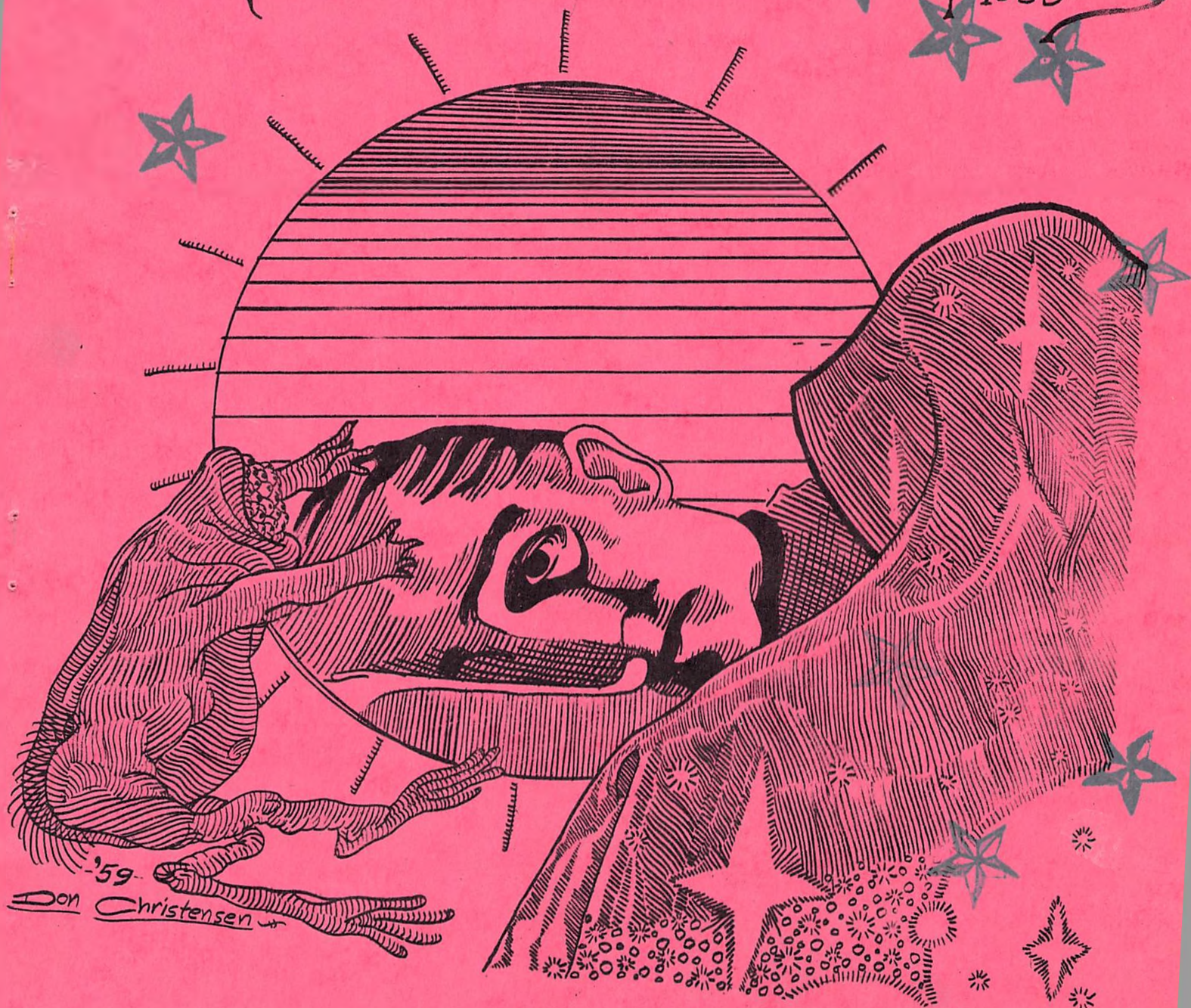


# Sphere

Spring  
Fall - 1959 -







# The Editor Sez

Writing an Editorial should be a lot of fun, and a job not too difficult to do from one issue to the next. Yet, with this issue I have had to let go most of my huge staff of specialized editors. You're familiar with the list that has appeared on the Contents Pages in the past. Since transferring from Florida almost two years ago it has become increasingly difficult to get each issue out. From bi-monthly we slipped to quarterly, now even that is hard to maintain. So it is with great admiration that I read fanzines like YANDRO, JD-ARGASSY, FANAC, TWIG, and SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES, to mention only a few of the regular ones. However, it's probably safe to say that no two zines are published under the same circumstances. One, the product of a very active fan club, another-dependable output of a devoted husband-and-wife team, while another rag is laboriously brought to life minus the help of anyone else. Of course, you have said—some of you, anyway—the singularity of your editorship is obvious.

So this issue marks still another change in the ever-changing policy of SPHERE. Someone said to this effect:...."your're trying to be a 'Little Magazine'....". I think we have succeeded in that respect. Take for example the size of this number.....it aint BIG is it?

