

SPIRAL



Published bi-monthly or thereabouts by Denis Moreen, 214 Ninth St., Wilmette, Ill., U.S.A. 10¢ per copy, 3 issues for 25¢. Trades accepted. All letters received are subject to use in the letter column unless the writer states otherwise. Unused material will be sent to the Fanzine Material Pool unless the writer states otherwise. Unsigned material is the editor's. Advertising rates on request. Circulation this: 100. This is an Orgloglump Publication. On to Frisco!

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COMING NEXT ISSUE!: Seeing as I've got an actual, honest-to-goodness backlog for once in my publishing life, I might's well let it known now as to what exactly will be in SPY #9, out right after the Frisco Convention:

- 1) The lead story will be a seven-page wonder by none other than HARLAN ELLISON, entitled "Cave Man in the Corned Beef." This is the first of a proposed series of "Ambrosia Eatery" stories which Harlan hopes to have appear in various fan magazines. Read this first in the series and then contact Harlan about having one appear in your fanzine.
- 2) Roger Dard will be present an authentic article entitled "A Renaissance in Science-Fiction Comic Books", a study of the growth of the fantasy element in comic books.

PLUS Dick Geis's "Violent Ward" and Claude Hall's "Doppel-Rad Effect", and the usual Spiralities (relating the first year of SPY's publishing) and letter column. And many other surprises! Yes, it may be enormous PI element, but....

"YOU'LL SEE IT ALL, EVERY BIT, IN SPIRAL!"

Gaa....

SPIRALITIES

"Well, gee whiz,
how the heck are you?"

I guess I just am a holiday man at heart. Last time I wrote this editorial, it was April Fool's Day. Today is July 4, and there's nothing I can do about it. It's been July 4 all day, and I'm afraid it will be until midnight. Can ya beat that?

But to anyone with a fairly-good level of mathematics will notice that there has been a three-month elapsement between issues, when there really should have been only two months. Perhaps I'd better explain. (...Snuggle back in your luxurious chair, ready yourself for a long alibi...) What with the end of school coming in June and an amateur show at the same time, things started piling up, which resulted in my not being able to start working on SPY until about a week ago. Simple enough, eh? Actually the worst part of it is that I still may be delayed in getting this issue out soon, because (a) I have only a partially-full pound can of ink left, and I don't know just how partially full it is--this means that, if I run out, I'll have to wait for my order to come through about six days from now or so; and (b) I don't have the slightest idea where I'm going to dig up \$3.00 or so for stamps for this issue's mailing! Ah well, if you're reading this, I suppose you must have received it...eventually... (courtesy Einstein Theory of Relativity).

In all reality I just realized something else: that this is the annish. Just notice the 100-plus pages, full to the brim with Tucker, Willis, Calkins, Silverberg, Bloch, etc...! (Well, almost...) Anyway, I do think you'll be satisfied with the material this issue--wait for our tenth-anniversary issue for that 100 pager!

What is usually the case in annishes is to mull over the past year's efforts. Due to the fact that this issue is later than usual and that there's a lot of other items which would not last until August or so, I've decided to wait until next issue to really celebrate one year in the publishing business, by summarizing the past year. Maybe it's better that way--what with a high percentage of editors succumbing to annishitis, the fact that I will live through it will give even more to celebrate for.

Now back to this issue at hand. First of all, I have a favor to ask. For the purposes of calculating just exactly the post office schedules for fanzine-type stuff, I'd appreciate it if each one of you would please, when writing me next, tell me the exact date when this issue of SPY arrived in your particular mail-box. I'll keep track of when I mail the issue, and then if you tell me when you received your copy, I'll know how long an interam there is to all of you. The usual time for first-class mail is two-days (this can be found out by examining the postmarks), but fanzines seem to be more variable. Remember, okay? Or else I stuff Rocketship X-M down your swanny-white throats.

You'll notice a few changes in format this issue. The letter section has been changed slightly, I think to the better, after reading some suggestions from Don Susan, to whom I extend thanks. I've decided to give little talks about each piece of material individually instead of in this editorial, on the assumption that it will help to better blend things together, or something like that. I'm also no longer striving to have one piece of art on every double-page, because, frankly, I'm no artist and I don't see any reason for it anymore. My stencilling is bad enough with the very minimum used this time! I'm also using a different typewriter, this elite instead of pica. This was caused by my getting mad at the other one (fiend

for personification that I am) and telling it that I wouldn't use it again until it got its chunks fixed in its roller. So far it hasn't paid any attention to my raving and has just sat under my bed, leering at me, chunks and all. This other elite typer I have been using in hopes that, thusfore, I could have just as much material as before, only saving a few stencils by having the smaller type; or else using the same number of stencils but giving a little more in the way of material. So what happens? -- this issue has more elite pages than the last issue had pica pages! Which all goes to show. ~~###~~ Anyway, this typewriter has a nasty habit of forgetting to skip words sometimes even though the space bar is pressed down, resulting in quite a jumble of words. Other than that it works fine, so you may blame any other mistakes on my high-school touch-typing lessons!

In three different fanzines within the month it appears that SPIRAL is classed as a (1) sixth fandom publication, (2) seventh fandom publication, and (3) eighth fandom publication. I can imagine the day, 20 years or so from now, when the Sam Moskowitz of the day will be rummaging through old fanzines, compiling a history of fandom, and will come across the above-stated information. "Egad," he mutters through his breath. "A fanzine that survived three whole fandoms! A RARITY!" I glory. (I have no final answer to this dilemma, except to point out the fact that I personally considered SPIRAL a seventh fandom publication when I first started it, but now consider it an eighth fandom publication since its beginning a year ago. Figure that one out!) But Rosco--what difference does it make anyway?

::

TARANTARA DEPARTMENT: Since the last SPIRAL appeared (April 2), I have received a total of exactly 52 different issues of fanzines, probably only 20 of which have been acknowledged to their respective editors. Yes, I HAVE been busy! Now, I could either forget the whole bunch of them, or else go into detailed accounts of each one of them. Pardon me while I deliberate.....oh....uh-huh.....well.. For some reason it suddenly seems to me that I owe the editors at least a nod of the head or something, so get ready for a rather lengthy discourse on current fanzines, folks!

(Actually, I'm probably ruining everything but good. It so happens that when I planned this issue of SPY, I ended up allotting Spiralities 3 pages and a fraction of another. Now I'm afraid it will run over that amount, enough so that I will be obliged to use another sheet of paper. The funny part of it is that I've only got a half pound of ink for the whole issue, and no more stencils! Isn't...that...funny!... You may never read this issue.)

The prize for activity in fan pubbing around now must certainly go uncontested to one Peter J. Vorzimer (not counting Wells and Geis, who are old pro's at putting out issue after issue after issue). If my reckoning is correct, I've received exactly four issues of ABSTRACT in the last 3 months, and, as the saying goes, that ain't hay. Also two or three VORZIMERZINE's have made their ways to Wilmette, Gad, how can anyone be so ambitious? The latest issue (#5), which I received just this morning (by now it's July 8) contains a long letter by Dick Geis in which Dick asks just about the same question. I for one can't see personally how such actifanning can keep on at such a fast clip without breaking the bubble pretty fast (poetic license!). Of the three mass-producers of late, Joel Nydahl, Dick Geis, and Pete, I think only Dick will see the end of the year still pubbing: because he's learned to slow down. Peter, please watch it! Abstract is too good to go down the drain.

The actual magazine itself probably climbed to the top immediately because of (1) its editor, and (2) the three-part serial by Don Howard Donnell entitled THREE LOVES HAD MICHAEL, the best fan fiction I've read for some time, even though the final installment didn't rank with the previous two in quality. The latter section

in particular is always good. But probably the noblest item which has come out of the head of Mr. VOR is the idea of taking a poll of fandom's best fanzines, and keeping it up to date yet. Peter requests every reader to drop him a line telling his top ten fanzines, in order, and top 25 if you're really ambitious. The address is 1311 N. Laurel Ave., Hollywood 46, California. In case anyone's interested, my choices, IN ORDER, for the top ten are as follows (I cautiously remain neutral on SPIRAL's merits!):

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1. Psychotic | 6. Deviant |
| 2. Oopsla! | 7. Hyphen |
| 3. Fog | 8. Abstract |
| 4. Confusion | 9. Vamp |
| 5. Dimensions | 10. Infinity |

And now I duck from all flying missiles aimed out of curiosity over the question as to just why anyone would vote for such misserable fanzines! (THERE, friends, is the classic mis-use of English grammar.)

The latest issue of DEVIANT (which also just arrived today, July 7) shows so much improvement over the previous 2 issues that perhaps I place the fanzine in #8 spot while still in a daze. Carol McKinney has worked hard on getting top-drawer material and almost-flawless reproduction, and it has paid off. About the most surprising item in the issue is a statement in Terry Carr's column: "SPIRAL to have annish!" You'd think it was earth-shaking news or something. Robert Bloch shines forth brightly, telling why fandom should conduct an extensive poll of its inhabitants, and also trying to show why he, while being a "dirty old pro", still has connections in fandom proper. A particularly enlivening art piece is on the third page, being done by Richard Z. Ward, which makes me wonder whether Ward is returning to fannish life or not. This is the first time in some time that one of his drawings has come to life.

Richard E. Geis has been prompt as usual with PSYCHOTIC, four issues to my one. This sort of thing could be habit-forming. PSY (I dread the day when I type that abbreviation the wrong way...) has its ups and downs nowadays, but still manages to grab top honors in the home stretch. The latest issue boasts another seven-day wonder (whatever that is!) in the form of a story, or tale, by Harlan Ellison about "The Little Boy Who Loved Cats." This is one of those on the order of Dave English's "The Little Boy Who Bit People" in FIENDETTA 6, and almost as good, which means excellent. Now let's see someone use the same type of technique in a thing called "The Little Boy Who Published Fanzines." That might be the best yet.

There is a certain group of fanzines which, for want of a better classification, I entitle "informers." In other words, GREY, CONFAB, and REVIEW are all appearing nicely and somewhat on times. John Magnus has taken SF and SATURDAY MORNING GAZETTE and thrown them together, more or less, and come up with an enjoyable VAMP, which seems to flow around all through the issue, cleverly, in a style quite similar to GRUE, which is Dean A. Grennell's contribution to the flock. (Neither VAMP nor GRUE are "informers", but they just snuck into the paragraph when I wasn't looking!) GRUE has gone mimeo and other assorted things and makes also for quite a time. Just call Magnus and Grennell Free-Flowing Editors.

(I just noticed something. For the past page and a half I've been giving the day's date in widely assorted numbers. Actually it is July 10. What happened is that this big desk calendar, with one meet for each date, sits on my desk in front of the open window. The breeze comes in the window and--whiishshsh--back go the sheets, one by one. That's why, when I'd glance over at it to find the date, it would be earlier and earlier each time. No, Moreen isn't crazy--not this time, anyway!)

(This delightful conflagration is continued on page 10.)

THE VIOLENT WARD

Recently at the Broadway Theatre here in Portland, appeared what should be called a "stinking-fiction" movie, but was advertised as a "science-fiction film thriller." The plot was hack, the characters were stereotypes, and the entire picture from start to finish, incredible. It seems that the monster wasn't half bad, though. Of course there was a monster. Every "science-fiction film thriller" that comes out of Hollywood and is not produced by George Pal has to have a monster. The one ray of sunshine in this dreary set of facts is that the special-effects boys are turning out bigger and better monsters for these run-of-the-mill pictures. They get better with practise.

