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SPRING-SUMMER
1959





Here 'tis

Our Third Anniversary Issue. A bit late you may say, and we say so too-----but then after being in Detention it was very difficult for us to get back to Earth. Had a wonderful time, and will begin now the plans for next year's big con. We had already run off a very beautiful cover drawn by Don Christensen, only it had the date imprinted: "Spring, 1959". Which was o.k. at the time it was run off. But with this Spring-Summer combination we decided to salvage Don's cover and use it on a future issue of SPHERE. It will be well worth waiting for. May even write a short story to go with it.

Forgot to say out there on the Contents Page:

The Headings and "Life of the Moon" photo-montage were done by Tony Allen

Also our forthcoming FALL and WINTER covers will be by Don Christensen.

The much-kicked around Letter Column of ours, one time titled "The Last Word", then changed to "Marbles", and missing altogether in the last issue, will again be omitted since the letters would be too dated in most of their comments. We might revive it entirely in our next issue. It will depend upon you. If you like it, we'll keep it--if not, we delete it. Easy as that.

We walked into the Bar holding this Litho Master waving it at Bjo. She was in Detention too, see the cute cut she dashed off for us above? In fact there were a lot of great guys, gals, and goons--(well, one GREAT one I'm sure of) in Detention. We didn't mind the punishment normally associated with Detentions-----it was really a NOVAcon**** (Four Star rating!!!!) But then we will save the details for next issue, which in a way will be a Conaccount. So see you in just a few weeks-----it's Fall already.

"UTOPIAN FANTASY: A STUDY OF ENGLISH UTOPIAN FICTION SINCE
THE END OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY"

Reviewed by
G. B. STONE

- Sydney NSW Australia

This work does not follow the program suggested by its full title, but covers a great deal of writing from earlier times. It has to, because by 1900 the utopian tradition had reached maturity, or what maturity it was likely to achieve, in most respects, and to say anything useful about it means going back for a look at its formative stages and later evolution.

It might well be maintained that by 1900 utopian writing was just about at the end of its tether, and about to enter its decadence, for two reasons. Firstly, by that time so little of the globe remained unexplored that there was hardly enough room for a utopia to hide itself in the traditional manner. Secondly, and more important, the other phases of imaginative writing which overlap with utopian fiction were about to outgrow it. True science fiction was almost in existence, in particular.

Gerber wrote this study with the blessings of the British Council and of the University of Zurich. A pity, for it gains thereby a spurious air of academic standing and authority which does not stand examination. Not that it is carelessly written or superficial: but its view of the subject is gravely defective.

The book's outstanding fault is that it fails to define its field: it does not examine the limits of utopian writing and determine what it is and is not. The issue is evaded at the beginning and never taken up again. See how he does it: a fine example of a classical fallacy. He starts by saying: "...The several characteristics of utopian literature are the outcome of a comprehensive utopian imagination and view of life." (Which begs the question—but we'll come back to what's wrong with that statement later on.) He goes on: "If we want to know what this imaginative force is we cannot set out with hard and fast definitions and typologies." (This is the excuse he gives for neither defining the whole field nor classifying its subdivisions, on the ground that only the supposed utopian world-view is important.)

"Therefore" (And here he makes an abrupt change of subject. That therefore smoothes over a non sequitur.) "...not only socially constructive utopias are considered, but also various other kinds of imaginative commonwealths and fantastical countries."

As we might expect, after such a disclaimer, he proceeds to ignore usage, stretching his interpretation of "utopia" so far as to lose most of its meaning. Besides satires, which while not strictly in the field frequently overlap it and have a place in such a study in any case, he discusses as though they belonged here numerous works of science fiction, or at least pseudo-science fiction in some cases, which are no more utopian than Mickey Mouse.

Take a look at this list of "utopias", for instance. "The War in the Air"

Book Review (Continued)

and "The War of the Worlds" by H. G. Wells; "1984" by George Orwell; "Mister Adam" by Pat Frank; "The Night Land" by William Hope Hodgson; "The World Below" by S. Fowler Wright; "Earth Abides" by George R. Stewart; "Tom's A-Cold" (U.S. title: "Full Circle") by John Collier; "Gay Hunter" by J. Leslie Mitchell; "Minimum Man" by Andrew Marvell; "The Hopkins Manuscript" by R. C. Sherriff; "Blind Mouths" by Thomas F. Tweed (but not his "Gabriel over the White House" which is definitely a utopia) and "Doppelgangers" by Gerald Heard. The book becomes of definite interest to science fiction students, whether interested in utopias or not.

The early chapters deal with the origins of utopian writing, and give a clear and well-reasoned account. Gerber points out a cleavage between classical and medieval writers, whose tradition was that of religious myth, and what he calls "the basic modern attitude: the quasi-religious belief in the miraculous power of unlimited evolutionary progress."

What it amounts to is this, Gerber argues. Plato didn't mean his fairy tales about Atlantis and what not to be taken seriously as hypothetical illustrations of what ought or ought not be done: their purpose was to direct the reader's attention to the issues to be discussed, and specific details in the Republic are only incidental to the general principles which they suggest. The way Gerber expresses it is that they were put forward "as a help in discovering another hidden level of reality that could not otherwise be perceived." (Those readers who have studied philosophy will see from that sentence that Gerber hasn't done so very attentively. Hidden Levels of Reality, forsooth.)

