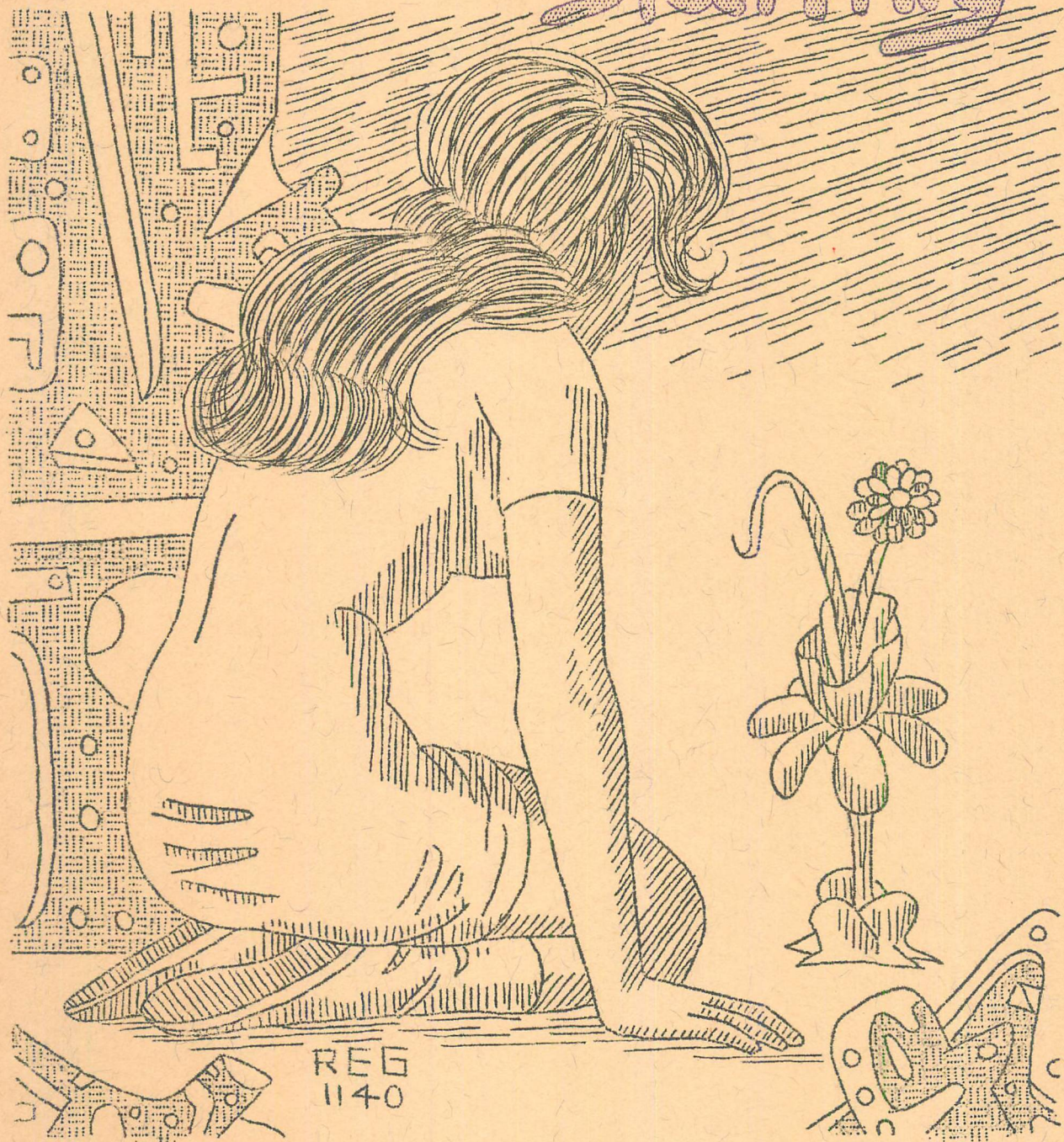


starling



Starling¹²

Starling is published by Hank Luttrell, 2936 Barrett Station Road, Kirkwood, Missouri 63122 and Lesleigh Couch, Rt. 2, Box 889, Arnold, Missouri 63010. It is normally obtainable with 25¢ (4/\$1), but next issue will cost 50¢ (see the editorial). It is also available with a fanzine in trade, or the contribution of artwork, articles, a letter of comment, or anything else which you can convince us worth publishing. June, 1968 issue. Next deadline: July 12, 1968. St. Louis in 1969!