At any rate I'll give this a try. If I don't like, and if too many of you readers (both of you) disagree, then we'll make more changes. Time was when I could say with a fair degree of certainty what the contents of next issue would be. Not so lately. Yet, with the New Year in view I feel that SPHERE might swing back into orbit.

Just had some good news from Ed Chamberlain, who contributed many good stories in our early issues, but who has been conspicuous by his absence in recent months. Ed tells me in his letter that he is almost finished with the manuscript of his story THE GENTLE MONSTERS. We promised this back in 1958. Still have a complete set of excellent illustrations by HESS (our own new Fan-Art discovery) to accompany this long awaited story. Chamberlain tells me....."Very close now to the windup of the story. Do not despair, now that victory is in sight. And remember the old saying: Damn the portedoes —  
full head aspeed!"

O.K. Ed, I with you! FULL HEAD ASPEED!

John Berry sent an aerogramme recently from Belfast, Northern Ireland. "As you'll gather from reading CRY", John writes, "I've been extremely busy writing up my memoirs, and I've got you down next on my list for material. I'll wait until the Xmas rush is over, before I send it surface mail. In time for the next SPHERE?"

John continues: "I would like very much to get Brian Aldiss's adress. I haven't forwarded the plaque yet, but I have tried. I wrote to John Carnell, his agent, and Carnell wrote to say he hadn't got Brian's adress, but if I sent the plaque to him he would guarantee to forward it.

John continues, "I would much rather contact Brian myself, and have in fact written a considerable number of letters to try to get get his loaction."

"If you have it, Joe, I would be very obliged if you could let me have it as soon as possible.....and if you can let me know whether the January date mentioned will be suitable I can send the Mss as promised." (And Berry signs off).

You have the address of Alldiss by now I'm sure since I sent it out the same day your letter arrived. Sure thing, I'll be eagerly awaiting your manuscript. It should appear in the next issue of SPHERE. ((All the foregoing should have been inside doubles like:))

So no zine features a combined Editorial and Letter Section?  
So what? So herewith continues same. But, seriously, hope you like it! ((These sentences ahead also, otherwise you wont know who said what to whom.))eds.

From: Dick Schultz, Detroit, Mich.-

"Like here I am again! Like commenting on SPHERE, too! Received #11 and #12 a few days ago, but just now getting time to read and write to you about them. The cover on #11 hereby goes under attack. It reminds me of nothing so much as the fake 'stf' fanzines of the 40's. ((?)) Put a monster or BEM on the cover. That's what theyall said then, and did. Yours at least has the advantage of faultless reproduction.

"You don't hesitate to approach the pro authors for material, do you? Brian does write an entertaining article. It would probably have been choice, if I had previously read "Judas Dancing". It put heart into the restless 'author' within me. Which is one of the few things that only the best of stories/articles can do.

"Don Franson was utterly innocuous. Ho--hum--. "It" was undoubtedly was intended to be humorous. Instead, boredom was the only reaction identified by this reader. Too bad, Don, try again.

"Now, let us discuss fiction, stf, in fanzines. Criticism, discussions, reviews, etc. of stf have an accepted place in our present Fandom. But how about stf writing? Is it accepted? NO. Then, why not?

"The man asked, 'Why Not?' To which I reply: 'Have you ever read(or waded through) the seemingly endless streams of crud appearing so frequently throughout Fandom's annual crop of fanzines?' The answer is that there is but one fault to most of it. That being, 'poor handling'. The ideas, tho, AH!. . . The ideas! To a Neo, the ideas strike me as being no poorer than those in the prozines, and in many respects, even better. For this unpolished gem, I will plow through excess wordage. Enduring the incongruous parts, reading through the non-existant plot or chacterization, etc. All this because it proves to be a real gem.

"It's (sigh). . . It's so hard to be optimistic about this form of Fan art (i.e. fanfiction). Yet, Silverberg, Harlan, Bradbury, and others rose from our ranks through the fanzines. Is it too much to endure a few stories now-and-then? Once in a while they prove to be worth while, too! For you see----- I rather liked Cam Williams' "Mission".

((Thanks, Dick for your letter. Yes, that master was the one used on the cover of last issue. Ed drew another one that same afternoon which appears on page 10 this issue.))

Well, mostly, as I cut out on the town to rent a multilith, I have few last minute words to pass on. Like next issue, due out right NOW, will be out soon. O.K.? Also will have more photos, another Detention Report. This one by Ray Beam. More letters. More, that is if more are written

Look for S P H E R E, it'll  
be here for a long while, yet!