But to continue, these tall stories of Plato were just what he called them--myths. They were there to brighten up the discussion and no more. And the same goes for later spinners of yarns about imaginary places (satirists aside) down to the age of More and Bacon.

Even if in those centuries anyone had wanted to put forward a plan for reforming the world demonstrated in an imaginary land, it would not have made any impression. It was not that people found the notion of reform or progress distasteful: it was practically meaningless to them. They had no awareness of evolution or expectation of change. Educated men knew that the world had changed in the past, but they did not have access to an adequate history of the world from classical times, from which they could see just what had happened and why. They did not think of change as intelligible or predictable, let alone inevitable or desirable. Gerber does not note that in classical satirists there was a tradition of irreverence for custom and received opinion, and of sceptical enquiry, which did imply acceptance of change, though their positive theories were not developed. But the open minded attitude of these writers could not survive when Christianity swamped the Hellenistic world, and in what we correctly call the dark age the imposed beliefs required a static world.

"The religious and the utopian view cannot be entirely reconciled," says Gerber: "If this life is essentially sinful and imperfect, what is the good of bettering conditions?" A lot of Asians still hold such a view of life, and five hundred years ago it was absolutely dominant in Europe.

When we get to Bacon and More we find a glimmering of an idea of progress and perfectability—the radical thought that matters might actually improve in the future, even in the near future if we do something about it, instead of getting further and further away from the vanished glories of

Book Review (Continued)

The Past. But, as Gerber says, "since it is not supported by an adequate world-picture, it is no more than a seed."

All the same, there was a change from static to kinetic, from pessimism to optimism, with the development of science. Utopian writing was a reflection of the changing approach, and continued to draw inspiration from science until it merged into true science fiction in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Gerber uses the term "science fiction" once, but does not seem to have any notion of what it is. It's all utopia to him. But since to take it into account would spoil his picture by giving a clue to the limits of the field, this is only to be expected.

Yet it is not always possible to avoid discussion of those limits. Thus, he has to consider the tradition of the imaginary voyage, and admits that "Every imaginary or extraordinary journey contains the seeds of utopian-romance.....in fact, the two join forces....in cases like Godwin's "Man in the Moon" (1638) and in many modern scientific romances it is the utopian element which is the by-product."

In other words, the writer's intention is important—the attitudes he expresses, as well as the kind of subject matter he deals with, have to be considered. But no, Gerber is not prepared to recognise this in so many words.

Before we get in any deeper, let's see if the subject can be defined. I take the view that like comedy and tragedy, utopianism depends on the writer's intention and treatment rather than his theme, though the range of themes is certainly limited. To belong in the field, a work must be substantially fiction. I say substantially, though many examples give more space to discussion and exposition of the thesis than to action. Bellamy's "Looking Backward" is such a work, with only a very simple story as the vehicle for endless interviews on different phases of Bellamy's socialism. Still, it is fiction. It must involve an imaginary country, or perhaps an imaginary regime in a familiar setting.

"Utopia" literally means simply "no place". However, the term is conventionally restricted to such works which make the details of imaginary customs and institutions the main theme. It would be stretching the meaning of the term too far to call any of Edgar Rice Burroughs' novels a utopia, though they have plenty of imaginary places, often with their way of life described in some detail. Nor could any of the books objected to earlier in this article legitimately be included.

Such a work may take a positive line, showing and advocating or at least admiring something, and this is what is usually understood by "utopia"—or it may show something which the author deplores, hopes will not become a reality. The latter approach has never been used as frequently until the last few decades, and until then it was almost always used in a more or less facetious manner, so that such works are usually satires, and clearly recognised as such. The serious book about undesirable culture, like Orwell's "1984" or Rand's "Anthem", is quite a different proposition from the conventional meaning of the term, and needs a specific name. You can use "anti-utopia" more or less legitimately, or you can more correctly call the two types of treatment "eutopia" ("good place"—More made a play on words here) and its opposite, "dystopia".

Since the imaginary setting must be supposed to be somewhere at some

Book Review (Concluded)

time, it may have the framework of a plot that looks like science fiction. But if the object of the work is utopian or satirical we may as well go along for the sake of argument without criticising its plausibility, and not take it seriously as science fiction.

Yet, on the other hand, and Gerber misses this altogether, we know that science fiction per se does also exist.

A few generalities about how people live and behave in some imaginary world do not make the whole work a utopia. So it is absurd to classify Hodgson's long novel of love and adventures with monsters and supernatural forces in a strange world which he chooses to call the remote future, as a utopia. Again, Wells' "The War of the Worlds" and "The War in the Air" certainly tell as much about Wells' opinions on people and society: but so do most serious novels, after all.

To get back to the work under discussion, granting those objections it is a book with plenty of interest to say, and is well worth reading, if with caution. A short bibliography and an annotated list of 256 books from 1901 to 1951 make it a useful reference work in a field so little documented.