The monster of CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON was shown in all his ugliness and menacing poses on the first page of the amusement section in The Oregonian, the largest newspaper in Oregon. The picture (I have it here before me) shows a girl in a white bathing suit cringing against the rocky wall of a cavern. She is looking over her shoulder with terror as her obvious expression at the creature which towers over her. The creature looks ridiculous, probably knows it, and tries to make up for it by striking a menacing pose. I can't imagine any way to describe that pose except to say that it is THE classic pose of all monster poses. There he stands, obviously moving toward this helpless girl a step at a time. (Small steps, of course; it prolongs the suspense.) His arms are upraised and extended, his fingers and razor-sharp talons are curved and spread. Frankenstein could do no better.

The caption below this blood-chilling picture reads: "CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON, science-fiction film thriller, will be the next featured attraction at J.J. Parker's Broadway Theatre. The monster from the lagoon is shown giving Julia Adams the scare of her life. Miss Adams costars with Richard Carlson. Richard Denning and Antonio Moreno also play featured roles in this film."

This was in the Sunday paper. The film was scheduled to start its run on Wednesday. In Tuesday's morning paper there appeared another ad for the film. This time it appeared on an inner page of the amusement section along with the regular movie ads. It said: "---Starts Tomorrow--- EXCITING! AMAZING! Is It Alive! Is It Real! Thrill Follows Thrill To Keep You On The Edge Of Your Seat! MONSTER BORN BEFORE TIME BEGAN! (Then came the title in huge black type.) ...every man his mortal enemy and woman's beauty his prey!"

They sure use a lot of exclamation points, don't they?!!!! This ad too is illustrated with a scene that involves the Creature and this lovely wench in the white bathing suit. It shows the Creature in hip-deep water with menacing arms outstretched (again) about to do something to the poor girl who is resting blithely just above the surface of the water. Her resting form has been superimposed on that of the horrid monster for what would probably be called "Dramatic Effect."

Clearly, these ads are meant to suggest something to your mind.

It seems that I've decided, for some unknown reason, that perhaps it might be nice to include with each selection some short editorial comment on it and its author: so to it. This time it's simple--you all know that Dick Geis edits a thing called PSYCHOTIC and that his regular column in SPY is treasured by its editor. Now that was rather painless, wasn't it?

Right here I should describe this Creature. He is humanoid, at least eight feet tall, is covered with armored scaly skin, has a long ragged fin running down

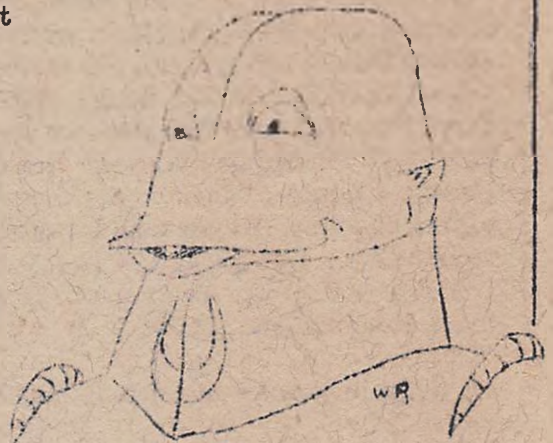
by RICHARD E. GEIS

his back from his neck to his rump, what looks like triple gills, webber fingers with long wicked-looking talons, webbed feet, and long fins on the bottom of his forearms. He is bald. His face is fishlike, no nose, and his eyes are goggle-like. His mouth is a lipless slit that gapes open, then closes, just like that of your pet goldfish.

I'll let Phyllis Lauritz, staff writer of The Oregonian, tell you in her own words the basic story of the film. Her review is excellent and stresses many of the points I thought of after seeing it. She writes:

"If you happen to have some credulity you want tested, take it to J.J. Parker's Broadway Theatre, where a little something called CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON opened Wednesday. Mine snapped early in the first reel but I clung gamely on, partly to find out what the billboard was hinting at when it showed a dripping reptile clutching a bikini'd bathing beauty to his scaly chest.

The Creature, in case you hadn't deduced from the ads, is a monstrous half-man, half-reptile who wallows happily in the ooze of the Amazon until Julia Adams comes around in the aforementioned white bathing suit and brings out the man in the beast. The reason Miss Goody-Two-Shoes is flitting about the Creature's lagoon is that she is a member of a scientific expedition seeking fossils to go with a web-fingered skeleton hand one of the other members had previously found.



Now this Creature---really quite a creditable science-fiction creation, with bug-eyes and a fish face---is twice as tall and many times more powerful than a mere man, say, such as Richard Carlson, leader of the expedition, and once he lamps our girl, nothing can stop him from systematically picking off the crew, one by one.

He is pierced by harpoons and bullets, and once even sprayed with fish poison by a sort of underwater Flit gun, but, just like the ads say, "Raging with pent-up passions at his first sight of a woman, the monster from a million years ago" still pursues her. Just what his intentions are regarding her is never made quite clear, even after he does carry her, screaming fetchingly, off the boat and to his subterranean boudoir, for Carlson and the remaining expedition members arrive just in the nick of time to prevent whatever it was.

We may never know, but one thing emerges crystal clear, judging from the opening day crowd, which ate the Creature up, along with its popcorn, there's nothing like a good monster to pep things up at the box office."

Richard Denning in the film plays a publicity-hungry scientist who technically heads the expedition. He is all for capturing the Creature and taking it back to civilisation to prove their story, because he fears (and with good cause) that other

scientists wouldn't believe them unless they have proof. He is also jealous of Carlson because Carlson has the inside track with the pretty Julia Adams. Denning becomes obsessed with the idea of killing or capturing the Creature as one by one the crew is picked off. In an attempt to capture the beast for a second time (fish-type knockout drops had done it for them the first time, only the Creature had burst his cage in a waterfilled hold and attacked and severely hurt one of the expedition who was criminally negligent; this was a case where these damned characters turn their back and yak away, leaving their guns and other weapons in odd places), Denning is killed by him in an underwater fight. Both Denning and Carlson repeatedly venture into the depths of the Black Lagoon with their trusty Aqua-Lungs and harpoon guns. Twice as I recall they manage to shoot the Creature with these guns, but his hide is so tough that only the point manages to penetrate. In pain and terrible agony the poor thing wrenches the harpoon from his skin and bends it into a near-pretzel shape. You can all but hear him mutter dire threats and promised revenge as he retreats into the depths and deeps.

At the start of the picture, before the expedition is aware of the prehistoric Creature's actual existence in the lagoon, Miss Adams is enticed by the cool beauty of the water and (in here ever-lovin' white bathing suit) goes for a swim. The Creature peeps at her from some underwater weeds, then, fascinated, swims under her as she paddles along. He is enchanted, that is clear. He carries on an aquatic flirtation with the unknowing Miss Adams, swimming sometimes only a few feet from her luscious body. The underwater photography was excellent. Incidentally, it was patently obvious that all of the beauty possessed by Miss Adams was not her own home-grown charm. Let's just say that two parts of her bathing suit were pneumatis. For that matter, it should be noted that the Creature was frequently shown in complete detail, and it was equally obvious that even had he been left alone with Miss Adams for any great length of time, he was completely unequipped for any kind of lecherous assault. Pity.

The whole picture was corned up with horror-film cliches. Leave me recite a few:

A webbed dripping hand emerges from the water of the lagoon where Julia Adams stands on the bank and gropes in the grass for her ankle. She is unaware of this and stands obligingly still. For perhaps fifteen agonizing seconds the audience watches this hand fumble closer and closer. Then one of the men calls to her and she moves away just a split second before this hand makes contact. Naturally the hand is frustrated. You can all but hear the hand mutter, "Curses, foiled again!" Disappointedly it sinks beneath the water.

The Creature repeatedly boards the boat and creeps up on the members of the crew and expedition. The creature isn't quiet, understand, he just slaps his webbed feet on the deck as usual, yet no one seems to hear.

No one, but no one, seems to have sense enough to keep a lookout anywhere but at the current scene of interest. This even though they know he is out to get them and has come aboard before. The beast thusly climbs aboard on the other side of the boat (never quietly, mind you) and does his dirty work.

When everyone is gathered in the cabin below decks, you are always treated to the sight of a scaly-webbed foot slapping wetly by the porthole. But of course no one sees it because they are all so absorbed in the development of some underwater pictures taken of the Creature by Richard Carlson. The pics didn't come out, of course. It would not do to be able to take some tangible proof back to civilisation.

At one time, true to monster tradition, the Creature reaches in through

the porthole and fumbles for Miss Adams while everyone is busily looking the other way. This groping-hand business is overworked in the picture, but I suppose the producer thought that if it is good for a shudder once, it'll be terrific if used twice. I can remember it being used at least five times.

But the prize item of all is when the Creature climbs aboard, grabs the beautiful Miss Adams, and takes her to his lair in a cavern in the cliff adjoining the lagoon which is reach (the lair, not the cliff) by an underwater passage. He carries her through winding rocky passages and deposits her on a flat rock, then hides. Richard Carlson (Hero First Class) had immediately donned his Aqua-Lung, grabbed his previously ineffective compressed-air harpoon gun, and plunger in after the thieving beast. And at last after traversing the same rocky passages, our hero comes upon our heroine languishing upon this rock and goes straight to her side, never once looking about for danger. He puts his gun aside and lavishes loving words and worried queries. She responds and they affirm their undying love for one another. Ah, but what is that rippling in that shallow pool of water in the background? Gads, it is the Creature, and he is advancing upon our lovebirds. Yep, dripping water and making an ungodly lot of noise as he wades to the edge of the pool, the monster slowly comes closer and closer. Of course our hero cannot hear him. Miss Adams cannot hear him. The Creature reaches the gun and breaks it against a rock. Then Carlson hears him. It looks bad for him as he backs away from the Creature, for all he has to defend with is a knife, and in the ensuing struggle it is apparent that it is a dull knife. It doesn't matter too much, though, because the Creature is taking an unconscionably long time to finish him off. Help comes, however, in the form of the remaining members of the expedition who have left the boat and entered the cavern via the back door which opens to the jungle. Don't ask about how they got ashore when earlier in the film the Creature had made kindling of their dory. Yours is not to catch a lie, yours is just to praise on high. Well now.... The Creature becomes aware of these other men and promptly transfers his ire to them. He feels a sharp pain in his stomach as one of the fellows shoots point blank with a .45. But he still stalks forwards, uttering howls as slugs rip into him. Altogether five or six bullets enter his hide. He is hurt.

You think the above is corny? Leave me continue.

With a stricken look on his face, the Creature plods out of the cavern with the humans following closely. Richard Carlson, true scientist that he is, understands what is about to happen and tells the others not to shoot again. The beast, leaking like a riddled barrel, groans his way through the jungle to the water's edge. At this point a member of the expedition wants to finish him off and stop him from getting away. But Carlson says no, let him go. So the Creature lurches across the beach, wades out to hip depth, then sinks down and slowly, painfully, swims underwater to the center of the lagoon, then slips down over the edge of a yawning deep. His body, lifeless, sinks slowly into the uncharted depths. He has returned whence he came.

(Do not be afraid to cry dear readers: this is highly absorbent paper.)

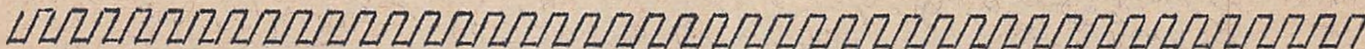
This picture, this CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON, was one of the most rank and rancid examples that Hollywood has thus far produced of what it criminally labels "science fiction." It was mostly out and out fantasy. This was painfully obvious during the picture when Richard Carlson, in a sort of monologue, prated about space travel, the stars, the future, the many things we don't know about even our own oceans, etc. He did this twice, and it was ridiculous the way all action

stopped while he made his little speech paying lip-service to stf.

There was one good thing about the film: the very good underwater photography. Also of interest was the extensive use of the Aqua-Lung by the two male leads.