## Key to the Con Pics

a) Bill Conner and Marion Z. Bradley. b) Martha Cohen-(radioactive), H.B.Brous-(Double Star), and unidentified guest. (Can anyone give us this fan's name?((Ed.)) c) Unidentified guest and Randy Garrett-(Henry VIII.) d) Burnett Toskey, Hans Santesson, John Berry, and Dick Schultz. e) A candid shot outside the Hotel in London at the 15th World Con. J.W.Campbell, Jr, center, signing autograph, others in pic are the Kyles, Ae Ackerman, Mary D., Val and Lee. f) J.A.Christoff. All photos on this page were taken at the 1959 Detention by our associate photographer, R. P. Schultz. (Except: Photo "e" which was made in London, 1957.)

A.) -Standing-: Corey, Hickey, Christoff, and Koogle. -Sitting-Bowart, oh yes, and burned-out flash bulb in his pipe. Taken at Oklacon, 1957.  
B.) From the Newyorcon-1956: Lee S., 4e Ackerman, Joe Christoff, Val, and unidentified friend. Seated: Mary D. and unidentified guest.  
C.) A scene from the clever ballet of Captain Future(?) at Nycon II. in 1956. D.) (Center Pic- Joe Christoff and Rory Faulker at Solacon, 1958.  
E.) H. Moore, Chairman of Nolacon, Bea Mahafey, and Joe Christoff, 1951.  
F.) Fritz Leiber, Judith Merrill, Joe Christoff rehearsing for Skit at Nolacon. G.) Announcer (?) Shelby Vic, and Joe Christoff entering stage in production of "The Robot, The Android, The Girl, and The Poet", Nolacon.  
H.) -(Bottom Pic: Detention, 1959, Nick Falasca, Dainis Baishetrs, Jim Caught-  
\*-Sometimes called: "Nycon II." /ran. John Koning, Boyd Raeburn, Ted White.





# HOME FREEZER

by  
Bob Lichtman

George stood before his workbench on which the end product of over a year of weekends and evenings sat. It was a time-stopper, and it would, when activated, cause time to stand still. George had built it for a specific purpose; he intended to steal himself enough money to live in luxury the rest of his life.

He had chosen the First National Bank for his target, for reasons of convenience; it was only three blocks away.

He reached down and turned on the time-stopper. Within a few seconds there was a deathly silence as all motion — all activity on the entire earth stopped — completely frozen. Only George was immune to the effects of this wonderful machine. This, of course, was just as he had planned.

He left the machine running, and started his walk to the bank. It seemed weird and completely uncanny not to see anything moving, were George's thoughts as he neared the door to the huge bank. Nothing stirred. Everything — everything living, mechanical.....all things that were moving or ever capable of moving were now frozen motionless.

Upon his arrival he found a lady holding the door halfway open, like a statue of ice. Always the gentleman, George tipped his hat and walked in around her. He went into the vault, which was conveniently left open, and headed for the stacks of high-denomination bills.

He reached for a packet of hundreds and couldn't lift it. Further tests proved the same for all the other money. Disgusted, he left the bank.

By now he was beginning to get hungry, so he headed for an expensive restaurant around the corner. Inside, he saw a waiter frozen in the act of serving dinner. He reached for a fork so he could taste the delicious-looking steak in front of one of the diners. He couldn't budge it. Then he tried the steak itself. He couldn't move it either. As a last resort, he bent down and tried to take a bite of the steak. It was like trying to bite a rock.

He hurried back to his house and ran to his workroom. Hastily he

-HOME FREEZER-

reached for the switch that would turn off the Time-Stopper.  
It wouldn't move!