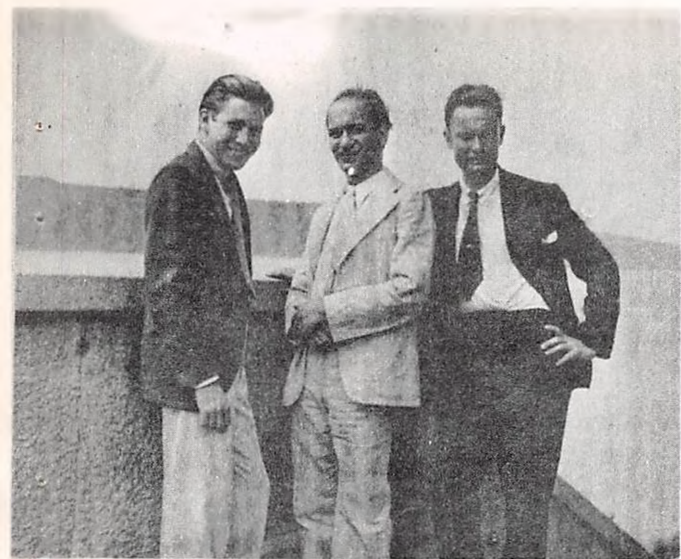
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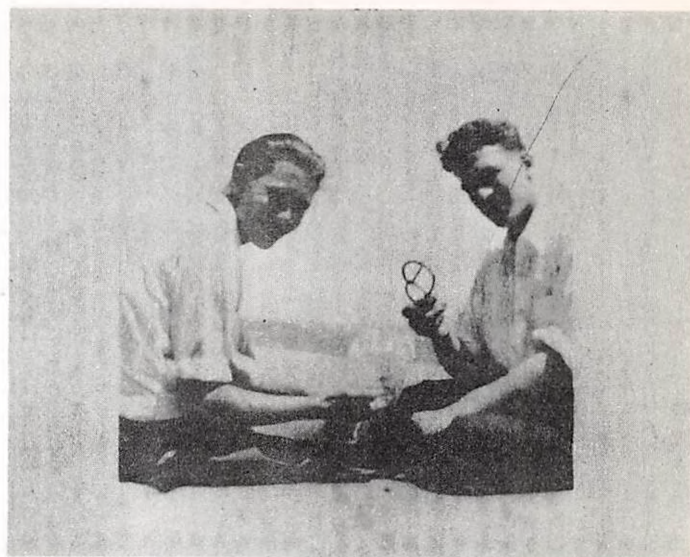
KEY TO PICTURES ON PAGE -8- :

- #I. Three founders of The Scienceers, left to right: Allen Glasser, Philip Rosenblatt, and Louis Wentzler. Picture taken in 1932.
- #II. Allen Glasser (left), and Mortimer Weisinger in 1930. They were good friends then; later led rival factions of The Scienceers.
- #III. The Scienceers after reunion in 1933. First row unidentified. Second row, left to right: Herbert Smith, Philip Rosenblatt, Allen Glasser, Mortimer Weisinger. Back Row: Arthur Erriger, William Sykora, Julius Schwartz, unidentified member, Isadore Manzon.
- #IV. Allen Glasser today.

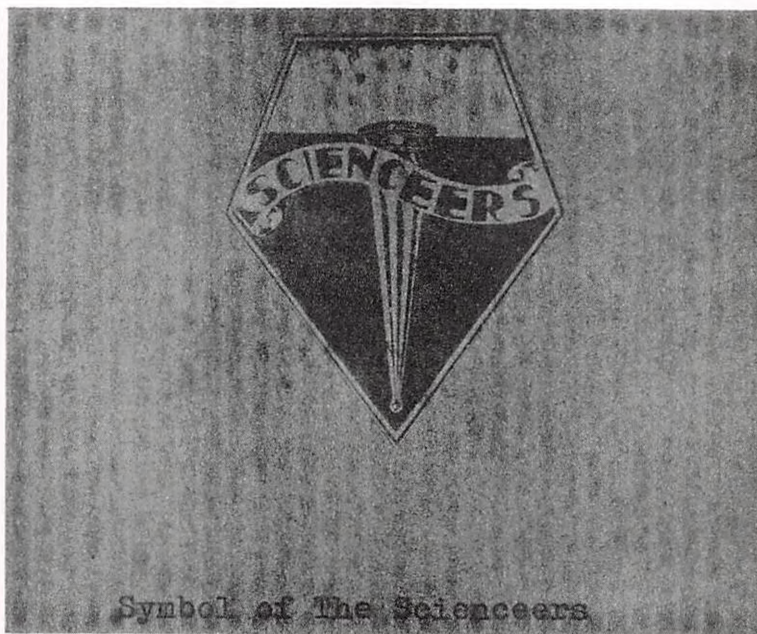
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II



Symbol of The Scienceeers



The Scienceers Story

By -
Allen Glasser

Long before "science fiction" was called by that name, I had become devoted to it through the Mars books of Edgar Rice Burroughs, which I read when I was only twelve. Then I scoured library shelves for the works of H. G. Wells, Jack London, Algernon Blackwood, and the very few fantasy books available at that time.

To me, incidentally, the terms "fantasy" and "science fiction" have always seemed synonymous. I think it's silly, for example, to consider time travel scientific and witchcraft fantastic. One is just as possible — or impossible — as the other; and both make equally interesting and provocative reading, at least to me.

After finishing all the fantasy books I could find in those early days — there were little more than a dozen then — I discovered that Argosy magazine occasionally ran a fantastic serial, which they called "different" or "pseudo-scientific" stories. These I followed with faithful fervor. Some of the novels I recall from that period were "The Ship of Ishtar", by A. Merritt; "The Great Commander", by Fred MacIsaac; and "The Return of George Washington", by G. F. Worts — which will approximate the time for fans familiar with that wonderful Argosy era.