Most definitely the thing wasn't worth 90¢ to see, but perhaps it won't be totally wasted if I succeed in warning my fellow fans away from it. My advice: wait seven years and watch it on TV.

--richard e geis



SPIRALITIES - 4 /continued from page 5/

DIMENSIONS appeared. Need anything else be said? Actually Harlan's preview announcements were wrong in one respect: he told us to watch for something different. DIMENSIONS is nothing more than SFB with the name changed and the circulation lowered. I hasten to add however that SFB'S quality is still retained, thus making DIMENSION into somewhat of a freak: the only pro-fan magazine which is mimeographed.

Then there's a little thing put out by Don Wegars which is called FOG, which reeks so much with down-to-earth personality that sometimes I feel the rest of us don't have a chance. FOG is mostly columns and letters and editor and editor and EDITOR... If Don doesn't rise to become the Lee Hoffman personality of today, then I'll pack up my things and leave. Truly, yes truly, Don is the first fan I've noticed who can even approach Lee's knack of saying things. I just wish FOG would come out oftener! Yum yum.

Walter A. (as in "a") Willis has produced a few more HYPHEN's here and there, which speak for themselves, and also "The Enchanted Duplicator", the fan world's answer to Pilgrim's Progress, and a strong answer it is too. Very enchanting.

Other run-of-the-millers include: THURBAN, INFINITY, VULCAN, CANADIAN FANDOM, FANTASTIC STORY MAG, INSIDE, and SCIENCE FICTION ADVERTISER. William Knapheide's XENERN LETTER seems to be devoted to running down reviews of old-time fanzines in the prozines, but what good this does Wm. escapes me; Stuart K. Nock's COSMIC FRONTIER is growing in quality quite fast, and, as a half-size endeavor, makes for enjoyable reading; John Hitchcock's UMBRA continues to be either devotedly liked or entirely panned, depending on whether you have the courage to read through John's (to me) delightful rambling; and Ralph Stapenhorst's SPACEWAYS, with supurb cover and good FILMS TO COME feature, still is hampered by the fact that the editor sees nothing wrong with simply crossing things out as a means of correction.

Color mimeography on the covers seems to be the dabbling-device on SFanzine, NITE CRY, and ZIP. Ted White's ZIP, however, is seriously prohibited by its quarter-size pages, and so NITE CRY, with a green dinosaur leaping around in an otherwise black atmosphere, takes top honors of the three. Sam Johnson's SFanzine can boast of the best material of the three. ## Ray Thompson has switched to mimeo on ECLIPSE, and this very funny boy will be better as soon as he learns to handle the machine with more efficiency. Slip-sheeting would help muchly. An all-poetry item called ICHOR comes from one Dale Hart, 155 $\frac{3}{4}$ Loma Drive, Los Angeles 26, California, and is a curious assortment of lithographed cover and thoughtful poetry.

Shelby Vick's CONFUSION and Gregg Galkins' OOPSLA! are both their good old former selves, no more said. Notably missing from the three-month's pile of fanzines

is Lee Riddle's PEON; and Bob Silverberg and his SPACESHIP just made the deadline, but something happened: SShip crashed-landed or something and is just an FAPA meager-zine compared to its old self. Fifth annish too. ## Russ Watkins completes the old-timers pile with #22 of DAWN, again conservatively enjoyable.

Two off-trailish things came to light to finish the entire 50-plus bundle. From Gray Barker, Box 981, Clarksburg, W. Virginia comes #3 of THE SAUCERIAN, 60 pages concerned with guess-what! This appeals only slightly with me, but the editor will trade. ## And W.R. Kaufman, 1320 Hartrey Ave., Evanston, Ill., has put out a little booklet entitled, SPACE TRAVEL: FACT OR FANCY?, in which he "explodes" every belief that space ships will leave the earth's atmosphere. Of course I disagree with all the arguments, but they are interesting.

That takes care of that, and if I ever receive 50 fanzines without acknowledging them, may Boston Blackie shoot me in the head! Shall we plunk our magic twanger, Frogie?

.....

Someone once said that you can measure the degree of science fiction prosperity by seeing how many pocket-size books on science fiction are appearing. If that's the case, then we must be in a very prosperous era indeed. In the last three months exactly 18 such books have been published. (I was asked in one letter why I mention paper-bound books and not the hard-cover ones. I do so because, for one, the only ones which I can afford are PB's; and with so many around these days, other fans would do well to pick up a few: so I mention them so they'll know which ones there are. Okay?)

Only 8 of the 18 were those in regular science-fiction series. Galaxy Novels were THE BLACK GALAXY, by Murray Leinster (#20); and Jack Williamson's THE HUMANOIDS (#21), both reprints from the 1949-1950 era. Ballantine, with their wrap-around covers and once-a-month originals, did fairly well with Poul Anderson's BRAIN WAVE (#80) and David Duncan's DARK DOMINION (#56). Robert Sheckley presented a Ballantine anthology of some of his best short stories in UNTOUCHED BY HUMAN HANDS, #73; and a final slightly off-trail representation was HERO'S WALK, by Robert Crane (#71). Ace Double-Novel Books, featuring one reprint and one original each time for 35¢, had for #D-53 Van Vogt's WEAPON SHOPS OF ISHER and Leinster's GATEWAY TO ELSEWHERE; and then later Cliff Simak's RING AROUND THE SUN joined forces with L. Sprague de Camp's COSMIC MANHUNT in #D-61. All in all the output in the above wasn't so hot, with the reprints probably as good as the originals, usually an erroneous view. But Bill Hamling came out with his long-promised companion to IMAGINATION, called IMAGINATIVE TALES (sounds like a title out of Hollywood), starting off with #1 the novel TOFFEE, and as yet I haven't read it so can't comment as to whether it's any better than the Toffee stories in Madge.

Not counting Donald Keyhoe's FLYING SAUCERS FROM OUTER SPACE (Perma 297), of the remaining eight science-fiction pocket books produced, only one was not an anthology, that being the reprint of SANDS OF MARS, the Arthur C. Clarke gem, in Pocketbook 989. But the collections of stories ran thick and more thick, Judith Merrill edited two, one consisting of 12 stories from her earlier BEYOND HUMAN KEN, sporting the same title in its Pennant #P56 book; the other being a new anthology of old stories, and a fairly decent one at that: HUMAN?, in Lion #205. The authors represented range from Chad Oliver, Fritz Leiber, and Isaac Asimov to the old H.G. Wells, the somewhat off-SF John Collier, and the very off-trail Don Marquis, who is in appearance with a selection about archy and mehitabel. These two books support my contention, made originally after reading Judith Merrill's anthology SHOT IN THE DARK, that she is about the best editor of such collections that there is. She might not make a bad prozine editor either.... ~| / -

A reprint of an early Robert Spencer Carr collection, BEYOND INFINITY, is now available in Dell edition #781; it came originally from Fantasy Press. Eight of the million or so stories in the original ADVENTURES IN TIME AND SPACE (Healy and McComas) have just come to light under the same title, Pennant #P44. And the complete Tenn anthology, CHILDREN OF WONDER, is now available for 35¢ from Permabooks (#P291). Avon (#T-80) came out with a 35¢ collection of 12 Nelson Bond stories in NO TIME LIKE THE FUTURE, probably the best title around!

The prize for this issue, however, must go to Pocketbook #1007, which is 12 of the best selections from Margulies and Friend's MY BEST SCIENCE FICTION STORY. This is truly a fine collection; and, what's better, clearly shows that Pocketbooks Inc. has an active interest in science fiction.

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HERE, THERE, AND EVERYWHERE: The prozins did practically nothing outstanding of recent, except perhaps that UNIVERSE restored Rog Phillips' CLUB HOUSE; now all I wish is that UNIVERSE will be a little more dependable as far as occurrence is concerned. FUTURE went digest, and then digest-digest, now holding the record for the smallest 35¢ prozine I know. F&SF has taken on several cheap-looking ideas, and--worst of all--GALAXY has shortened the length of its pages by two lines per page. Altogether it's not a happy outlook, which makes me wonder how IF can keep coming month after month without something happening to it. Could it be that IF has a much larger circulation than any of us think?

There has been a rash of science-fictional material published in newspapers and magazines of late, probably because of the double-occurrence of the sun eclipse and the closeness of Mars. All the Chicago papers have played both items up very much. Collier's continued its outer-space lectures, concerned especially with Mars this time, in the April 30 issue. One Chicago paper carried a six-day condensation of Arthur C. Clarke's book Exploration of Space. Other national magazine coverage was in THIS WEEK of June 20 and 27, and FURY for August. Up again came the flying saucer articles, all bunk, in PIC (June), TEMPO (June 21), and MAN'S LIFE (July). Collier's for May 28 carried a featured story, "Weather Made To Order?" and also a piece of fiction entitled "The Family That Went To Mars," the latter pretty good. Newsweek for June 21 had an article (with the cover devoted to Pogo) about comics in general and Pogo in particular; and Pageant for June carried an article on MAD COMICS, revealing, among other things, that Mad's circulation is 750,000. One of PANIC's satires in the Sept. issue concerned SF, including mentioning of "bems", SF conventions, and "Ray Brad Buried." The November issue of same (they're slightly ahead of times, eh wot?) carries that SF Book Club ad on the back cover, indicating that at least Doubleday feels people who read Mad should also read science fiction. And you might be interested in knowing that Dell puts out a quarterly magazine called Ballyhoo, which I would define as "the magazine read by those who enjoy reading MAD but don't want to be seen in public with a comic book."

And still they come. PARADE, for May 16, carried an interesting article, "When Will You See by Telephone?" which comes to the conclusion that within a generation or so it should be fairly common, but that the device is used even today, in closed-circuits across country. The Chicago papers of June 18 told about plans for some scientists to record the "rhythmic vibrations" in Lake Michigan for three months, using a seismometer, whatever that is. The scientist said that "I believe the action of the waves set in motion by a cold front causes a pounding on the lake floor." A week later a violent tidal wave mysteriously hit Chicago, killing eight people. Of course it had nothing to do with the seismometer, but it would be a nice thought that perhaps the lake didn't want its pulse taken and told us so! ## Perhaps the most astounding story though was told in the July 9 papers by the Seattle Associate Press. It seems that some sort of atomic particle, "apparently from outer space, capable of annihilating ordinary matter in hair-raising fashion," /continued on page 17/

"THE DOPPEL-RAD EFFECT"

by CPL CLAUDE R. HALL

Apparently nothing remains in fandom of the science-fiction fan. Instead, we have the Pogo degenerates, the pursuers of Mad, and the egoboo-crazy maniacs practicing their particular type of phlebotomy on anything from fanzines to the highest type of science-fiction magazines. And these three classes of up-starts have ruined the old meaning of stf until now it is almost a thing to be laughed at--not respected.

What has happened to the serious constructive fan of the past? Where are the intellects of fandom?

Science-Fiction has literally reached its peak. Unless a miracle can rise to pull Science back into science-fiction, I think that 85 per cent of the professional mags will fold and science-fiction will be left once more with only Astounding, the proverbial finger in the dike.

Even up until five years ago, the basic theme of science in all stf stories could boast of progress. There were theories of the A-, H-, and C-bomb to expound upon and a few themes of the old "IF" problem had not been used up. Soon however all scientific themes were used up and the imagination of both most of the acceptable writers and fen had been used up. A few of the more talented and newer writers turned to other themes for story material. Witness "The Lovers" by Farmer. A lot of other writers followed suit, quickly hashing out stories with vice angles. "The Lovers" was sex from an angle. Mickey Spillane's story, although supposedly written by Howard Browne, was detective without hardly even a mask.

By way of an introduction, Claude Hall is one of fandom's most famous "never-say-no" people, who have certain opinions and make life active for the rest of us by stating those opinions. Claude formerly edited MUZZY and is now in the U.S. Army, where he nevertheless seems to find time to continually bombard me with these columns! I recline and listen for comments.....