-THE END-

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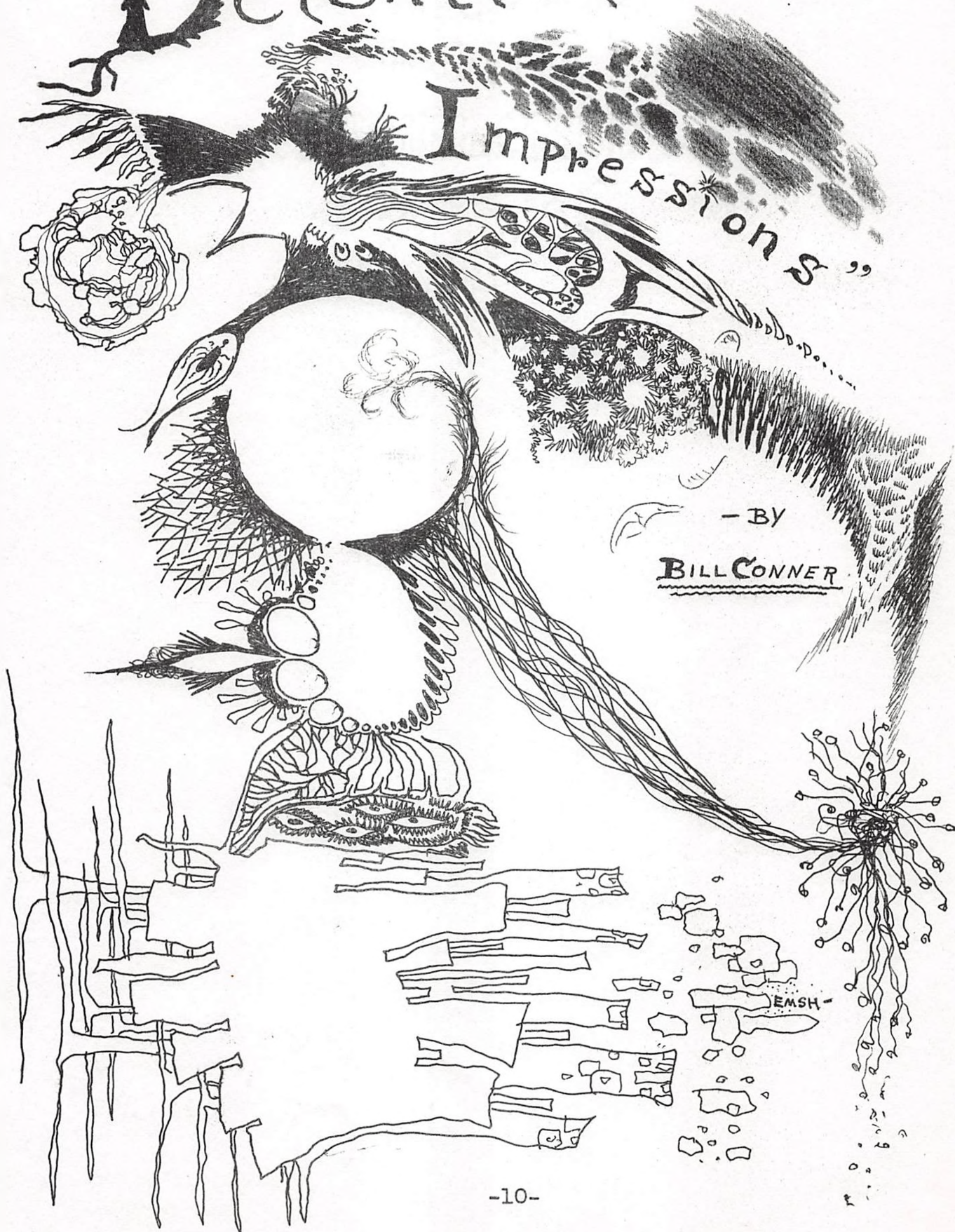


# "Detention

# Impressions"

- BY

BILL CONNER



-DETENTION IMPRESSIONS-  
.oooooooooooooooooooooooooooo.

By  
Bill Conner

It was five-thirty AM, Saturday, September the fifth (1959). It was just getting dawn in Detroit as a Checker Cab pulled up in front of the Fort Pick Shelby Hotel, and out stepped a long, lean young man with a rapt expression on his face. This vertical specimen of homo fanus was carrying two pieces of luggage; one, a suitcase, was full to overflowing with clothing, but the other, an AWOL bag, was nearly empty. As a result of this strange arrangement, this linear creature walked with into the hotel lobby with a pronounced list. The bell boy may have thought the empty bag was intended for any kind of portable hotel property, but the slim being was thinking of other treasures. Strange, exotic names whirled through his mind....  
.....Gernsback AMAZING.....UNKNOWN WORLDS.....early WEIRDS.  
PLANETS, WONDER STORIES, FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES, C O M E T.....

oo

When I entered the lobby of the Detention hotel at 5:30 Saturday morning, the lobby was, of course, devoid of fans; everyone was either still at the parties or in the process of sleeping one off. It was good to know, however, that in the many floors above me, the citizens of the universe was gathered to commune with their fellows. It was good to know that soon I would again have the pleasure of talking to some sane people for a change: people interested in the future, people not content with our present "civilization", thinking people. These are the people who are very much ALIVE, and are not content to pass their days in a mindless stupor, letting some one else do all of their thinking for them. It was good to be home again with the cosmic family of fans.

To the individual fan, a convention starts not when he checks into the hotel, but when he actually comes into contact with other fans or pros for the first time. The Detention started for me when I went down to the second floor to register for the con. I immediately met my friend of the 1958 Southwest con, who was Guest of Honor there, Marion Z. Bradley. I was able to spend some time enjoying MZB's company during the con, but I somehow didn't manage to discuss with her all the things I wanted to. Nor did I manage to talk to many other people there as much as I wanted to. But this is the way cons are — one keeps on the move, hopping from person to person, from group to group, and from party to party, trying to do all and see all he can in the precious little time available.

After the official Welcome and the Auction Bloch were over, Marion and I met again, and Marion got me enthused in a fannish project. She asked me if I had a costume for the Masquerade Ball, and I told her that I did not. MZB said that all TRUFANS go to the ball in costume, and who was I to question MZB? We made a journey out into the concrete jungle of Detroit and found a costume and make-up store, where we purchased grease paint and eyebrow pencils. This is the second time I went to a convention without a costume, but managed to appear as a weird monster at the ball anyway.