Weird Tales next engaged my absorbed attention — the first all-fantasy magazine I had ever enjoyed. Then, in 1926, Amazing Stories came upon the scene, immediately winning my ardent allegiance.

It was Amazing Stories which made me a real science-fiction fan — the kind who wrote letters to the editor, criticized stories, and corresponded with other fans.

However, it was through Science Wonder Stories, rather than Amazing, that I finally made personal contact with other fans in New York City and with them founded the first of all science-fiction fan clubs — The Scienceers.

The exact date on which The Scienceers came into being was December 11, 1929. The founding members, as I recall, were Warren Fitzgerald, Nathan Greenfield, Philip Rosenblatt, Herbert Smith, Julius Unger, Louis Wentzler, and myself, Allen Glasser. With the exception of Fitzgerald, who was then about 30, all the members were in their middle teens.

-THE SCIENCEERS STORY-

At this point, in relating my activities as a founder of fandom, I should like to say that most of this account is based on memory alone. Though my recollections of that early era are quite vivid, some minor details may have been forgotten after so many years. However, I still possess a few treasured clippings from those dawn days of fandom which serve to keep certain basic facts fixed in my mind.

Some readers may dispute my foregoing statement that The Scienceers was the very first fan club in the science-fantasy field. Objectors to that claim may cite the fact that the Science Correspondence Club, founded by Walter L. Dennis of Chicago, existed well before The Scienceers.

While that is undeniably true, I contend that the Dennis organization was—as its name clearly implied—a loose, widespread association of correspondents, with few members ever getting together personally. By contrast, The Scienceers was a tight-knit local group which conducted regular meetings every week. However, I freely acknowledge our debt to Walter Dennis and his Science Correspondence Club as the medium through which several Scienceers' members were brought into our fold.

During the early months of The Scienceers' existence — from its start in December 1929 through the Spring of 1930 — our president was Warren Fitzgerald. As previously mentioned, Warren was about fifteen years older than our other members. He was a light-skinned Negro — amiable, cultured, and a fine gentleman in every sense of that word. With his gracious, darker-hued wife, Warren made our young members welcome to use his Harlem home for our meetings—an offer which we gratefully accepted.

Early in that year of 1930, Hugo Gernsback's Science Wonder Quarterly conducted a prize contest on the subject "What I Have Done for Science Fiction." My letter about The Scienceers' formation won a prize in this contest and was published in the Gernsback quarterly.

As a result of this publicity, our club attracted the attention of Gernsback's editor, David Lasser, and G. Edward Pendray, who wrote science fiction under the pen name of Gawain Edwards.

Both Pendray and Lasser were members of the American Rocket Society, an organization of mature scientists, engineers, and other professional men.

After attending a meeting of the boyish Scienceers in Fitzgerald's home Lasser and Pendray invited us to affiliate with their Rocket Society, as a sort of junior branch. While this offer flattered our juvenile egos, most of us preferred to maintain The Scienceers as an independent group within our own age bracket, rather than become an adjunct to a much more mature organization. Only Fitzgerald, who was closer in age to members of the Rocket Society, joined their ranks.

With Warren's home no longer available for our meetings, we were glad to accept the offer of a new member, Mortimer Weisinger, to meet at his parents' home in The Bronx. There, in a spacious room of their private house, which Mort used for his science-fiction library, The Scienceers came into full flower, attracting many new members through publicity placed in magazines and newspapers by myself, as Secretary

-THE SCIENCEERS STORY-

of the club. One paper in particular, the New York Evening World, listed our meetings every week during a good part of that year, 1930; and I still have their clippings of our activities.

It was during this period that we published our club monthly, The Planet, which was the first paper issued regularly by any local group of science-fiction fans — although it was preceded by Cosmology, an organ of the Science Correspondence Club. Some authorities on fandom, including Robert A. Madle, consider The Scienceers' Planet the pioneer of all the multitude of amateur publications that have waxed and waned in the fantasy field since our club paper set the pattern nearly thirty years ago.

Editor and creator of The Planet was myself, Allen Glasser. I also cut all stencils needed for each issue of four or five pages. Mimeographing was done by Philip Rosenblatt, who never received full credit for making the paper's publication possible. Most of our members contributed items to The Planet, including reviews of professional science-fantasy magazines which then numbered only four.

Six monthly issues of The Planet were published, from June to December, 1930. Since I do not have a single copy left for reference, there is little more I can tell about our club paper. But I do recall that it attracted readers far removed from The Bronx. One was Gabriel Kirschner in Temple, Texas, and another was Carlton Abernathy in Clearwater, Florida — both of whom tried to start branches of The Scienceers in their home towns.

By the end of 1930, dissension among our members caused the club to split into two factions — the smaller group continuing to meet at the Weisinger home while the larger group, led by myself, held regular sessions at the home of Nathan Greenfeld, in another part of The Bronx.

Rather farcically, both factions retained the name of "Scienceers" and both continued to attract adherents. Notable among the newcomers during this schismatic period were Julius Schwartz, who teamed up with Weisinger; and William Sykora, who joined my own group.