And slowly the intelligent quotient of fen began dropping, from that of the above-child-genius level to that of the comic-book reader, seeking adventure, hunting a "kick."

The old writers with the scientific background dropped their writing like a hot potato and went back to teaching classes in colleges and universities over the nation. They couldn't supply this "Thrill" that the new type of fan wanted. And too, they didn't want to. Mostly, writing stf stories with the old "thinkers" had been a hobby, a proving ground for their pet trends in science, chemistry, physics.

The "thinkers" disappeared from the professional magazines and nothing was left but the hack, the type of writer who could produce. As a result, science-fiction soon became a stomping ground for everyone. No more was it a proud thing to be a fan. Science-fiction was now an everyday term, something even the average housewife could understand, something to be displayed on cereal boxes. More magazines rapidly hit the market. But almost all of them were hack stuff published with the ten-year-old child in mind.

The greatest mistake present-day fandom ever made was in criticizing SCIENCE-FICTION PLUS and chasing Hugo Gernsback into non-active state again. In the few issues of SF PLUS that appeared, Gernsback had already started the trend back to a

more cultural level of stf. He was bringing the thinkers back into active state with him. Of course, they were a little rusty -- just as Gernsback was. But experience would have added the oil to their ideas and storæes. It wouldn't have taken long until a fan could once more claim to be "different." But are you different now? No. Not any more than that six-year-old kid down the street with his space helmet.

Another editor whom I consider among the group with Gernsback and Campbell is Ray Palmer. Palmer had one weak spot and that was his ideas for sensationalism. But he brought forward into Science-Fiction a very notable theme-- that of life within caves in the earth. His tool was Richard Shaver. But the cultural level of fans had already sunk to the point where they couldn't recognize the idea behind a story from the fiction. I thought the first time I read any of Shaver's work that he was bringing a whole new concept into fandom. He was. Even now, "Slaves of the Worm" rates high with me both as a story and as a different concept upon old Mother Earth.

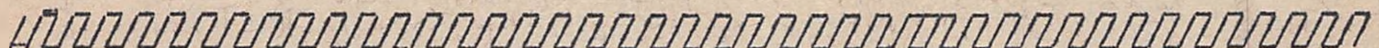
Shaver's theme followed itself all of the way through in most of his stories. The last of his cave ideas was portrayed in "The Sunsmiths," published in OTHER WORLDS a couple of years back. In this story, he carried the theme of the caves into outer space. But it was still his basic theme and interlocked beautifully with even the very first of his series.

Unless science fiction can come up with something new -- something to outmode even the C-bomb, the time machine, the different dimensions, and all of the psi powers -- fandom will gradually disappear. Even ASTOUNDING won't be able to withstand the suction. Not with slick mags printing and classifying science-fiction with detective and western pieces and offering the new type of fen their angles.

Probably, the old guard of fans will have to settle back with a copy of Superman for their science fiction before too long.

I hate to see science-fiction die. Ridicule is such a lonely grave.

--claude raye hall



FILLER DEPARTMENT: About the same time that I picked up the Ballentine editon of Siodmak's RIDERS TO THE STARS, I happened to be wandering through a Chicago music store which I frequently visit, and noticed a certain piece of music of the same title--RIDERS TO THE STARS--whose cover also contained a rather noticable advertisement for the movie, complete with screen credits and everything. It seems the song is featured in the Tors-Carlson-Siodmak epic, so I bought it purely out of curiosity. Following are the lyrics, graciously reprinted by me without permission. I decline comment....

RIDERS TO THE STARS, that is what we are,
Every time we kiss in the night.
Soon as we embrace, I get lost in space;
That is why I hold you so tight.
When we kiss we touch a star;
Far from earth are we.....So...far...that...
Heaven's in your eyes, and I realize:
This is what I dreamed love would be.....
RIDERS TO THE STARS are we!

All this, PLUS (as the title page says) "DAWN ADDAMS, the sensational siren of 'The Moon Is Blue'!" Complete with beckoning photograph. Oh yes, off in the distance can be seen a small spaceship, though.... -14-

INSIDE

"FANDORA'S BOX"

by

MARI WOLF

Right after the last issue of SPIRAL came out I took pen in hand and decided that I'd better drop a line or two to Mari Wolf personally, more or less "preparing" her for the article Claude Hall wrote about Imagination's "Fandora's Box" in SPY #7. Because of the fact that I didn't agree with many things Claude said, I told Miss Wolf that, and hoped that she wouldn't hold it against me. Then somehow I started saying that, after all, the actual workings of the Box are somewhat unknown to fandom in general, and perhaps it might be good in some future editorial to sit down and tell her audience exactly how certain fanzines come to be reviewed in her column. I must admit that I also casually dropped the statement, something to the effect that "perhaps also you might like to write me a line or two in defense of your methods, which I could place in the letter section as somewhat of a retort to Hall's statements." What resulted was that Mari wrote the following article-letter, which I present as a reply to Claude's accusations. After reading both sides, you can decide amongst the two. After all, "the actual jury is composed of the many Americans in the listening audience"--or is that statement copyrighted by a certain junior senator? So to it.....

Dear Denis,

I want to thank you for your letter, as it made me realize how long it has been since I have explained the mechanics of fanzine reporting in the BOX. When I first read your letter I was surprised; I was sure I had written on the subject recently; but when I checked back I found that it's been at least a year and a half.

I'll try to answer your letter now; I'm using the same points in the editorial I just finished for Bill Hamling.

The first difficulty arises because of the time element. Suppose a fanzine is mailed to the BOX in May. It goes to Evanston because I've found it hard to receive copies from all the individual editors; I've moved half a dozen times in the last couple of years, and even now when I expect to stay put for awhile it's easier for them all to arrive in one bundle. So, the fanzine mailed in May will probably reach me for the column I write in June. Supposing that it is included in the review -- and I do read all the fanzines, though maybe not every word of every substandard one -- there will still be a three-month lag before it appears in print. A monthly magazine takes about three months to go through editing, proofreading, typesetting, printing, and out to the newsstands.

Spiral is a case in point. You write that you've sent in seven issues straight. I don't remember the earlier ones. But I know I reviewed Spiral in April, and it was reviewed at least once before that -- the review should be out any time now, if it isn't in the current issue.

Now as to the selection of fanzines. They aren't "grabbaged." I try to be as fair as possible both to the editors and to the readers, and if I sometimes overlook something I shouldn't have, it's not done out of any spirit of high-handedness. But selecting fanzines can really be a problem, for several reasons.

One is that in some months I receive about twice as many good, reviewable fanzines as I can possibly cover. When this happens I try to select ones I haven't reviewed lately for inclusion, and, of course, the really exceptional ones. The others I keep, and usually review in the following column, since it almost always works out that the next batch of fanzines I get will be a somewhat skimpy one.

In a way my job is something like that of an editor's. I will, it is true, pick first the fanzines I know, from past experience, are consistently good. For one thing, a fanzine that is consistently good and has been published over a long period of time will probably still be being published and still be good when the reader writes in for a sample copy. I'm not likely to get complaints from the reader that the dime he sent has disappeared forever, with nothing in return. (This happens, alas -- twice in the last month I've had letters from disappointed fans.)

But I read all the fanzines. And there's nothing more fun than finding a new, really good one. (Of course, my opinion as to what is good is my own, but I try to make allowances for my own particular likes and dislikes, and give good reviews to zines I don't care for but that I know other people will enjoy.)

Most new fanzines, though, do not start off too well. Often the reproduction is very poor, for one thing. I don't feel that I can ask some reader who may know nothing about amateur publishing to pay money for something he can barely read. If I did, it would react badly not only on the BOX but on fanzines in general. Also, many new fanzines have an air of impermanence. You can't tell by looking at them whether they'll be around next time or not, and, furthermore, you have no way of knowing whether or not they'll improve next time around. If the zine suffers from the deficiencies of youth but still shows promise I'll review it -- if there's room -- mentioning, however, that it is new and will doubtless get better. If it's really good from the start I get a human enough pleasure of discovery to give it an extra-good review. (I had to rewrite half a column to squeeze in the review on the first Psychotic, which I received in a late batch of fanzines.)

There are certain fanzines that will be reviewed automatically. The list of these changes, as some fold and others come along. There are certain ones that I review occasionally but without much praise; these come in faithfully, issue after issue. They're acceptable, they're faithfully published, but they don't show improvement. They have a tendency to blend one into the other.

There are others that don't get reviewed for several issues, because of poor reproduction, too little material for the price asked, or perhaps just because they've been submitted in the company of other zines that seemed to me better. Usually these zines get reviewed eventually, as they improve.

One thing about it is this: unless the editor really asks for it by an overbearing attitude, I never like to write a really bad review. I'd rather ignore his zine than slam it. There are exceptions -- I've sounded off at Brevazine in print because I think it's pompous. I haven't sounded off at Claude Hall's Muzzy because I didn't think the zine a bad one, and I don't want to use the advantage of a pro-

fessional medium to hit back at someone in a more limited field. (Muzzy was, originally, a zine I didn't review because I thought there were better ones around. I did review it as soon as I thought it a fairly good buy -- just about the time of the Hall diatribe.)

A lot of fanzines that are way substandard will never be reviewed by me, because I couldn't in sincerity recommend them and I can't see knocking them. A lot of the more promising ones will be published for one or two issues and then fold; I've been accused of not helping such zines get subscriptions, so that the editors give up in despair. This, I think, is silly.

I guess this rambling letter covers just about everything you wanted to know, except, "What do I expect in a fanzine worthy to be reviewed in the BOX?" That one I can't answer, completely. It should, of course, be legible, look fairly neat, not be priced too far out of line with other fanzines of its general size and method of reproduction. It should contain enough good writing to hold interest -- some fanzines seem to be turned out by people who are not only illiterate but boringly so. I guess the main question is interest: if the contents are well done, unusual, making the zine have a flavor of its own, then a lot can be forgiven its format and general appearance (as long as it's legible.). Or if it fills a specific need, like a trading zine, it will be included for those who might be looking for such a medium. (Sometimes I've even reviewed flying saucer zines -- but here my personal prejudices against most of the saucer fans I've met enter in.)

I hope you keep sending in Spiral. I was rather sad to learn you and Dennis Murphy are too different people -- I like both your stuff, at least as it appears in Spy. (And if this letter sounds a lot like my future editorial -- well, no coincidence. I used the letter as a sort of first draft.) Probably one reason I've put off answering you for a couple of weeks....

Good luck with Spiral, and if you can give me any other ideas for editorials, well, fine....

Sincerely,

Mari

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SPIRALITIES /con. from page 12/ was detected in a roll of film sent up in balloon tests. It was estimated as being 50,000,000 times as powerful as theuranium fission atom at changing matter to energy and back again. More details will doubtless be available in science publications soon.