## \*DETENTION IMPRESSIONS\*

Improvising a costume is fun; it's really surprising what one can do with ordinary, mundane clothing. Little did I realize that I would be wearing one of MZB's old blouses at the Detention Masquerade, not to mention one of her son's T-shirts! (Which was intended originally to be a part of Marion's own costume.) With her kind assistance, I put together a costume sufficiently outré to be presentable at the Ball. The rest was easy; I just love to smear bright green grease paint all over my face, and with my face, it's not too difficult a task to make a real healthy-looking monster.

Now, I agree with MZB, that all TRUFEN should attend the Balls at Conventions in costume. It puts one in the spirit of things. (No pun intended.) I think that your personality is somewhat altered, if only in its outward manifestations, whenever you put on a costume and a mask. To me, it is wonderful fun to be something else for a change. Your identity is gone, (if your creation is good enough) and you are free to create a new personality as you please.

While I was under the spell of the Masquerade, wandering through crowds of ghouls, ghosts, vampires, magicians, aliens from other worlds, monsters, (D)jinns, fairies, witches, werewolves, and any and all of the fabulous creatures of sf and fantasy; I made the acquaintance of a splendid warrior of the spaceways. This spaceman's dazzling uniform so completely mesmerized the judges that they awarded him the prize for the most beautiful costume of all. Calthu, King of the Crab Monsters, they called him, and it was quite a great accomplishment when one considers that the ball room was full of beautiful creatures as well as hideous monsters from many worlds. This towering spaceman had an amazing lens on his helmet which enabled him to attune his mind to those of the other beings present, and I had my omnivision lenses which enabled me to see anything in the entire universe, in any perspective or frame of perception. He and I combined forces and roamed around the assembly of phantasms, inspecting an occasional interesting mummer with our bizarre lenses. I later learned that this spaceman is known sometimes as Joe Christoff. (i.e. when not at home with the Cosmic Fen, or back on mundane mother earth)

Although my creation did not win any prize from the judges of the Masquerade, I received more than my share of egoboo after the Ball was over. I was on my way to transform myself back into Bill Conner before starting out for the evening's revels when I walked past a group of non fan residents of the hotel near the elevators. One of them, an attractive young girl, caught sight of me; her eyes widened, her mouth gaped open, and she uttered. "HOLY C-Cow!" My evening was then complete.

After enjoying the usual round of parties Saturday night — rather, Sunday morning, I left the revellers at three-thirty AM, intending to get a few hours of sleep. But I seemed to have fallen into a deep sleep already, and when I regained consciousness, it was one PM, and time to get ready for the Banquet, which would no doubt start at two since it was scheduled for one. At the feast, it was my good fortune to be served prime roast rib of beef instead of the ham I had ordered. By the time I noticed the difference, it was too late to correct the mistake. Needless to say, I did not complain to the management!

## \*DETENTION IMPRESSIONS\*

Poul Anderson, the Guest of Honor, made a speech in which he stated that he believed that science fiction was the literature of today's renaissance man. In retrospect, I believe that Poul's speech may have helped set the stage for the event which occurred later that day and which may prove to be the most important thing to happen to sf and fandom in many years. Also, the professional magazine editors helped set the stage for this event in their discussion of "Where We're Going From Here." The event I'm referring to is the Fanzine Editor's Panel, which evolved into something more — nothing less than a Nova!

oo

### THE NOVACON

Why Nova? Why Novacon?

Because a slumbering dwarf star, the star that is science fiction fandom, suddenly flared; it changed from a dim red glowing coal into a Nova of brilliant magnitude. Its blinding gases rapidly expanded into the lightyears of dismal darkness that have surrounded it for lo, these many years. No mortal fan can tell if this Nova will continue to blaze, emitting its life-giving energy to the world of science fiction and fantasy. Ordinary novae flare out only to become dim stars once again. We can only hope that this is no ordinary nova.

The fans who witnessed the miracle in the Crystal Room won't soon forget the feverish excitement which grew to a crackling electric charge in the air. Not even the members of the First World Convention could have been more excited than these people were that night, nor more enthusiastic.

The story of how the Fanzine Editor's Panel developed into this Nova will probably be told many times and in many different ways. Prob- several different fans will come forth to claim the distinction of turning the discussion to More Important Things, just when the panel was busily commenting on the proper use of staples in fanzines. And, apparently, some one thought that this subject was of much less vital importance than the burning questions they had in mind. If I remember correctly, it was Ed Wood who triggered off the Nova effect. However, the important thing is that the questions were asked. Why were fanzines devoting so little space to science fiction? Why did so many fans show so little interest in science fiction these days? Was fandom getting away from science fiction, and was it changing into something else?

Questions such as these needed to — begged to be asked. The Nova was destined to Come. People who love science fiction, who think it is truly the most important literary form, at least to them. People who are deeply concerned about the sad state of this field today. These were questions that needed to be asked of a fanzine editors' panel before a group of fans at a convention. Under these circumstances, it isn't so easy to laugh these questions off as the mad rantings of a misguided "sercon" fanatic. It was significant that no one arose to defend so-called "faaanish fandom". The "Who-the-hell-reads-that-stuff" faction must have not been present. The laughing boys, who can never seem to get even slightly serious about science fiction had nothing to say.