This separation lasted for nearly two years; but by the start of 1933, all members of The Scienceers had reunited at the Greenfeld residence, where they continued to meet until more mature interests drew them away from the club one by one.....and The Scienceers became only a legend in the annals of fandom.

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Vaccinations

-By
Don Franson

Once upon a time there was a guy who went to the race track every Saturday, but didn't have much luck. One day he met a friend who told him about a marvelous tipster he knew, that was never wrong. So he went to this tipster the next time he was at the track and got a tip from him. The horse won. Next Saturday he got a tip again, and again the horse came in. Next time he tried two horses and won on both of them. This went on for a few months, though the guy was afraid to bet too much. So he never did get rich. But every bet he made on the advice of this tipster paid off.

One day he met the friend again, who said, "What do you think of this man I told you about? Isn't he astounding?"

"I'm quitting him," said our hero.

"Whatever for?" exclaimed the friend.

"Who needs him? Who needs a tipster when he's winning all the time?"

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And so, Fans, that's the reason for the present decline in the popularity of science fiction in the face of the space age. Now that we told them about the future that is here today, they know all about tomorrow without asking.

Won't they be surprised!

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Zuber 58

Solacon

by-
G.H.Scithers.

In between there was a great deal of fun and very little sleep.

and one editor on a leave of absence, Anthony Boucher. Both editors admitted that they are not getting stories that are as good as they would like, and Campbell mentioned that he felt that one of his duties as an editor was to get writers to write good stories, and not just sit back and wait for stories to come in of their own accord.

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-15-

-Solacon Reflections-

class that excellence will eventually spring. During the question period, he got into an argument with Ed Wood, who was opposed to this viewpoint.

In the course of the argument, Ed asked, "Ray, do you have a lawn?"

Bradbury said, "Yes, I have a lawn."

"Well, what do you do to the weeds that grow in your lawn?" Ed wanted to know.

To which Bradbury smiled and said, "Why Ed, I use them to make dandelion wine."

Which pretty well ended that particular line of argument.

There was, of course, a house detective. Like most house detectives, he didn't look like a house detective. (Don't ask me what most house detectives look like - I haven't met most of them yet.) He was a muscular Korean in a California sport shirt. (He was wearing pants, etc., too, but it was the sport shirt that was outstanding.) He either has or is working on his Master's degree and can speak good, colloquial English, but drops into broken English when telling parties that they are making too much noise, and like that.

"It is not allowed to sit on the stairs and smoke" - House Dick, Hotel Alexandria.

The Banquet was an amazing thing - the food was both reasonably priced and good. Anthony Boucher was the toastmaster, and spoke wittily on the peculiar fact that the degree which written material is felt to be pornographic depends on the language - an English translation of a book may be kept on the locked shelves of a library while the original French version will be on the open shelves. Unfortunately, he did not quote any examples. Boucher traded some insults with Bob Bloch, without whose humor no convention is complete. Bob's remarks will be published, I believe by YANDRO (15¢ a copy, 105 Stitt St., Wabash, Ind. /Adv./) if they have not already appeared by the time you read this.

Boucher presented the awards - Freas for art, Leiber for the best novel, and all the rest. When he got to the Best Magazine award, he paused, then said, "I feel, at this point in a convention, like the Lord Chancellor in Gilbert and Sullivan's Iolanthe, who sang, 'I sit in my court all day, Giving agreeable girls away,'

With one for you, and one for ye,
With one for thou, and one for thee,
With one for him, and one for he,
But never, Oh, never, a one for me.' 4

Tony looked down at John W. Campbell, and added, "John, I've given so many of these awards to you," and in a slightly louder voice announced: "The award for the best magazine - The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction."

One of the greatest disappointments of my life was the discovery that L. Sprague de Camp was not the little gnome for whom I had been putting out a saucer of milk every night.

Poul Anderson.

[illegible]

-Solacon Reflections-

Then there was the costume ball. The trouble with the judging of a masquerade such as this one is that there are so many superb costumes that one which is merely excellent has no chance at the prizes. There is certainly not enough space here to give you any complete picture, but only an impression of the swirl of color and cloth that was the ball.

Some of the convention committee, who were of course not eligible for a prize, came in costume - and by a surprising coincidence, although they did not discuss their costumes beforehand, they all came as characters from Tolkein's LORD OF THE RING cycle. They made a perfect group, from Sneary in black hood, Johnstone with a brown cloak fastened by the silver Malvern leaf and wearing the sword Sting, to Bjo in her dress so fair.

I saw a lot of your Editor of SPHERE — his costume was designed to have a lot of him seen. He had some lightning flashes coming from around his head, some extra brief briefs, over which was a thin paratrooper-like trousers which were next to invisible. More like green mosquito netting. (The net-trousers were green, I mean. Netting for green mosquitoes, of course is a horse of another color, decidedly.)

"Never Do Yesterday What Should Be Done Tomorrow" - "All You Zombies"

-Robert A. Heinlein.

Karen Anderson came as Countess Dracula, complete with bat wings that she could fold, spread, flap, and clutch people with. Stuart Hoffman was dressed as the Devil-Witch-Doctor from an Astounding cover of a few months ago.

E.E.Smith, Ph.D. and Ray Bradbury, between them embody all the mid-western virtues. Ed Wilson

- Liz Wilson.