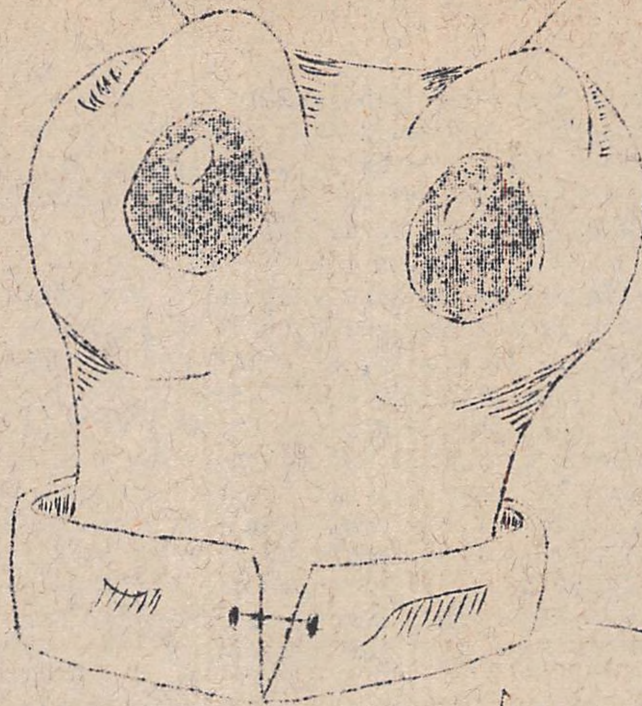
How I can still be crowded for space after 6 pages is a mystery, but here come come condensations: F&SF for August reports about a \$1.50 HANDBOOK OF SF AND FANTASY, available from Howard De Vore, 4705 Weddel St., Dearborn, Michigan. Containing anything and everything, it sounds like a good deal. ## Norman G. Browne, 33 Lyongate Dr., Wilson Heights, Ontario, CANADA, wants contributions for FILLER #2; and Earl Kemp, 3508 N. Sheffield Ave., Chicago 13, Ill. wants quarters for his index to 1953 prozines. ## The Fanettes have re-organized and are now under the direction of Honey Wood and Noreen Kane Falasca. ## Saw "Them" a few weeks ago. It's a very good SF movie, considering all, but what's more astounding is that Richard Carlson isn't in it! Dick has opened an SF stage theater in California, and is panning a TV series for next fall based on guess-what. ## THE IMMORTAL STORM has yet to appear, but Geis in PSY says it will be soon now. Sure hope so. ## Burton K. Beerman's summer address is 26232 Pembroke Rd., Huntington Woods, Michigan. But does anyone know the addresses of either Ed Cox or Jack Harness, please? I shrink away and collapse.....

*Demo*



"OH,  
SO YOU READ SF,  
DO YOU?"

by  
ED COX



In the seventh issue of SPIRAL, I noted with at least amusement, the column-article by Richard E. Geis. Since he claims it to be a serious article, I'll try to be serious here.

Firstly, he makes a bare-faced statement, with no evident qualms, that a fan reads stf and fantasy. How does he know? I know of many fans who don't read it. Any real serious and constructive fan doesn't, you know. Furthermore, many read stf and fantasy, true, but read more in other fields of fiction and non-fiction. So, being a fan doesn't necessarily mean that stf is the only kind of fiction read, or that it's read at all.

That it, or most any other kind of fiction, is an escape literature means little. Why does anyone read any type of fiction? I'll wager that most any type fiction to be found on a newsstand, in a library, or in a book store is or can be classified under the broad term of escape literature. Which he states. Then he goes on to state the common denominator in stfiction as being superiority. He "proves" this point by giving a very limited and restricted list of classics. This is false, this theory. The superiority theme is not any more the common denominator of science fiction than in any other type. Many of the science fiction stories use the theme

Ed Cox dropped me this article after reading Dick Geis's column last issue, in which Richard stated some certain faults or at least indications of a fan. I think Ed's is a good summary of all the opinions which oppose the Geis Theory, and so here is printed, somewhat the same way as Mari Wolf's, to give the "other side" a chance to speak up. Only one thing wrong--I've lost Ed Cox's address and can't find it anywhere. Will someone please oblige? (If I keep repeating that request enough times maybe I will get an answer!) Geisians: prepare to battle!



in which a superior being is featured as the next step above the present homo sapiens. Possibly a cause for us homo saps to feel inferior but not superior by identification. Another theme, as evidenced in many stories, is the superiority of the entire human race, not one person, over an alien race in combat, business, skull-duggery or what-have-you?

A reader of Mickey Spillane mysteries probably identifies himself (or would like to) with the hero and gets a more pronounced superiority sense than from reading a science fiction story. After all, no matter what the type of fiction, the story has the hero winning out over all, doesn't it? So, while I disagree with this common denominator theory, if it is to be used, it can't be restricted to science fiction.

Furthermore, the way many stories have ended, the hero, the human race, the planet we live on, or whatever the vehicle for reader-identification is, has lost out. Science fiction is known for the trend of grimness in recent years. Hardly a fiction for the inferior type mind to get kicks from reading!

In the case of fandom now. It is a hobby, one of a host of hobbies in which people in all walks of life indulge, be it a weekend garden, after-work bowling, stamp collecting, hot-rods, photography, tying fishing flies or what-have-you. Many of these have their own slang in closely-knit semi-organizations. Try amateur radio, photography, stamp collecting or miniature rail-roads, for instance. The line of reasoning that Mr. Geis uses would have all these people indulging in these hobbies because, of course, they have inferiority complexes and must prove that they are better than the "dirts" around them. To go further, then most of the population of the United States has an inferiority complex since most everybody has some hobby or other.

So why pick on so-called science fiction fans? A man, forty or fifty years old has an inferiority complex because he reads stf and maybe writes for amateur mags allied with stf? Then so does the forty year old "ham," the thirteen year old kid who collects stamps and the guy with a miniature railroad system in his basement!

I'll agree that in a few cases it might be true. But a blanket-statement that includes nearly the whole of fandom and stf readers is taking on quite a lot. I particularly got a kick out of the second from the last paragraph of the article. Here is where Geis justifies his own indulgence in stf and fandom in an effort to forestall any accusations on the possibility of him having an inferiority complex of his own!

So, if on the whole, all of his stated ideas are true, and using the same reasoning and logic that he does, everybody in the whole damn country has an inferiority complex! But wait! If everyone has, then we're all square, all equal. No superiority or inferiority complexes at all! Isn't this just dandy?

You can stop reading science fiction now, kids!

--ed cox

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FOR-SALE DEPARTMENT: Having bought about all but eight or so of the 1953 prozines, I've decided to dispose of some of the lesser ones and try getting some money instead. (Yum yum!) So, to anyone interested, write me (Demo) for prices for all or any 1953 issues of: TCSAB, TOPS IN SF, PLANET, FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES, WEIRD, pulp editions of AS and FA, DYNAMIC, FUTURE, SF QUARTERLY, UNIVERSE, COSMOS, NEBULA, OW. Also: (all duplicates) POCKET BOOK OF SF, OUT OF THE DEEPS, #2 issue of GALAXY, and #1 & #2 issues of F&SF. -19-

THE LAST AIR-RAID

dennis murphy

Philip sat on the chair, surveying his one-cell prison in the murky glow of the candle set on the small table. He looked at the rifts in the ceiling and walls. Against one of the walls stood two large barrels. He got up from his chair, walked over to them, took a tin cup from a nail in the wall, and dipped it into the cool, stale water. He drank slowly, trying to find traces of the mountain spring freshness that were no longer there. The air in the cell was stuffy, and thin. He glanced toward the two cases of canned foods near the barrels.

Then he turned and looked at the dirt and rocks that formed the fourth wall of his prison, and at the gaping hole in it that he had laboriously lengthened day by day. He hung the empty cup back on its nail, and studied the swollen, festering blisters on the palms of his hands. The crowbar, pick, and shovel stood against the wall of rubble, his only keys to freedom. Now he knew the full horrors of being interred alive. Why hadn't the others rescued him? There had been about twenty people, originally, terror-filled beings scrambling up the rock and briar-strewn hillside, gasping for breath as they rushed into the cave that had become an improvised bomb shelter. Where were they now? All buried up near the entrance when the blast came and shook the hill to its very core? He had shouted until his throat felt like shreds of sandpaper were vibrating within it. There had been only the raucous sound of his own voice slamming back from the walls and ceiling, nothing else.

He picked up the shovel and winced with pain as the gaping blisters felt like they were being seared by flames. Every movement was an agony, as he dug the blade of the shovel into the rocks and earth.

Three days he had been in this cursed shelter, yet it seemed like a month. The wrist watch lying on the table still ran, and he had marked every twelve passing hours by gouging a mark on the tabletop with his jackknife.

This shelter had been just a small cave at first, but when the atomic bomb threat hung like a gloomy cloud over the world, he and several of the villagers had set to work enlarging it, shoring it up, and cementing the walls. They figured it would make an excellent shelter, but peace had come, and the prepared shelter was again looked upon as just a useless mouth in the face of the hill.

Then had come the invention of the hydrogen bomb, and with it, the rising distrust among nations, among people. Again the hillside cave was regarded as a possible hiding-place from death. Other nations learned the secret of the Hell bomb, and began stocking up, each one fearing his neighbor as never before. Just the realization of what the H-Bomb could do was enough to keep most of the nations at peace, though in a state of world-wide distrust. People went about their daily routines, trying to keep that fear suppressed. - 20 -

Philip rested awhile, wiping the muddied sweat from his face with a grimy hand.

Yes, the H-bomb had created a fear-laden peace, but the secret began to seep out that another type of bomb had been invented, a bomb that would make the H-bomb seem like those cherry bombs the kids used to fire off on the Fourth of July. The Cosmic Bomb! All the hitherto unknown powers latent in cosmic rays harnessed into one bundle----the C-Bomb!

There had been one test--and only one. The locale was a desolate atoll, far out in the Pacific. The lower western coastal regions of the United States had been subjected to unusually abnormal tides as a result, accompanied by days of prolonged high temperatures, far above average. The lower Asian coast had been subjected to the same after-effects, but on a minor scale. All but a few of the Sandwich Islands were submerged, and, according to an aerial survey, the islands still above water seemed utterly devoid of any form of life, and appeared flat and desolate. With that grim evidence of the C-Bomb's power, all further tests were declared permanently abandoned.

But--again the news divulged the grim story that the enemy nation had somehow gained the secret of the C-Bomb, and had begun making them. Surely, after the entire world had learned what the only C-Bomb test had done way out in the Pacific, no nation would dare use it! Scientists had implored the nations to stop creating this horrible weapon, which could easily turn the entire world into a spherical graveyard for all humanity, destroying aggressor as well as victim.

Then, that terrible day came, when radio stations abruptly cut programs to flash the grim warning that enemy planes were rapidly approaching the western coastline, and had fanned out to make a smaller, more confusing target. The announcer said that nearly all the radio stations along that coast had ceased operations suddenly, and had remained silent. The listeners were strongly urged to try to be calm, but to prepare to head for the nearest bomb shelters. Suddenly the announcer's voice became almost incoherent as he said there had been a terrific flash somewhere beyond the western horizon. He had no sooner made that statement, when the station went off the air. A few minutes later, sirens in the village reached their full pitch in wailing the dread warning--AIR RAID! Phil had snatched up his portable radio, and joined the people who were dashing toward the improvised shelter in the bowels of the hill.

Now the radio sat in the corner of the cell, useless. All attempts to bring in a station--ANY station--had been met with dead silence.