## \*DETENTION IMPRESSIONS\*

-The Novacon-

I assume that many people in the crystal Room realized that they love science fiction and fantasy, and that no matter how bad some of the stories may get, they will continue to love it. They realized that their beloved muse was in trouble. Not only had many s-f and fantasy magazines perished, but many once-loyal fans of s-f and fantasy were becoming more and more apathetic towards this field. In the discussion of these ills, the Nova was born.

oooooooooooooooooooo-NOVA IMPRESSIONS-oooooooooooooooooooo

And why not? It's a good idea to get serious about your favorite form of reading entertainment when it is in trouble. Remember the good stories; the stories that stretch the imagination to far places of the universe, the ones that changed our pre science fiction worlds from the tiny, narrow, everyday here-and-now, to the infinite expanse and scope of genuine science fiction? Why shouldn't we remember to give s-f and fantasy the credit they deserve for entertaining and enlightening us?

I assume that most of you reading this enjoy very much going to conventions, enjoy fanzine fandom, and writing letters to fanzines and other fans. For all of this you can thank science fiction, and magazine science fiction in particular.

The fanzine fans who like to belittle some of those oldfans who are not now so active in fanzine fandom, should realize that they owe their favorite "ghoddamhobby" to magazine s-f and the fans of First Fandom, who started all of this stuff in the first place! It is ridiculous for anyone to think that the fanzine part of fandom will someday evolve into merely a group of amateur publications with no connection with science fiction. To exist, the fanzine needs a group of readers who have a common interest besides that of merely writing for, reading, or publishing an amateur magazine. Other kinds of amateur hobby magazines do exist, but they are nothing like s-f fanzines. They lack the viewpoint of today's renaissance man. This is limited to science fiction fanzines. There are more people in s-f fandom who like to use their minds; there are more people who are very fond of expressing themselves to a receptive audience. Science fiction alone provides a common background of intellectual experience necessary to our unique brand of fandom. Hans Stefan Santesson, editor of Fantastic Universe, told the gathering that not only were s-f magazines in trouble, but that all magazines are suffering a general decline in sales. People just aren't reading as much as they used to. The big slicks and digests are feeling the pinch, too. Why? Certainly T-V no longer can be considered a novelty — it certainly isn't getting any better. Nor the movies, despite the claim. Why then does this rejection of magazines exist? Are people content to loll in their easy chairs, lazily accepting anything T-V has to offer as an alternative to spending their leisure time doing something a bit more strenuous? I think so. People who are capable of reading, and thereby improving themselves intellectually, are spending too much time passively watching crud on T-V. To quote Harlan Ellison, "People are glued to the glass tit!" They allow their minds to attach a mental mouth to the 21-inch nipple-----and let it suck away.

It is so easy to be "enteratined" by letting someone else do all of the work. It is so easy to lie there, hypnotized, dreaming whatever dreams are served up for you by your electronic genie. There is no

\*Detention Impressions\*

-NOVA IMPRESSIONS-

need to think; Jack Parr and Charlie Weaver are paid enough to do that. To read, one must turn the pages, and build up visual images in their own mind; television does all of this for us. T-V is the answer to a lazy mind's prayer for diversion from the cares of living.

Thank God for people with restless minds! These people aren't content to let their minds stay idle; they continually keep their minds inquiring, and seeking to appreciate and enjoy the infinite variety of things and thoughts that exist in our universe. These are my kind of people. Science fiction must address itself to these people. Science fiction can give people something to enjoy while at the same time presenting them with new horizons to explore. Maybe it can help some lazy minds to discover that thinking can be enjoyable, that thinking can make them more aware of being alive, and that thinking can help them to enjoy life more by increasing their understanding of the universe in which they live.

But, perhaps Larry Shaw had a good point when he said that only a certain percentage of people are capable of enjoying science fiction. He expressed his doubts that science fiction would ever be as popular as, say rock-and-roll. Lazy minds, like the poor, will probably always be with us. But surely more people are capable of enjoying science fiction than the relatively small minority of readers the field has now. No doubt Hollywood has done it's fair share of creating the wrong concept of the meaning of this type fiction, by labelling the nauseating bug-and-beast-films as science fiction. At least T-V has not joined the movies in this crime, (yet) and for that we can rejoice.