There were also a Scientologist-Dianetician with keeper, an exceedingly dead looking mummy that amazingly still managed to navigate about the mass of costumed beauties and monsters, Djinn Faine as a pleasure girl from some exotic faraway world, the Kyles ingeniously paired in radio transmitter tubes as Posi and Negi, spacemen, spacewomen, and many others.

Suddenly from a large open window, high above the ball room floor a thick gush of grey, blinding smoke filled the crowded room of festivities. As the smoke slowly cleared by a shift of the wind, in the window opening could be seen the figure of a tall, thin, old man of unearthly appearance. Holding aloft in one hand a strange looking torch from which came the dense smoke, he descended into the ball room. A sudden hush fell upon the crowd. The weird creature from outside began to rush about the crowded room lifting his uncanny voice in a loud cry which sounded like: "Ughk-Na-Noeh!- - - UGKH-NA-NOEH!" Repeating it over and over again.

No one had any idea as to whom this creature was, or from whence he had come.

Never once did he step out of character. He did attempt to communicate with the judges and others around him by writing with a strange wedge like writing instrument which he dipped into a small pot of black fluid.

-Solacon Reflections-

However no one could seem to understand what he was trying to convey to them. He finally disappeared just as he had come. Out through the open window, and this was on the second floor of the hotel. He took with him some award that the judges rightfully passed on to him. The next day accounts were related how a strange prophet, outsider, or a creature from another world had visited the ball and ended up with an excited following at the near-by city park for the remainder of the night.

Who was he?

Jon Lackey. His costume and character portrayal was electrifyingly superb.

Someone came as Bob Bloch. He was terrific!

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"What is the use of a book with nothing but pictures and Conversation?"
Said Alice in ALICE IN THRILLING WONDERLAND as she threw down a comic-
book.

[illegible]

For the play, the Little Men were fortunate in having some actors to play themselves. Anthony Boucher, for example, was The White William A.P. as Doctor Derringer (Dr.Derringer, you may recall, was a character written by a character in one of Boucher's stories.) Bob Silverberg appeared as half of the siamese twin author, Attic-Agberg. And EE Smith PhD appeared as the Up Stage Lensman.

[illegible]

"If At Last You Do Succeed, Never Try Again." - "All You Zombies"
- Robert A. Heinlein

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And a final, financial note - Anna Moffett revealed that the Convention was in the black before the auction began. All thanks to the convention committee; the convention was great because they worked to make it so.

GHS

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Life of the Moon

-By

Leslyn MacDonald Modabee

The moon that we see is pallid and dead
A patchwork of craters and sand
Where the "seas" are but shadows and moisture has fled
And only the mystery is grand.

Perhaps at the peak of our orbital span
We shall see the back valleys are green,
And the Life of the Moon, like the Life of a man,
Is the side that we never have seen.

"Dear Mr. Fan Ed:"

~~I don't know how to beat around~~
~~the bush, so I'll just come right out~~
~~and say it: Your fanzine and all the others like it are stealing my~~
~~girl from me. You don't believe it? Well, it's true. I guess I'd~~
~~better explain from the beginning.~~

-By
Bob Lichtman

Dear Mr. Fan Ed:

I don't know how to beat around the bush, so I'll just come right out and say it: Your fanzine and all the others like it are stealing my girl from me. You don't believe it? Well, it's true. I guess I'd better explain from the beginning.

I met her on the first day of school in my English Lit class. Of course I made sure that I was seated right next to her. I should have known better as soon as I spotted that copy of Galaxy sticking out of her notebook, but I didn't and by the end of the period we were acquainted; old friends practically.

I asked her to a show on Saturday. She said, "Okay." And I asked her which show she wanted to see and she said, "Oh, anyone you want." (I still didn't know that she was a fan, but it looked kind of funny when she put down a copy of Astounding she was reading to listen to me.)

The show we went to see was a double Science-Fiction program. I figured she'd get frightened during the scary parts and.....The pictures were "The She-Creature From Planet X" and "I Went Steady With A Teenage Blob."

Right from the start I overheard her muttering "What trash!" to herself. She wasn't scared at all when the Teenage Blob ate the young couple parked in their car. She just yawned. The She-Creature impressed her even less. But we did hold hands. So, all was not a loss.

After the show was over we went to a drive-in where we had hamburgers and Coke. As the car radio played, she said, moving closer to me, "Jack, I want you to come home with me and meet my parents." It seemed all right to me, so I replied, "Sure, baby; anything you say." That was a big mistake and also the beginning of the end for me.

Her parents seemed nice enough. They asked me all the usual questions, well, you know what I mean. Then she interrupted to say, "C'mon up to my room. I want to show you something."

She led me back into the hall, stopping in front of a door which had a sign pinned on it. The sign read: Asteroid Publications - Office of the Editor. She opened the door and we went inside.

This is a girl's room, I thought, when she turned on the light. There were pictures of spaceships all over the walls and at one end of the room was a bookcase eight feet high and about twelve feet long, and it was packed with books and old magazines. On one shelf there was a stack of what looked like old paper. As it turned out, this was her file of fanzines. In the far corner there was a mimeograph machine with about fifty reams of paper stacked next to it on the floor. On a desk next to it there was a small stack of mimeo stencils. She went over to them and picked them up. "This is the next issue, honey." she said.

-Dear Mr. Fan Ed-

"Next issue of what?" I inquired, confused.