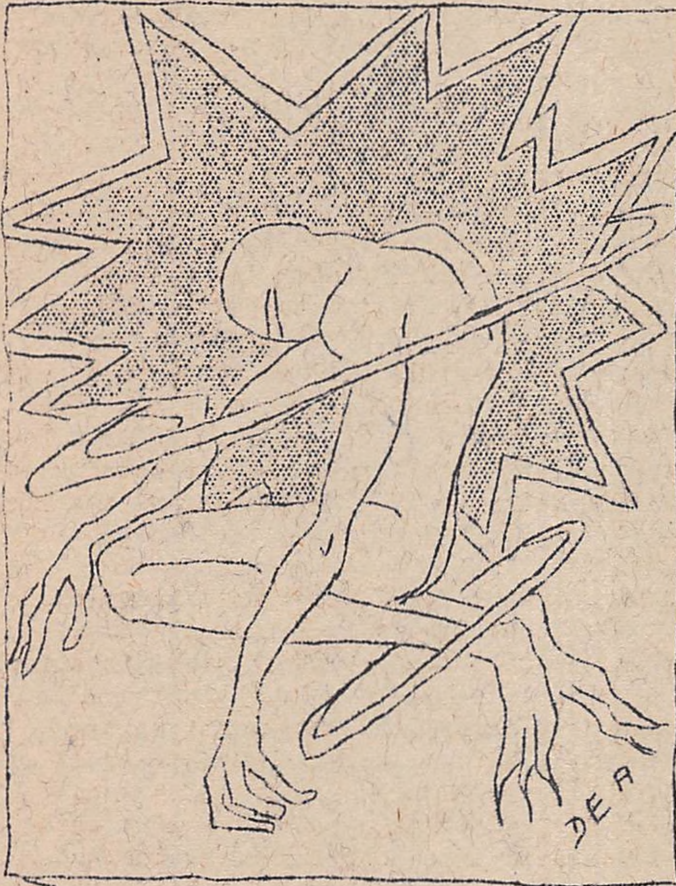
Phil again relived the last awful minutes with his fellow refuge-seekers. He had been among the first to enter the cave. As he'd rushed inside, he'd heard a rocket-powered aircraft, with its high-pitched whine denoting great altitude. Next thing he knew, there was an ear-rending blast, and the entire hill seemed to reel. He remembered the terrible, searing thrust of air at his back--and nothing more--until he had opened his eyes later and found himself alone. He had been lying just clear of the wall of dirt that sealed him into this one-cell prison. What of the others? What of--DONNA? She had been somewhere in the crowd that frenziedly

Once again I delight in being able to finish off this issue's material with a Dennis Murphy story about another type of finishing-off. Denny, besides being a really true fannish friend to top fannish friends, also writes with a pro-touch that exceeds most other fan writers, even though his plots are usually common stories. See if you don't agree....

rushed into the cave!

He picked up the shovel again, and plunged it into the rubble. A shoe appeared, a man's shoe. There was a foot in it, and as he dug and probed, he finally unearthed the body of Stewart, his neighbor. He felt sick as he pulled the body free, and laid it atop the diggings. Then he resumed his work. More bodies came to view beneath his shovel, all dead, of course. As he dug, he found that the rock ceiling was filled with deep cracks. If it should fall now, he'd soon join the dead he had already uncovered.

Then----he found Donna! Dead, like all the others. Grief put a stop to his work for awhile. He clutched the cold body to him, and sobbing, kissed the cold begrimed lips. He remembered the revolver he had put into his coat pocket, when he had started for the hill. Why go on with the painful delving toward freedom, now that Donna was dead? What was left now in living? He looked back at the coat draped over the back of the chair.



But some tiny spark of the instinct of self-preservation still remained alive, so, with sweat and tears streaming down his face, he resumed his digging.

Suddenly he broke through, and a rush of heated air enveloped his face as he tried to see outside, into the brilliant light of day. Then, in a sort of frenzy, he wielded the shovel, widening the hole so that he could crawl through.

At the entrance to the cave, he looked down toward the village. Only there was no village, just a mass of flattened, smouldering ruins! Even the trees were nothing but fallen, blackened timber. Not a tree, shrub,

or even a blade of grass had remained alive. The C-Bomb had done its work well!

An ominous rumble behind him caused him to turn. With a thunderous roar, the ceiling of the cave collapsed. Philip's only injury was a small rock striking his right shoulder. He turned, and walked slowly down the desolate hillside.

He arrived at the ruins of the village, and sat down on a blackened rock to rest. There was nothing but silence, the silence of a tomb. Not even the sound of a bird. Nothing! He stared around him at the desolation, which extended in all directions as far as he could see. Was it like this everywhere--all over the world? Was he the only creature left alive? It's true, he thought, just as the scientists had predicted. The world is a space-borne tomb for humanity, and I'm the only mourner....

The last spark of self-preservation dimmed within him, and died. In place of it, came a frantic desire to be at peace with all humanity, to join them in their eternal slumber. He considered diving headlong against the rock he sat on. Then he remem-

bered the jackknife in his trouser pocket. He reached for it, hoping it was still there. He gave a sigh of intense relief as his hand closed upon it. He opened the largest blade, then looked again at the utter destruction around him. All gone! Donna, and all the others, everybody! Now he knew the awfulness of being the last man on earth--the last living descendent of Adam!

He became aware that the air seemed thin, difficult to breathe. The sun seemed unusually bright, its rays penetrating the pores of his skin, saturating them with heat. He realized that the after-effects of the C-Bomb were still activating, and slowly destroying the envelope of atmosphere which encased the world....

Lifting his head a little, Philip stared toward the western horizon. "Oh God--it took You six days to create this world. Then You created Adam, the firstman. Now man has destroyed Your world in three days. And I am the last man alive, with nothing left to destroy but myself!"

The knife flashed in the sun as it was raised to his throat, and came away, crimsoned. It fell to the heat-seared ground, and Philip sank to his knees beside it. He heard a swishing sound in his ears, the first sound he'd heard besides his own footfalls and voice since reaching the village. Looking upward, while his chest was rapidly reddened by the flowing of blood, he saw a silvery disk in the sky, growing larger as it came. It hovered high above him, then slowly descended.

"I--I thought I was--the last. Someone else--is still alive--coming to rescue me---to late--" Philip sagged forward on his hands, then fell over onto his side.

The disk landed. A panel slid aside, ejecting a small ramp. Two short figures emerged, wearing coveralls of a shiny, metallic fabric. They hastened down the ramp, and over to Philip's body.

One of the greenish-skinned figures gently turned Philip over onto his back, and stared at the unseeing, clouding eyes. The other figure knelt also. "Ogu, look!" one of them said. "Here is another of the Earthlings--and he, too, is dead!"

Ogu bent closer, looked at Philip's crimsoned throat and chest, and at the jackknife beside him. "If he'd only waited just a little while longer, we could have saved him. We've watched these poor Earthlings always quarreling with each other, using stronger weapons each war--until they ultimately found the most potent weapon of all, and destroyed themselves. All except this poor creature, who had nothing left to end himself with but a primitive weapon! What shall we do with him, take him back with us? What do you think, Nagat?"

"No," said Nagat, "this is his home, his planet, his tomb. Let him lie here. The last of the Earthlings."

Ogu rose and brushed the dirt and ashes from his suit. "It's a pity indeed! The Earthlings never learned the true value of peace, as we did. Earth was their home, they never got very far from it. They fought over it, killed for it, and finally destroyed it, and themselves!"

"They were endowed with intelligence, but turned it into the wrong channels. Come, Ogu, there is nothing more to linger here for--nothing--just a sepulchre in space--"

Ogu and Nagat went back into the disk, closed the panel, and the saucer rose, slowly at first, then arced on an angle, a final salute to the last Earthling. Then it speeded up, became a tiny metallic oval in the now cloudless, heat-seared sky, and was gone.



...the litter section...

I have a feeling deep down in my bones that this SPY's letter section is going to be slightly bigger than usual, and I don't know whether to applaud or boo...but in my attempts to cut down the many letters received in comment on #7 I got almost completely stilted because they were all just too darn good! Both Claude Hall's column on Mari Wolf and Dick Geis's on what-is-a-fan brought in contrivertial comments like mad...so they are printed here. At least this continues to prove one thing--that the best way to fill a fanzine in a hurry is to print something fans can argue over! Ah, well, mad mad world, keep sending in those cra-a-a-azy mixed-up letters...

BURT BEERMAN - GROVE SCHOOL - MADISON, CONNECTICUT

Dear Denny;

In the last issue of Spiral, I liked what I read. The Geis piece was the kind of thing I think about but never come out and say. Geis isn't chicken. Surely, some people for whom the article seems to be too shocking a revelation will go after Dick's head and claim the whole thing to be a lot of projection. Geis can't deny it. It is projection. Nonetheless, the driving force behind the article isn't immaterial; more, we should concern ourselves with the meat of the article. I agree almost entirely with what Dick says. Note withing fandom, two things: One) that the main portion of active fans have a leaning toward the arts. With the latter thought in mind, turn your thoughts toward the Montmarte, Greenwich Village, Basin Street, or the dimly-lighted bistros on the outside of college towns. In these places, you will surely find artists, writers...outcasts. Associate, too, the fact that being a fan isn't necessarily the sole symptom of neurosis; that there may be other symptoms, sometimes more anti-social is highly possible. Two) that fandom emulates in their own way, the very manifestations of our degenerate society (the (sic) outside) that have driven fandom away. In each group of fans, there are one or two individuals who are looked upon with great scorn, it seems, by the rest of the group. However, a perfect rationalization for fandom and its inferiority complex would be this: Have you ever seen a group offans in a hot-rod, wearing motorcycle jackets, guzzling beer, and making public nuisances of themselves? A good question. I feel that it is better to withdraw from society than actively fight it. Fandom withdraws; the shotrod elemint think they are fighting it. It was a good article.

Dennis Murphy is one of the newer fans to take pen in hand and write for fanzines. I think he has a very sensitive touch in his fiction and a terrific sense of humor, the latter more evident in his verse which Lee Riddle and I are printing in coming issues of Nebi.

Terry Carr is one of the better poets that is really a fan. He possesses more

variety in theme and form than Isabelle Dinwiddie, herself a fine craftsman. Orma McCormick isn't truly a fan, but a semi-pro since her installation into some national poetry society. Robert Peters is in the same boat as Orma. I can't speak for myself; I'll say this much, though, that I'm not as good as Terry, yet.

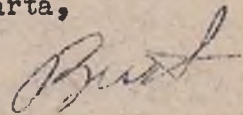
Claude R. Hall is crude but honest. The latter is important. There is much partiality evident in Mari Wolf's writings of fannish doings. Taurasi, Nydahl, Geis, Willis, and even Lee Riddle enjoy the fruits of that dame's follies. The littler magazines don't. Because Lee Riddle heads Nebi, that magazine will get reviews from Miss Sheeps'-clothing. That they will be good reviews is obvious: I wouldn't release a poor magazine and fandom knows from experience that Lee won't.

The editorial and the letter section were, as is always the case, quite good. I gather from the bottom of page 5 that you share my deep love for (sic) music in the popular vein; that is, chords and choruses hacked out and pieced together by cultural vampires.

That business of initials at the ends of letters is ruining me. Now when I get mail from the University (I plan to attend Michigan this fall) or in answer to job applications or from book clubs, I look at the real initialling at the bottom of the letter and try to find the humor in it. Agh.

Hasta la poesia o su carta,

bb/doll



/Two remarks in your letter made me think of something which is entirely irrelevant, so I'll state it: When you say that Geis is not chicken, and that Robert Peters is in the same boat, does everyone who reads this understand what the slang means--in fact, do they know it is slang? I just wonder how far slangisms can spread in English, and just how can one know whether a certain phrase can be understood by the entire country? (What prompted this thinking was an experience recently at a neighboring high school, where they didn't know what the most common terms used at my high school meant.) And what about our poor English, Aussie, and Irish friends? Gaa.....As far as your second point goes, it seems to me that, to an extent, any group of people who gather because of a common interest will pick on certain members for various reasons, not just a fan group. After all, any group needs to pride itself in the fact that it is pretty darn good.....I've never seen fans rodding around in a hot-rod or wearing motorcycle jackets and other hoody items, but there have certainly been reports in fan publications of other fans guzzling beer and making public nuisances of themselves. If these are the actions of certain fans, doesn't that still allow them to be above-average intellectuals who have been shunned?.....Darn you anyway, Burt. I hadn't thought about looking at all letters for the initials, but now I don't see how I can help but do so. Another nasty habit begun, and shall I send the psychiatrists' bill to you?.....It strikes me that Isabelle Dinwiddie would not be so much of a craftsman as a crafts-woman. And when will Nebi appear? And what makes us "cultural vampires?" And what the heck does the Spanish (?) mean? (You see, I'm not such a good censor!)/

ED COX

Greetings,

Don't worry about the salutation--you're not draft-age yet anyway.

