rub him the wrong way, Ermengarde.)) How do you know he's good looking? When you say he travels in soap do you mean embedded in a large cake, as in suspended animation? Anyhow, thank him very much for the poem, which I shall treasure.

All other readers make me sick;  
This is not true with Shelby Vick."

Thank you, Ermengarde and Shelby. I hope you'll both be very happy.

Now, from the sublime to CHUCK HARRIS----better known, perhaps, as the 'Dagenham Girl Pipers.'

"With all due respect sir, I think you're quite mad. ((How do you know I'm mad?)) You rave about Jackson and don't say a word about Bulmer, who made a really good job of The Gatecrashers. Sure, you gave him the plot and it was a new idea. But the twist of putting the whole thing in the past historic turned it from a space opera into an extremely good short story. You sent me the same plot last August. I had three tries at it and chucked ((charlead?)) the results away in despair and the ashbin. I had shown them to my BNF friend and his friends. It was horrible. "Hee-hee-hee," they laughed, "Ho-ho-ho," they cackled. They rolled on the floor in paroxysms of mirth. With a horrible ripping sound their sides split, covering the floor ankle deep in guts and gore. This was most unnerving to a delicate neofan.

However I have started another story, about werewolves this time. (Ray and I are extremely good at this sort of thing---of course his publicity agent is really the goods.) My story opens; "The family were changing for dinner." This is really a terrific opening for a werewolf story. Note the subtle play on 'changing.' In all probability I am a young genius. Nice looking too. After finishing this letter I am going to write another sentence, and try to knock out a few ideas for an article too. I love that cheerful encouraging manner you use in rejection notes. Of course you'd have to run it at the end of the magazine: anyone else would be at a terrific disadvantage if they had to follow on after me. ((You mean like the men who follow the Lord Mayor's Show?))

Can't James White write something? I saw a piece by him in S4: "This is not the opinion of typesetter James White." This deathless piece of lyric prose deserves to be improved upon. He ruined my last werewolf story by guessing the gimmick in the first paragraph, and I want to snipe at him.



If he says this one is obvious I'll fly to Belfast and have his guts for garters.

I am now an N3Fer in good standing. I have loads of leaflets telling me that C.L. Moore's pseudonym is Mrs. Henry Kuttner (not this please of Hank), and that Rick Sneary will send me some seals (be a change from whalemeat). Incidentally I gave your name as sponsoring member. I hate joining under a cloud, but I knew of nobody else. Maybe fandom will forget in time.

I saw Brown's copy of the SFN with the Conreport. I commented on the piece about the cries of 'Good Old Walt', but finally realised that Mrs. W., James and Bob were strategically placed throughout the audience. It almost fooled me tho. I will no doubt subscribe to this mag of Clarke's. I thought it a lot better than the usual indecipherable blotting paper that passes for fanzines. Two colour duplicating too!

You're easily fandom's best columnist, SLANT is miraculous, your prose is a constant source of inspiration. I'd like to borrow your SPACEWARP file and the FAPA mailing."

And here are a few extracts from a letter by the editor of that superior blotting paper the SF NEWS---a most absorbing newsmag, needing only a little more size to be perfect. VINCE CLARKE advises me to:

"Keep a tight rein on the space opera Walt. I find myself instinctively skipping any story that starts, 'The mighty spaceship Vegan lass carved its way through Nebula X24' or similar...But for Ghod's sake stop making me so jealous. I think I'll go round the White Horse saying 'Look what 3 Irish fans can do. About 50 in London can't do a damn thing. What are you going to do?' If you hear of an unidentified corpse found hanging from a Fetter Lane lamppost, you'll know we've stirred them to some activity at least. ((The SF NOOSE?))

....Ohhhhh---it's Sad-d-d-y...after being up until 3am looking for NGC 55272(3), (3636H), an interesting nebula in Canas Venatici, I rose bright and early at about 12 noon to find that Ken had got up at 5.30, to go to Silverstone to see the motor racing. What or earth he sees in that I'll never know. Queer tastes some people have.....'Sfunny, but on the day we got the QUANDRY with your comments on Ken's moving scrapheap he had to be towed back to the garage. He comes in and looks very seriously at me with tears in his eyes and tells me all about it, and finishes by saying very sorrowfully, ".....and it looks as if the engine has dropped a couple of inches." Personally, if it had dropped out completely and lay smoking on the ground I wouldn't have been in the least surprised.