"Of Asteroid," she beamed.

"What-in-th'-world is Asteroid?"

"It's a fanzine," she replied, walking over to her bookshelf and taking one from her file. "This is the last issue. I've got to get this one out by tomorrow."

"Oh, I see." I was still not sure of what she was talking about.

"So would you be a dear," she continued, "and help me run off five hundred each of the first few pages?"

I figured that it might get me more in good with her so I said, "Sure, if you will show me how."

I didn't get home 'til four the next morning. What she had said was to be a "few pages" turned out to be the whole magazine, thirty-six pages long. I think I must have turned on that mimeo crank at least a million revolutions. My arms are so sore---but we finished all five hundred copies and put about half of them in envelopes ready for mailing out the next morning.

Out on the porch she said, "You've been a real dear helping me tonight," and she let me kiss her goodnight. I'd given up on that back when we were running off the sixth page of Asteroid. (As I said, that's her 'zine.)

Her kiss sort of made up for all the rest and so I said, "Goodnight" and started for the door.

I didn't see her again until Monday in English Lit (third period) and then she asked me if I would come over to her house that night and help her run off something that sounded like her "Fapazine". I had no idea what she had meant, but I still hadn't given up hope so I agreed to go over that night.

But this has gone on for two months now. Twice more she's asked me to run off "Asteroids" for her. Of course I do it. And now she's talking of starting a new "zine" called "Borogove". And inbetween times she keeps me busy reading fan and pro-zines. It's getting to be too much for me, but I like her a lot otherwise, and I was wondering if you could suggest anything.

Please don't print this in your fanzine because if she should see it she would never forgive me. I don't want that to happen. I haven't given up hope yet.

In fact, the bug is biting me too. I wrote a few stories for her zine and I've even subscribed to a few others without telling her.

But I DON'T LIKE SCIENCE FICTION.....

FANZINE QUOTES And COMMENTS

by Clay Enders

The honorable editor of SPHERE asked me to send along a picture of myself this time to be used for the Third Anniversary Issue. Unfortunately for you, I declined to do so.

At one time I thought myself not too bad a looking character, at least passable for all good purposes. One day I happened to overhear a friend (?) of mine talking. "There's nothing wrong with old C.E.," he said, "that having some bridge work done wouldn't help. His teeth are so bucked that he could gut a watermelon through a picket fence and not even swallow a seed."

All of which brings me to the cover of the current A BAS, a sterling production of one Boyd Raeburn, 9 Glenvalley Drive, Toronto 9, Canada, for 25¢. I really don't think my pan is any the worse than the character who appears there-on. Purportedly this is Andy Young, but never having seen the man, I wouldn't know. Actually, the cover is the worst part of A BAS this time, not in line with the precise duplicating Boyd usually exercises. Main forte of this issue is Boyd's own report of his trip to the Solacon. Interestingly told, but a bit long. I found myself tiring of the thing before I got to the end of it. The narrative is broken up with Rotsler illos---if you could call them that. I've never found myself actually caring for his work, too much repetition of the same character with a different line under it. I sat down myself just to see how hard it would be to dash off a few of these people. Once I got the idea, it wasn't hard to do.....and if I can draw them, it isn't art. A BAS is a must for any tru-fan, or for any fan, if they want to see how the other half.

By chance, I got to see a copy of Guy Terwilleger's BEST OF FANDOM--'57, and thought it a great offering. Now that THE BEST OF FANDOM--'58 is out, I must admit that it is superior to the previous volume. All the best of fan written material is present. Something every fan should have on his shelf as representative of the fine writing other fen can do. Available from Guy Terwilleger, 1412 Albright St., Boise, Idaho -75¢

Ron Ellik and Terry Carr, 3320A 21st St., San Francisco, Calif. are still going strong with their FANAC, four for a quarter, nine for fifty. The fact that this is a news and commentary zine covers the contents thoroughly. When something new is around in fandom, these two will get it for their publication.

The new VOID under the helm of Ted White and Greg Benford is one to watch. Send requests and money to Greg at 10521 Allegheny Drive, Dallas 29, Texas. Not only from the standpoint that it is one of the fastest growing zines in fandom, but also from the standpoint that Ted is really using a scalpel in reviewing the fanzines of his competitors. To date he has operated on both PSYCHOTIC and TWIG ILLUSTRATED. SHAGGY, in this latest, #17 issue, was treated a little more kindly. Perhaps I'm out of line. I don't know Ted, and I don't know Guy, but from the latest issues of both magazines, I would say that Ted tends to think any zine should be edited from the viewpoint of what Ted White will like and nothing more. He fails to take into consideration that there are other people in fandom who don't go for the same things that he does.

-FANZINE QUOTES And Comments-

VOID leads off with a slightly humorous article by Larry Stark on the Aerodynamic Qualities of the Morris---the morris being the cartoon character created by Ted White. Hardly worth the effort in my opinion.

Best of the issue is Franklin Ford's "Criteria For Critics". He points out that fandom is at last beginning to accept sincerely outspoken criticism, and agrees that it is the thing that will do fandom the most good. Agreed in this quarter, if the criticism is sincere, not bias.

Letters wound out the balance of the issue, and it is interesting to note that some fen agree with the way Ted reviews and some don't. VOID is well worth the money, whether you agree with the editors' viewpoint or not.