Which is one way to start this letter. You're possibly surprised to hear from somebody who isn't on your sub-list or in FAPA concerning SPIRAL. But I read the

April 1954 issue today and a few comments were inspired.

All in all, SPIRAL impressed me as being an entertaining effort. The editorializing is the type I like, format average and contents balanced. I should complain about things when I didn't even buy the zine?

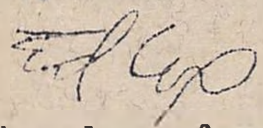
Geis' column sparked a small article-type item which I'm enclosing (double-spaced yet!) in case it might be usable. I rather expect Dick's article will go over like a lead-balloon in FAPA but few, if any, FAPA members will bother to mention it. That is, unless they've changed much in the last few years.

Terry Carr's poem was worthy only for the last two lines.

Claude Hall continues to amuse. Getting real peeved because his zine wasn't reviewed. So what? Is there any obligation on the part of fanzine review editors to review anything and everything they receive? If I remember correctly, the first few issues weren't very good in the first place. Which is purely a debatable situation. However, the ridiculous statement to the effect you've got to come from California before she'll review your mag takes the well-known fur-lined item. Let us serious and constructive fans not take ourselves too seriously!

...So endeth this note. Sorry no sub enclosed. If I did that, I'd probably sub to another and another and....so on. And that would be spending valuable beer-money.

Sincerely,



/Many thanks for your article, practically the only one favoring the fan and not siding more or less with Geis.....I suppose the Geis column would have received more FAPA comment if that issue had been in the regular mailing instead of being post-mailed. At any rate, no more SPY will be distributed in FAPA: while comments usually are plentiful, they are not available till the next mailing anyway, and then they're of much less use in planning the issue. Besides, I'd rather receive the comments in individual letters...it's more romantic or something..... Certainly the Carr poem was worthy only because of the last two lines: they contain the whole idea of the poem.....DOES ANYONE READING THIS KNOW THIS COX CRITTUR'S ADDRESS? I can't find it anywhere, and I'd like to send him a copy of this issue!/
/

DON WEGARS - 2444 VALLEY ST. - BERKELEY 2, CALIFORNIA

Dear Denis,

SPIRAL #7 was left here this afternoon by our friendly mailman. I actually don't see why he should be friendly, what with the fanmags and letters and bills coming my way. Still, he greets me with a hearty welcome whenever he comes upon me. "You know," he mutters, as he staggers down the street with a load of fanzines on his back, "I shoulda stayed in bed."

But anyway, it got here. I like the way you mail Spy, not folding it in half, et cetera. I like it so much, in fact, that I'm using your way, too.

The cover wasn't too good, but let's not quibble over that. I'm sure that most of your readers thought it was wonderful, not being done by Hazelhurst. I think this one would of looked nice in color, tho.

#7 looks a bit tan, no? I imagine it was the Chicago heat what done it. But if the paper costs less, by all means...

SPIRALITIES was enjoyed muchly. I like your style. As I told a friend of mine once, "A column by Moreen is a column by Ghu..." How Ghu would react to that statement is not known in this quarter, but I think he'd be pleased. /At this point Sir Wegars pounced into a long list of reasons as to why I should write a column for FOG.

The results of his stupendous persuasive powers can be seen in the next issue of FOG. And now, thanks and all that, Don, but those tears shed all over my shoulder are simply ruining my newcashmere socks--cut it out, hey fellow? It's somewhat terrifying to be praised...on and on...!/
FACE CRITTURS was good, though a bit on the short side. I think that Carr's fannish success is hinged on them. In ABSTRACT #2 he admits that the Critturs and the [fmp] have been his main source of recognition. I like them, but without a spread he doesn't have enough room to develop. The one in DAWN I thought was quite good. I even like the one in SPY...

And the poem by Terry was good too. I wish he'd sned me something like that... I think that you have about the best letter section in the popular fanzine of today. You even beat out Geis' though not by much. Everything is SO spontaneous! Now that I look back, I thought that you were Dennis Murphy. I didn't think it was a pen-name even. I just looked at the Dennis and the M following it and took the rest for granted. At one o'clock in the morning one can't see straight, can one?

Sincerely,

DW:um dum dum dum.....DUM!

[No wonder your mailman greets you with a hearty welcome when he meets you. He's probably relieved at that point that he can get all that stuff off his back! By the way, I've noticed that for the past few months our mailman has been using that thing similar to the thing the lazy golfer puts his bag on to tote it around...I wonder if it could have any connection with all the fanzines he too has to deliver?..... You'll notice that the Chicago heat has been burning so much that it's turned the color of this issue's paper from tan to gray. After all, what can you expect when today is the eighth straight day with the temperature over 90?.....Terry admitted to me that he's run out of his own original ideas for Critturs, and that in the future any editor wanting some more would have to supply some new story line, which makes sense. Yes, TC does need more room to operate.....Just for curiosity's sake, Don, how do you pronounce your last name?/

PAUL MITTELBUSCHER - c/o GEORGE WERNEKE - SWEET SPRINGS,
MO.

Denis;


This being my first SPIRAL I imagine You'll want some commentary, thus the benighted presence of this simple individual: Let us say that the entire item was superior to what I'd expected, perhaps its only a nostalgic unrecognized yearning for "the good old daze" but somehow it seems to me that the fan pubs have deteriorated in quality (on an overall basis) since the time of my apprenticeship in fandom. Such a deluge of misbegotten crud-sheets have I never seen.....

After the crude beginning I was much tempted to cease in my attempt to read the fiction offering, however same developed into a readable yarn. Although it's not much of a compliment to give these days I can truthfully say it was much better than some of the stuff used by the promags.

Your rambling editorial "Spiralities" rather interesting....a few Condorish comments on aforementioned: Why for you and Birdbath feel it necessary to kiss and make up? # 'Tis unlikely you will see any "products" from Dave English either. # Is Johnson still editing ORB? # SF is scheduled to "bite the dust" but VAMP will rise phoenix-like from ashes.....since you've a copy of #8 would you mind telling me if I'm still represented...? # One man band eh....dig that crazy Moreen....reminds me of the Ray Nelson cartoon in one of the last OPUS's...this character is givin' out

with noise via a paper-whistle (Vot you call 'em?) while an enrapture individual yells "Go Man Go!"....one of my all-time favorite farmag cartoons...you see?

Geis's discourse on the nature of FAN extremely interesting. I've a mental picture of ultra-numerous deluded young fen banging away at their typers in fervent haste attempting to point out that "Well, that may be true of most fans, but not me." Facts are oftentimes note in accordance with what we wish them to be. Moreand more I've come to respect this Geis...he has a frankness and a forthright manner about him that bodes well for fandom...if only we had more in this cast and less of the screaming juveniles in our midst. ### ...As for "escaping from Reality" fans are merely doing so in their own way. Some people use dope, movies, sex, sports, society, art, science, music....we employ "actifanning"...are we any worse...or better...than the remainder of the American population? Escape....its stamps, antiques, baseball, soap operas, jazz, "little" magazines, paintings, Marilyn Monroe, nicotine, fashion, cocaine, new hair-do's, Dragnet, whore's, day dreams, Li'l Abner...it's all of those things and more....

CONDORishly, 

/I doubt if fanzines on the whole have deteriorated from days of old. It would seem to me that simply the "good old daze" as you put it has worn off slightly with repeated fanning.....(1) The bout with Harlan was over some comments I made once about him which he didn't appreciate; (2) no, ORB isn't still published: it's just that, having to identify who Johnson was, I mentioned that he used to edit ORB; and (3) yes, you were represented in #8 of SF with 2 pages of Time Warps, as John said, cut very much. Any more questions for the Answer Man?/

DICK GEIS - 2631 N. MISSISSIPPI - PORTLAND 12, OREGON

Dear old Denis;

How are your fingers and arms holding out? I must say you arean enterprising young fan--taking in washing--er--mimeoing on the side, putting out a school scandal sheet, and belonging to ALL those organizations..... What do you do in your spare time?

Y'know, Denis, my column was pretty bad, wasn't it? I got so damned confused reading it I wondered what I was talking about in that fateful first page. I still don't know if I answered all those questions I posed. Gad....

The finest thing in the issue was SPIRALITIMS. You are a born columnist.

"The Good Old Days" is deceptively well written: if one examines any one part of it, dialogue, plot, general writing level, onefinds that it is pretty average and maybe even plum bad, but taken all together, these elements combine to leav be impression of a well-told story. Odd, but true.

Right off the bat I could write a better poem than that by Terry Carr in #7. Lesseee now....

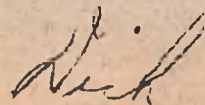
Oh...struggling powerful little id
I know now why you have a lid.
Because if you and I should blow our top
We'd start to flip and never stop.

Well..... at least it's original...

I wish I could get ditto paper for 90¢ a ream.....(sigh)... /So does the fair-haired Peatrowsky./

SINcerely,

-28-



/THAT COLUMN OF YOURS WAS BAD??? Ye Gods, if that's a sample of some BAD Geis material, I'd give a year's file of ASF to see his GOOD stuff! Please--whatever you do--continue writing me the most lousy stuff you can! It brings in the mail.....It is heartening to hear from someone else that I am a "born columnist"; i.e., that's I'm a columnist who's been born--although I do believe I've been fully aware of the fact for some 17 years or so, okay?.....Your comments on how Murphy left the impression of a well-told story makes just as much sense as the person who told the chime-keeper, "Without a rope your ringing is no good, and without a bell your ringing is no good, but, taken all together, these two elements combine to leave the impression of a well-tolled bell." Same difference.....I feel like being a Mines today, so here's a poem in reply:

Oh...struggling, powerful little Geis--
He can't with clever poems entice
 A change in my good, sound advice:
 I'd rather see than be one!

Hummm.../

BOB PEATROWSKY - BOX 634 - NORFOLK, NEBRASKA

Dear Denis,

...After reading your mention in the last issue, I finally managed to locate the February PATHFINDER for that stf-ish article. It didn't quite come up to my expectations, but then maybe I was just expecting too much after the trouble I took to locate the mag. The local library doesn't handle the mag, but I managed to find it on a recent trip to the old home town. Must admit I liked the general "tone" of the article though; not the down-the-nose, laboratory-specimen air that many of those kind of articles take on. At least science fiction and its readers would seem to be accepted, judging from this article.

Wish the ditto people would put out copy paper for 90¢ a ream. /So does the fair-haired Geis./ My 20# stuff costs me \$1.65.

Dick Geis puts forth what, to me, is a very interesting and probably very true exposition of the inner workings of the science fiction fan. I doubt if many fans will admit that they have an inferiority complex, but I think Dick has hit pretty close to the mark in his reasoning. Dick probably wouldn't have written this article-column if he wasn't willing to admit that the facts were true in his own case. So I'll join him by admitting to somewhat of an inferiority complex myself. The line forms at the left.

I think Claude Hall does go a bit overboard in some of the statements about Mari Wolf's fanzine review column, but I must admit that I've had very similar experiences. When I first started pubbing MOTE in July 1952 I religiously sent a copy of every issue to her for review. Claude may be right in that she doesn't like to review poor/beginning zines, as she didn't get around to MOTE for over a year--closer to a year and a half, I think. I finally folded MOTE in January 1954 and now she's reviewing the mag regularly. Each issue is six months old when her review is finally printed, but she is reviewing it. And she's drawing subbers for me too. The only trouble is that the mag is no longer going. I believe I've received (and returned) more subs to MOTE in the last three months since folding the mag than I did all the while it was being published. These reviews would probably be fine for fanzines that can manage to keep publishing for a couple of years to take advantage of them, but for the majority of mags that don't last over a year or so they are too late to do much good. In fact, the time and money spent in returning these subs soon gets a bit tiresome....The fanzine review columns in the pro-mags are fine--I'm all for them--but couldn't they get the things into print a bit faster than six

months after the fanzine has been published? STARTLING and AMAZING used to cut that time by at least half when they werestill running reviewcolumns. At least that was my experience.