I think the vast majority of the people who are "glued to the glass tit" are those who are incapable of enjoying science fiction. What did these same people do before the age of T-V? They read comic books possibly, or visited their neighbors or relatives to discuss local politics, their last operation, and a few other trivialities. The people who watch Matt Dillon on T-V today watched Gene Autry do the same things on the movie screens yesterday. And with Gene Autry, the audience was spared from psychology, which is so important today in the "adult" Western. But even though the science fiction fad may never be as wide-spread as rock-and-roll, or the T-V Western, it does seem possible that it could reach a larger readership than it does now. The distribution problem was also discussed during the night, and Lynn Hickman told how he rearranges the news-stand when he makes business trips, putting s-f mags out in front. He said that in the days of First Fandom, this was a standard practice of all TRUFANS. It's a very easy thing to do, and although it may not cause any sudden increase in sales figures, such a practice is bound to help some. No, I wouldn't go so far as to suggest that s-f fans should put printed cards in s-f magazines asking "interested" people to join a local fan club; this might help the local club, and it might add a new fan or two to fandom, but it won't necessarily get many more s-f mags and books sold. Nor do I believe that the fan movement is Just The Thing to Save the World, or that it is our prime mission to spread enlightenment to the mundanes and bring them into the fold. This is what is meant by the word "sercon", and surely "putting s-f- magazines out in front where they can readily be seen" isn't in the same category!

As long as science fiction stays a part of our literature, there will always be new fans coming into fandom somehow. Provided they are made

\*NOVA IMPRESSIONS\*

aware that such a thing exists. Publicity in the prozines is still the best way of making the fan movement known to science fiction readers who may want to become active in fandom; putting ads for local clubs in paper backs and magazines has shown results in the past. At present, no magazine is giving fandom the publicity it needs. Bob Lowndes removed all fan departments from SF Stories and wrote an editorial entitled, "Who's to Blame." I think HE is. Lowndes convinced himself that fans are no longer interested in s-f, or at least not his magazine. But ironically enough, the cover of the very issue in which Lowndes makes this statement is splashed with blurbs for stories by Jim Harmon, Bob Silverberg, and Marion Z. Bradley — all of them fans turned pro! Lowndes complains that he isn't getting as many letters as he used to. This is probably true, and it is also undoubtedly true that his circulation is not as big as it used to be. Lowndes also complains that fanzines show very little interest in science fiction these days, and this also is somewhat true, but maybe all this will change now after the Novacon.

Already, the new FANNOTATIONS in the latest issue of FANTASTIC UNIVERSE by Belle Dietz shows much promise with eight fan magazines reviewed in an adult, intelligent way that should attract new interest to the field.

Returning briefly to Doc Lowndes.....surely he doesn't think that to be "interested", a fan magazine must devote all of its contents to sci-fi. This just isn't the nature of the fan movement; if Lowndes thinks it is, or should be, he obviously doesn't understand (or has forgotten) Fandom.

Are science fiction stories about s-f itself? Of course not. The stories are about as wide a range of subject as those fans like to discuss in the fan magazines themselves.

Lowndes seems to have retained his letter column, however, and as long as it and S F STORIES are around, it will be possible to try to sneak in a plub for fandom now and then. S F STORIES, like many of the other prozines, is living on borrowed time, and there's no telling how much longer it can continue to get away with this.

Maybe if Lowndes could have been at the Nova session in Detroit this year in person, his attitude toward fandom would be changed. If he could have heard what Doc Barrett, Dave Kyle, Ed Wood, Larry Shaw, Harlan Ellison, Hans Santesson, Lynn Hickman, Jim Harmon, and many other fan and pro had to say that night about science fiction; if he could have felt the excitement and enthusiasm that was everywhere present--and set an undurance record for the length of time it lasted--yes, had Lowndes, or anyone else who doubts been present at this session they would have to agree that SCIENCE FICTION FANDOM IS NOT DEAD! (Indeed not!)

ooooooooooooooooooooMORE DETENTION IMPRESSIONSoooooooooooooooooooo

And so the Nova blazed on into the morning. If it had not been for the awful fact that fans are only human after all, and not the robots of their favorite fiction, the Nova might have flamed on into the late hours of the next morning. It was a weary Bjo Wells who suggested that we break up the meeting, and it must have been about 3:00 AM by then. Bjo heroically controlled this immortal storm that will no doubt go down in fan history as one of the longest sessions ever---mayby one with far reaching results.

-MORE DETENTION IMPRESSIONS-

(Continued)

I remember when the Novasession was breaking up, hearing many fans as well as pros making remarks that they had never witnessed anything like this at any previous convention. It is doubly astonishing when one considers that at the same time, booze and blog were flowing like water — rapid, gushing water, too — and just as free at the many parties upstairs. Of course, beer and cokes from Detroit's Beer Party kept our whistles sufficiently wetted to keep the discussion going.