It was hard not to bring into focus the zine that has been under attack in VOID in reviewing it. So, in order not to forget the things I wanted to bring out, I'll get right into TWIG ILLUSTRATED, from Guy Terwilleger, 1412 Albright St., Boise, Idaho, 20¢ #15.

This is a far above average issue of TWIG, with Leman, Bloch, Carr, etc., represented. The most interesting item, though, from a fannish viewpoint, is Guy's own editorial in which he answers Ted White and tries to prove that Ted's review of his zine was biased. In order to do this Guy reprinted the first letter Ted wrote to him before this ruckus began. On reading the letter, what Guy has to say, and using a little common sense of my own, I come up with this as the answer to the problem. 1) Since the letter Guy reprinted was sent before the review of TWIG appeared, it would seem the whole thing was premeditated on Ted's part and he was acting out of spite. 2) At the same time, the letter could have been harmless and the review valid with White giving his honest criticism of the zine. 3) There is no common ground on which to view the subject. Either you are a friend of White, or you are a friend of Guy as far as personalities go. 4) The only decent thing to do is agree with both of them and forget the matter. Both zines have qualities that put them where they are. Ted claims he has it on good authority that Guy is going all out to create war on him. Guy on the other hand states he has no such idea in mind, that the matter isn't important enough to carry on.

That's not much of a review for TWIG, but I think you'll find it of interest, especially the art work which is strongly reminiscent of the old SATA.

There aren't too many specialized zines in fandom. One of the more recent ones is G. H. Scithers' AMRA, from Box 682 Stanford, Calif., @ 20¢ per. AMRA concerns itself with Conan the Cimmerian and is one of the best of the specialized type I've seen. The outstanding point of this publication is that it doesn't take itself seriously. That is, it deals mainly with material on Conan, but it isn't all dyed-in-the-wool sercon material.

Outstanding in this issue, #3, is the center spread picture by George Barr. Barr is one of the newer artists in fandom and is one of the best too. His pictures have a tendency to remind me of other artists' work, but this doesn't detract from them since they are original in content. Also in this issue is a double page spread reverse map of the United States which lays out the various kingdoms of Conan's world. After checking, I find that I live in Vendhya!

-FANZINE QUOTES And Comments-

If you are at all interested in Conan. AMRA is your zine. If you aren't interested, get it anyway for the fine art is beginning to appear in its pages.

The current crop of LASFS members have really taken their club zine in hand and have turned it into an up-and-coming fanzine. SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES, 2548 W. 12th St., Los Angeles 6, Calif. 20¢.

It's hard for a club-pub to become a really general type zine in fandom. I can think of only one other that really made the grade and it will be reviewed next. SHAGGY has gotten away from using all material by and about the club. This expansion program has brought out a lot of talent that lay dead under the old club zine since some of the material just didn't fit. Bjo Wells seems to be the guiding light in this mag, though Al Lewis is listed as the editor. Bjo's personality flows through the entire zine.

Ron Ellik has the outstanding item in this issue. His column, The Squirrel Cage (a regular in the zine) has, for the past two issues, concerned itself with the N3F, a group of fen banded together to form an international club. Whether intended as such or not, Ron's comments are the first ones outside of N3F that I have seen that go into detail to explain what is wrong with the club, and, with this issue, what is right, or could be right with it. Always a staunch advocate that the club (N3F) was for the birds, Ron is handling the subject with an open mind and his points are far more telling than if handled in the usual "down with the N3F" attitude. I missed the Squirrel Cage Annex by Terry Carr this month.

SHAGGY is a zine to watch in the coming months.

The other club zine that I mentioned is CRY OF THE NAMELESS, from box #92, 920 3rd Ave., Seattle 4, Wash., 25¢. One of the consistently good, large, monthly zines. At the moment, CRY is having size troubles and needs to cut down -- they say.

Still the only consistent prozine review column in fandom of any worth is Renfrew Pemberton's "The S-F Field Plowed Under". I find that the column is of great help to me. With all my activity, there just isn't time to read all the prozines -- though they are getting fewer in number -- and I find that Renfrem's reviews can steer me away from stories that might not be so hot. It isn't always good to take another's word for everything, but when you are busy, it sure helps to have some one (who knows) take the trouble to point out the bad ones as well as the good.

John Berry's A Sops Fable #4 appears in this 128th issue and continues his trend of fannish items. Not up to his "All The Way", or the one just previous, it is still heads over most of the fan fiction being written today.

Carr, Grennel, and others are present with interesting items. The letter column is still one of the main features of CRY and always has something of interest in it.

QUID #1 just arrived from Vic Ryan, 2160 Sylvan Road, Springfield, Ill. Future issues will be 15¢, 4/50¢. For a first issue it is very good I think. The as yet untitled fanzine review column promises: ".....this is a review col. wherein fanzines will be mercilessly torn apart." In case you didn't note, that's a quote. But that's

-FANZINE QUOTES And Comments-

about all, because you see as far as I could determine none of the fan zines reviewed were actually torn apart. Well, almost, that is, the last Issue of SPHERE was sort of. You could say the staples were yanked out, and the cover was roughed up a bit. Other than that. Well. Take a look for yourself at the two readers below. They too found the cover quite horrifying. Just goes to show.

QUID looks like it will develop into a very interesting pub and we look forward to all future issues.

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