....Something tells me (all right, it's actually a small wombat called Cecil----why should I keep it a secret?) that I'm nearing the end of the paper, so g'bye. Besides I can feel ideas for an article bubbling up inside me like....er....gas in a sewer seems the wrong simile. Like those little bubbles hastening to cover the censorable parts of a Finlaynude."

Maybe you'll be thinking that letter, however much it may have been above par in other respects, hadn't much to do with S5. But I quoted that bit about Bulmer's car to lead up to something else later----- a spot of auto-suggestion. Here's a more relevant letter, from JULIAN PARR:

"Such Stuff As Dreams was perfect and wastes neither your space nor my time. Cover--technique good but the cover itself was unexciting. I liked the star clouds effect, but I think the artists should avoid rocket exhausts whenever possible. ((This seems sound advice for anyone.)) I disliked Countercharm (much ado about nothing) and Eve of Tomorrow (more ado about nothing). It is obvious that professional authors won't appeal to me, since I carefully avoid buying promags these days and read only good fanmags. I like ideas more than style...Work out for yourself what a fmz has to offer & see if you reach the same conclusion, namely those things which for various reasons promags cannot offer. On re-reading your plea to authors on the back cover I see you're on the right track: "articles and fiction too short intelligent or unusual for the promags." There you are--you've done your part, now it's up to the community to supply. Don't be too narrow in your definition of sf; remember the Lord Dunsany quote which amounts to an sf novel in one line:

"Over mossy girders the old folks came back."

Hear that, community? You herd.



And now I am going to confound Chuck Harris by publishing something by James White. It is an extract from his definitive report on the London Convention, and is published by kind permission of Ken Bulmer, editor of NIRVANA. This Report was originally scheduled for the Second Anniversary Issue of NIRVANA but although the Report at the moment covers 24 closely written pages it takes the reader only up to approximately 8.30pm on the first day of the Preliminary Sessions at the White Horse. Pending the Third Anniversary Issue of NIRVANA further extracts from the Report will probably be published under the title WORK IN PROGRESS.

This is White's first published work, and will give the lie to rumours that he is a mere pigment of my imagination. This rumour has arisen from the fact that James White never writes letters nor until recently has he engaged in any other form of literary fan activity. But as often happens it has needed merely one soul-searing experience to release the latent creative talents of a natural writer.

#### I RODE WITH BULMER

by James White

...During tea at The Epicentre Ken wanted to know what had happened to Walter and Bob. He seemed very relieved when I told him, and I got the impression that he had expected to have to bail them out. He offered to take me to the White Horse in his van. I accepted gratefully. This was a chance at last to see a decent stretch of London above the ground for a change, and accompanied by a native guide. The blood on my shirt had dried out black and looked just like ordinary dirt so I didn't bother to change it. He told me to take the front seat beside the driver and as we were arranging ourselves inside he asked me had I a driver's licence. I told him no, I couldn't drive: he said that's good. I was much too polite to ask him if he had one.

We took off down Drayton Park and cornered at speed where it intersected the main road. Here he told me not to lean sideways too much as the catch on the door was worn. He also apologised for the lack of a car radio, the fact that two corners of the roof were tied down (very securely however, I noticed) with rope, and for the steam from the radiator that sometimes fogged the windshild. I pointed out that he need not apologise--at home I had only a bicycle, and any thing with a built-in source of power was better than that, and hadn't he got four wheels and an engine, what more could he want? He muttered something I didn't quite catch about sometimes having to make do with three wheels. The van was definitely old, even ancient, though it had not yet reached senility. It had a surprising turn of speed and climbed hills without protesting too much, and it knew when to stop at traffic lights when the driver was otherwise engaged. He seemed very much attached to it. Various places of interest were pointed out to me, but we didn't run across any interesting people. Most of the pedestrians managed to leap clear in time and the older and less active ones he missed deliberately. He has a very rigid code of ethics, and has a kind heart behind his grim and forbidding visage. He has another one in the usual position but he only uses it occasionally. We made our approach to the White Horse down Fetter Lane backwards. He said he didn't want to have to turn it later or that it was a one-way street or something. We got out at a grey shapeless building set on a corner from which the sound of muffled shouts and poundings was coming. I thought, 'Goody goody, they have riots here too'.....

How did James White get the blood on his shirt? What were Willis and Shaw doing at the rear of the struggle while their friend was facing death in the van? What was the nightmare of the White Horse? Read the inner history of the London Convention in NIRVANA.

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#### REVIEWS (The following are not in order of merit.)