After the Novasession, I was among those who were attracted by the magnetic personality of one Harlan Ellison, as he was holding forth in the foyer afterwards. Harlan is a fabulous story teller when he has the attention of a small group of people, and by "small group", I mean about twenty in this case. Harlan wandered on to the subject of Rogue Magazine, this of course being a subject which he is naturally very fond of, and he proceeded to tell us what was good about the mag and what wasn't. I'm sure that he wouldn't want some of the things he said about certain people and their ideas on how a man's magazine should be edited, so I won't. Harlan was at his best when he told the story of The Door At Beatly's on the Bayou, and the other incidents that caused Beatly to throw in the towel on future Midwestcons. This performance took place in Harlan's room, which was only a single, but into which at least twenty or more people must have jammed at one time. I said "performance", because when Harlan is at his best, he somehow performs the story he is telling with his gestures and his expressive way of speaking. This has to be seen, to be appreciated. Finally, the whole group descended upon the small restaurant across the street from the hotel at about 5:30 that A.M. After drinking coffee, the group broke up, and I imagine everyone staggered off to bed.

That afternoon I managed to make it to the Crystal Room in time to hear most of what John W. Campbell, Jr. had to say about "The Right to be Wrong." I found myself agreeing with most of what he had to say on this subject, and I certainly agree with JWC that scientists had the right to be wrong. In the question period after John's speech, I asked him how one could ever be absolutely sure that two things were, or were not, occurring simultaneously. JWC had discussed his belief that the Einsteinian observer was a "one-eyed logician" earlier in his talk, and that this one-eyed entity could not observe such things as two events that happened at the same time. JWC agreed that we can never be sure of this, or anything else having to do with our perception of time and space because our perception is only so accurate and no more.

After Campbell's profound speech on the basic philosophy of science, Fan Turned Pro Panel took over, and seemed to take up where the Nova session of the "other" day left off. It turned into a discussion of "Who Should We Write For?" Harlan said that an artist should write for himself; Marion Z. Bradley disagreed and said that an author should write for his readers. I agree with MZB. I think Harlan qualified his remark later; he agreed that an author has to write for his readers in order that he may eat, and that an artist writes his best when writing for himself. The discussions then went on to "What Should We Write?"-----and, then to "Why DO WE Write SF, When THERE IS NO MONEY In It?" This proved to be a very interesting discussion, and it indicated that the spirit was indeed still alive!

-MORE DETENTION IMPRESSIONS-

That evening, the Play was staged. It was hilarious! The story was - - like teenage science fiction fans were putting rockets into orbit by using wadding made from s-f mags for rocket fuel. The Government sends Agent Bleary of the Goon Defective Agency to investigate this matter and put a stop to it. The Goon goes to several prozine offices and gets nowhere, as does a grey-haired neo writer wearing a beanie prop cap who is trying to sell a story. Finally, these two characters end up in the editorial office of John W. Scramble, Sr., who is attired in the regalia of a king, and the Superman "S" imprinted on his vest. While the buffoonery was going on, Scramble's secretary brings in a "story" and puts it up on the office blackboard for JWS, Sr., to edit. The "story" consists wholly of a mathematical formula. Editor Scramble makes a few corrections, but then rejects the "story" as not being original enough. This play was a gas, and all of those who had a hand in it should be thanked for giving the conventioners such fine entertainment. Randy Garrett did a great job as Mr. Scramble, and Fritz Lieber stole the show as the aspiring writer with the beanie cap. It was a fitting climax for a great convention.

But for me, the convention was not over even as the final applause died away after the final curtain call for the brilliant Play. One of the Editors of SPHERE, Joe Christoff, offered to give me a lift home, since he was headed south and would pass through all of central Ohio. So the convention did not end for me until I arrived in front of my home in Chillicothe. Before Joe and I left the hotel, we went to the local coffee shop with Ernie Wheatley, Bob Lambeck, Al J. Lewis (of Michigan) and John Koning for our last fannish feed. Later Super Squirrel Ellik came over to our table.

After this Joe and I set the auto-controls on his treasure-laden '59 Impalla and settled back to five or six hours more of convention continuation. Did I say five, or six hours? Actually it really was only one. The time-warp, one leg of it anyway, does lie in central Ohio. In fact it would seem that the warp twists back upon itself in one or two places. Our S.S.E. direction as set on our compass when taking off from Detroit put us right in line with the time warp. So the trip ended much too soon.

I had managed to fill my AWOL bag with mags, books, and other treasures from Detention. The entire back seat as well as that vast space beneath those Martian wings which serve as a trunk was loaded too. Joe had packed many rare gems back there before we headed southward.

Our talkacon back was one of the high points of the trip for me; we discussed fandom, fanzines, fans, and life in general. From this experience, I have gained inspiration to write many articles, some of which may appear again in these pages. Many of the 'word-pictures' of this report are a result of this marathorn conversation that Joe and I had on the way back. It's amazing how time and space flow by when the conversation is enjoyable. Even had we not encountered the time-warp -- and surely we must have done just that -- the trip would have ended too soon. It's a good thing for us that Joe's subconscious mind is a good driver. You see not all of the controls were automatic, and his conscious mind was wrapped up in the conversation, so it's well that he is gifted in this respect. But at length, and as I said, only a short time passed, I noticed that we were entering familiar country and soon I was directing Joe to my apartment. We arrived, I unloaded my baggage. We said our goodbye to each other. And Joe roared off into the chill night; the Detention was over for me.