I see I have an ally in my preference for editorials and such stuff composed on stencil. I've been using this method in CONFAB and I'm getting so I can even re-read the things without grimacing, which is more than I could do with my MOTE editorials. And then too, if I write the things out beforehand, I always end up in doing so much cutting in putting them on stencil that I only have half enough material to cover the space I want. So I just bang away until I fill my allotted space and quit, and it seems to work out fairly well.

And such is SPIRAL #7....

Confabulously,

Bob

(You see, I've found a new complimentary close for my new mag....courtesy of Dean Grennell.)

[I'm glad to hear somebody could find that PATHFINDER article...hunt as I did, nobody had the magazine, not even in Chicago's Loop: apparently it's not very popular.....In other words, Bob, the prozines should remember that six months, by a fannish calendar, is indeed a long time!..... I don't compose on stencil nearly so much to fill an allotted space as I do to save time. Saying what comes naturally just cuts off extra effort; and, after all, I'm just a lazy goof at heart!.....Why the heck did they make this Remington with no asterisk mark on it?/

CLAUDE HALL - US54100511 - 517th MEDICAL CO. (C1r) (Sep) -
APO 42, c/o PM - NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Dear Denny,

..."Those Good Old Days" by Dennis Murphy was, as you stated in the editorial, very muchly worked, so far as plot was concerned; but the lad does have a good writing style--talent already yet! He should find himself a good plot, or better yet, something off-trail to write about.

Your letter section is well handled and like any true faaan, I always dig into the letter section first--be it prozine or fanzine. Is this "spontaneous" that Graham speaks of in his letter as bad as combustion? I know old spontaneous combust-ion well. It's the sort of feeling that one gets when sitting on an atomic bomb or even holding a grenade in your hand with the safety pin pulled. I've heard of some people getting quite a "kick" out of the latter. They accidentally let the handle fly-off and went all to pieces over the situation.

Not that Spy has that effect on me now--don't get me wrong. Hope Spy lasts a thousand years so I'll always be able to read it in my old age.

MUZZIforever,

Claudia

[One of these funny fellos yet: hahahahaha. Just for spite (although it has nothing to do with anything at this point) I present something read recently in Bennett Cerf's column in THIS WEEK: The patient asked the doctor, "Did you say eating radishes would make my skin break out? and the reply from the physician, "No, I never make rash promises." See what I mean?/

"See what you mean and mean what you see."

SAM JOHNSON - 1517 PENNY DR. - EDGEWOOD - ELIZABETH CITY, N.C.

Dear Denise...Dennis?...

...The boy that did your cover may have been a Johnson /not the same one, kiddies!/, but I lay no claim to him. Good Ghod, boy, I can do as good as that; that's not so good either!

I would go on through the issue and pick apart everything like I want, but I'll just say "'Twas good" and let it go at that.

I will, however, let Geis in on a few things. I like to think I know a little bit about PSYchology, but I like even better to try to understand what makes a fan tick /could it be that Bulova he swallowed?/. I've got a few ideas myself... I know full well that a fan may have a deep inferiority complex, but I'm not too sure that THAT'S what makes a fan a fan. Instead, let's look at him in a different light.In his earlier days, every fan alive passed through the stages of interest in everything under the sun (astronomy, radio, painting, model aircraft or railroads, rockets, chemistry, etc.). But one thing is wrong here. ANY intellectual person passes through the same stage or stages. So something must happen along the way, right? I've spent some time on it, and I've decided that the fan is a flub... he is interested in everything, and that's his trouble. He likes everything, but not enough on one thing to make him get good at that one thing. He finds in the meantime, even if he HAD gone on into something deeper, he would never be very good at it. He is somewhat above normal intellect, but he is not quite good enough to be really good at it (this may include athletics in many cases). He then starts developing a shell around him, convincing himself that he is superior to everything beneath him, but he recognizes the fact that his shell has a hole at the top: someone superior to him is peeking in... So he comes across a stf story someday... he immediately finds a way to cure all his ills. Through the media of stf fiction he can place himself in the position of "hero", or someone with a superior brain power. This way, he can place himself (for a time) above even his former superiors. In his lust for his "egoboo" or self satisfaction, he often comes across someone else who is just as maladjusted as he. Thus they can spend time making each other think that they are really superior to everything else. As these groups grow, he had to have everything set so that no outsiders could understand it, and thus he would still have that superior feeling (whether he was or not). You know as well as I that there are practically no people who can figure out just what makes a fan do something, and anything the fan writes is pure jargon to the non-fan. So this poor maladjusted person (fan) wanders around, sporting a gleaming coat of superiority, and yelling, "Hey look at me, I'm a fan!" Damn stupid business if you ask me, and I'm a fan. Notice that in writing this letter, I am placing myself in a position above even other fans by being able to diagnose their neurosis, when I should be looking to myself. Anyway, all this just goes further to prove what Geis said about fans being covered with a huge blanket of inferiority complex. Only one catch--even the inferiority complex is superior to something else. A fan will admit that he is conceited and has an inferiority complex, and by doing so, he still is above the ordinary person. What do you do with someone like that? Just let them alone is what I think. The numbers grow by the day; I wonder when and if it will end, or if we will end up with a planetful of neurotics...hmmmm?

Well, I like your mag, and hope you like mine as much.

I Dissolve,

/In case you're having trouble, the name's Courtney.....You've got an interesting twist to the fan story, Sam, but certainly this "history" can't apply to every fan, can it?/- 31-

LYNN HICKMAN - P.O. BOX 184 - NAPOLION, OHIO

Dear Denis,

Received Spiral #7. An enjoyable issue. Best issue so far in this reader's opinion. I didn't care much for your zine at the start, but now I find myself really enjoying it and looking forward to the next issue.

The cover this issue was lousy. Didn't know Johnson could turn out such crud. Must have been your stenciling.

Spiralities was the most enjoyable item in the zine, but how can you be happy about a bill from the Marr Duplicator Sales Co.? I just received a bill for \$39.00 from the Coxhead Corp. for new feed rolls and four typer ribbons for my Vari-typer, and believe me, I'm not happy about it. Must disagree with Dick Geis' ideas on stf fans. I've been a stf fan for about 18 years and I don't believe I have an inferiority complex....I don't if Dick has the symptoms he is talking about (I've never met him) but I could go through the list of fans that I know, and that is considerable, and you would find that over 75 per cent of them would be normal people who I would consider are making a success of their lives. I'll admit that perhaps they stay a little more in the background than do the boustrous type that are making themselves obnoxious trying to prove to the world that they are somebody when deep down they themselves believe otherwise, but they ARE fans, and actually the reason for the success of fandom. I like nothing better than to stop at Don Ford's and have a pleasant chat with him on stf and fandom as well as other things of interest to both of us. The same can be said of many other fans. We're in fandom because we enjoy reading stf and enjoy meeting with and talking with people of similar interests, not because we feel we're no good at anything else. Do you honestly feel that way, Dick? It's a bad sign.

Yo's, *Lynn*

/Please don't throw too many tomatoes at Johnson--as any steady SPY reader must have noticed by now, perhaps my worst talent is stencilling of art. I don't draw too well either. (Do you suppose the two might be connected?).....I think the reason I must have enjoyed the Marr bill is because it was (then) the last one I had, and I had the money to pay it all set aside. Sounds pretty bad, eh?.....At least I always marvel in this fact: leave it up to Hickman to perk up one's curiosity each letter. This time Lynn typed in that cra-a-a-zy script-type typewriter; and the letter was typed on stationery of the Virginian Hotel, Lynchburg, Virginia, mailed in an envelope bearing the return address of Gates Co., Denver, Colorado, and postmarked Napoleon, Ohio. Such a cross-representation of the great U.S. and A. is to be applauded!/
Lynn

GREGG CALKINS - 2817 ELEVENTH ST. - SANTA MONICA, CALIF.

Dear Denis:

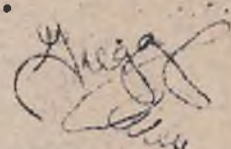
A very enjoyable seventh issue of SPIRAL. Have you published so many already? It seems like just the other day you first started...

I'm damned if I see why you publish a zine like SPY for FAPA, but I presume about half your circulation goes out as a subzine, so that explains it. Personally, I think you'll find publishing a subzine about three times the pleasure that belonging to FAPA will ever provide. You never can tell, tho...one man's poison, you know.

I really haven't much to say about this 7th issue that is concrete, Denis...

just some few words about how I think that SPY is going to be one of the best fanzines to ever come out of the current crop. You've got an editorial personality that's all your own, and I heartily suggest you write good long editorials. Also your zine has a freshness that is very pleasant, yet it isn't loud and gaudy like so many 7th fan-dom zines. And your letter column is highly interesting....

I guess I've raved enough for tonight...



/As I already said in comment to Ed Cox's letter, SPY will no longer be distributed via FAPA. And I think I agree with you, Gregg, in that this subzine can be more fun than FAPA. Course, I haven't been in that apa long enough for any conclusive judgment.....Oh, dear, your favorable comments are too much to stand! I keel over in a dead faint.../

DENNIS MURPHY - c/o BOX 249 - RT. 1 - CROMWELL, CONNECTICUT

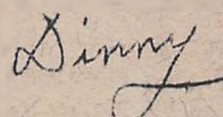
Hi, Dinny;

Seems as how some of the fans think that you and I are getting around on the same pair of legs. Be gorra, if we were, you wouldn't be editing SPIRAL, and I wouldn't be trying to write material, and we'd be quite an attraction in some side-show. No sir, you and I aren't pushing the same pen! However, we have something in common--music. I, too, play the pianer.

I always like SPIRAL. Dinny me lad, don't be after changin' the title to SPY. Course, I can't stop you, if you really want to make the change, but I do think SPIRAL is a much better name. SPY sounds too subversive!

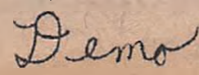
Your SPIRALITIES is always informally chatty, and informative. Claude Hall had a nice article there, too. Be gorra, it was through my reading of Mari Wolf's reviews of fanzines in MADGE that I first stuck me finger into fandom. Since then, a lot of the fans have written and tipped me off to other fan mags that Mari hasn't yet fetched out of her mailbag. Terry Carr's prose LURE OF THE STARS sorta echoes me own sentiments when I stand gaping aloft into the nocturnal regions....Guess that's all for now, so I'll sign off.

As alwuz,



/Be gorra, if you haven't gotten the wrong impression! I have no thought of changing the title of me magazine to SPY--I just use that as an abbreviation.....Glad to see there's some other fan who can also still glance up at the sky with wonder. All is well for science-fiction stories.....Sure 'n' be gorra!/
/

That, as the saying goes, takes care of that: if I don't end this section pretty quick, it might begin to bore you! Seriously, I do think WHO GOES THERE^E is fairly interesting as a letter column, and maintains its interest without delving into personalities or feuds, as a few others do....Fine letters squeezed out of this issue include those by Robert Bloch, Howard Lyons, John Fletcher, and P.H. Economou, and my thanks to all writers. Remember to keep sending the letters and material, and please remember to tell me what date you received this issue....Till about August 20, then, good fanning!



Denis Moreen
214 Ninth Street
Wilmette, Illinois

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"Phann away to
Phrisco in the
Phall oph
Phiphty-Phoor!"
~~~~~  
(Who would like  
to do a Conreport  
for Spinal?)

Charles Wells  
405 E Grand St.  
Surrey  
Surrey in



WILME

(1)