WONDER. Mike Tealby, 8 Burfield Ave., Loughborough, Leics., England. The cover was a free service of PROXYBOO Ltd., but Mike has evidently not been able to find space to give the artists' names. They are Bob Shaw & James White. This issue is devoted to the Shaver Mystery, which I am not.

SLUDGE. Bob Foster, 2 Spring Gardens, Southwick, Brighton, Sussex, Eng. Interesting new hand-printed mag, with a personality all its own.

SOL. Dave Ish, 914 Hammond Rd., Ridgewood, New Jersey, USA Promising newcomer from a 13rd year old editor. May go far.

FANVARIETY. Max Kessler, 420 S. 11th St., Poplar Bluff, Mo., USA. The most controversial mag now being published. Good reading.



Dear Gregg,

Thanks all the same, but I've never bothered with advertisements and I'm not going to start now. Besides I've as many subbers as I know what to do with. Still like reviews tho, so don't leave me out from any you're running. Just take this / as an advance exchange copy for OOPSLA, which I'm looking forward ~~to~~ to.

I think the ~~rmz~~ postal rate is no higher ~~thamamth~~ from there to here than it is Stateside. In fact unless they've changed it without letting me know, it's lower. Used to be the same here, you could send a fax cheaper to California ~~tham~~ than to Aughtnaloopy. (Yes, it's a real place.)

Address of AUTHENTIC is

~~Amfina~~ 1 & 2 Melville Court

Goldahawk Rd.

London W. 12

I'll send you copies every month in exchange for some prozine you buy and don't want to keep, if you like.

All the best with OOPSLA.

*Walt*

ODD. Dugie Fisher Jr., 1302 Lester St., Poplar Bluff, Missouri, USA

A bi-monthly mag specialising in humour. Much of it is very good indeed, especially Nelson's inimitable cartoons. If you like fan humour you must have this one.

MAE. Dick Ryan, 69 W. Locust St., Newark, Ohio, USA.

A first issue, and an excellent one. This mag has individuality, intelligence and a sense of humour. Literate too. Get in on the ground floor.

NOTE. Many of these American fms give free copies to overseas fans for only a letter of comment on each issue. Why not try them? You'll never get a better bargain.

ORB. Bob Johnson, Box 941, Greeley, Colorado, USA.

An unpretentious but very entertaining miscegen mag. The editor obviously believes that content is more important than appearance and pays little attention to extravaganzas in layout, like paragraphs. Instead he packs his pages with material which is usually so interesting that it survives its presentation.

PHANTASMAGORIA. Derek Pickles, 41 Compton St., Dudley Hill, Bradford, Yorks., Eng. It's clear from this lavish, gorgeous and flamboyantly extravagant production that the editor believes in sparing no expense to make his mag attractive to the eye. The result is breath-takingly--almost alarmingly--sumptuous.

ERRATUM. Through some unfortunate mischance ORB's review got ascribed to PHANTAS, and vice versa. ~~Could~~ ~~claim~~ how that happened. I must also apologise for cutting this review section short. I meant to review all the better fms but I've had to restrict myself to those that have arrived within the last few weeks.

Result of 'Fanfiles' poll. WW-35 votes, Ken Slater 13, F.J. Ackerman 8, Bob Tucker 5, Joe Kennedy & Roy Lavender 4, Les Hoffman & Rick Smoery & Mike Taitby 3, Marion Bradley & Walter Gillinge & Ted Carnell & James White 2, Roger Dard & Ken Beale & Roy Squires & Les Quinn & Sam Moskowitz & Derek Pickles & Reid Boggs & Bosco Wright & Lyell Crane & Arthur C. Clarke & Fred Brown & Ed Ludwig & Erringarde Fink & Norman Ashfield & Ken Bulmer & Vince Clarke & James Taurasi & R.T. McAdams & Nigel Lindsey & Eva Firestone & Lilith Lorraine & Arthur Rapp & Betsy Curtis one each.

OPERATION FANTAST. Capt. K.F. Slater, 13 Gp. RPC, BAOR 15, c/o GPO, England.

Articles, news and reviews, all excellent, in a neat and attractive format.

PEON. Charles Lee Riddle, PM1, USN, Fleet A.W.T.U., Pacific, c/o Fleet PO, San Francisco.

A really excellent general interest mag, highly recommended. Free to overseas fans.

SF NEWS. A. Vincent Clarke, 84 Drayton Park, Highbury, London N.5.

Now on a subscription basis (3 issues for 1/6 or 1 promag) this indispensable newsmag is England's equivalent to Bob Tucker's inimitable SF NEWSLETTER. All the news on mags, books and films presented intelligently and with humour. Outstanding.