an overlong editorial: Your Man in Missouri4
an article: Sex and the Single Femme Fan (Lesleigh Couch).9
a column about books: With Malice Toward All (Joe Sanders)	13
a letter column: Words from Readers (and featuring words from HL and LMC)	19
fiction: Outcast (W. G. Bliss).	25
a column on pop music: Pangaea (Hank Luttrell).28
a poem: (Jim Reuss) 18 // two reminders: St. Louiscon 4; Ozarkon 3 19 //	

cover: Robert E. Gilbert

backcover: Carl Bobke

- 3 Seth Dogramajian
- 5 George Foster
- 6 Doug Lovenstein
- 7 Robert E. Gilbert
- 8 Rick Seward
- 9-12 Hank Luttrell
- 20 Rick Seward
- 21 Steve Rasnic
- 22 Bill Garnett
- 23 Doug Lovenstein
- 24 Seth Dogramajian
- 29 Hank Luttrell
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Symbols of the Mailing Labels:
 R - Review L - Letter
 T - trade C - Contributor
 a number - the last issue unless
 you do something.



Your MAN IN MISSOURI

EDITORIAL: WORDS COURTESY HL

A number of OSFA members went to see 2001: A Space Odyssey recently -- the Editorial Staff of this fanzine (allow me that pretension) was part of the group. We saw it June 1st, the first Saturday after the St. Louis premier on May 29! After seeing Fahrenheit 451, if you will remember, we* had felt compelled to say something about it in Starling; we had thought it rather neglected by the fan press. Later we were to be disappointed to see it lose a Hugo to a Star Trek episode -- not that we had not expected just that. But after this movie, 2001, I'm really slightly reluctant to write about it. It hasn't opened in many parts of the country yet, and won't be released generally until at least September, so while many of you probably haven't seen it, I'm sure you've probably read more about it than you might care to -- in everything from Popular Science to the Christian Science Monitor to your own local newspaper.

But I thought you might like to hear from someone presumptuous enough to think he might understand the movie a little bit.

I can understand why a number of people don't quite follow all the movie. It is both sophisticated science fiction and a fine, beautiful movie, employing good movie technique, but technique which may require at least some acquaintance with movies, and some effort at understanding and interpretation above passive observation.

* * * * *

*When I use an editorial we, I mean something with it, I mean Lesleigh and me.

A REMINDER:

St. Louis CON

*The St. Louis Worldcon bid is backed by active, experienced fans. You probably know us through our extensive publishing and covention attendance.

*St. Louis is a major midwestern covention center -- and can provide all the extensive facilities necessary for a successful World Science Fiction Convention, as well as providing a pleasant, interesting surrounding for those of you who would like to combine site seeing with your conventioning -- you've heard about our zoo, our museums, our baseball, our breweries, our Arch. You'll like St. Louis.

*OSFA, the large local fan group backing the convention, is enthusiastically interested in providing for you a really memorable and pleasant convention. We urge you to vote for St. Louis for the site of the 1969 World Science Fiction Convention.

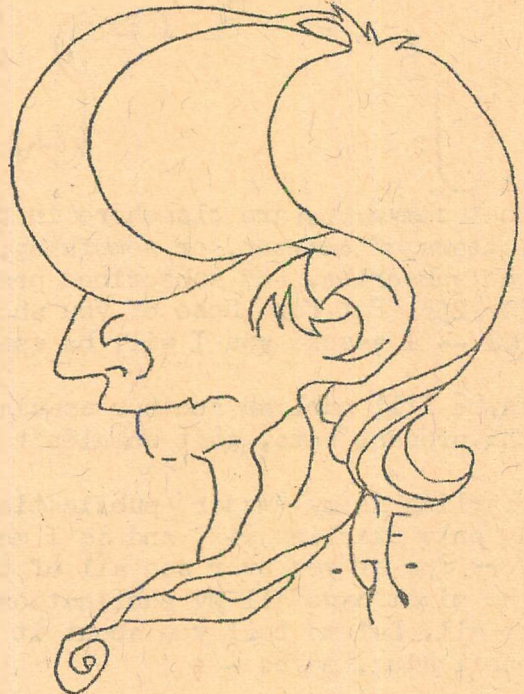
Good novels or poetry, after all, require both an acquaintance with the art form, and an effort on the part of the reader. A movie, a good, serious movie, should demand just as much from the audience. Many science fiction fans may not be regular movie goers, and many people familiar with film technique may not understand the science fiction. But I really think almost anyone familiar with either area (or both, of course) should find the movie wonderfully impressive and beautiful and stimulating.

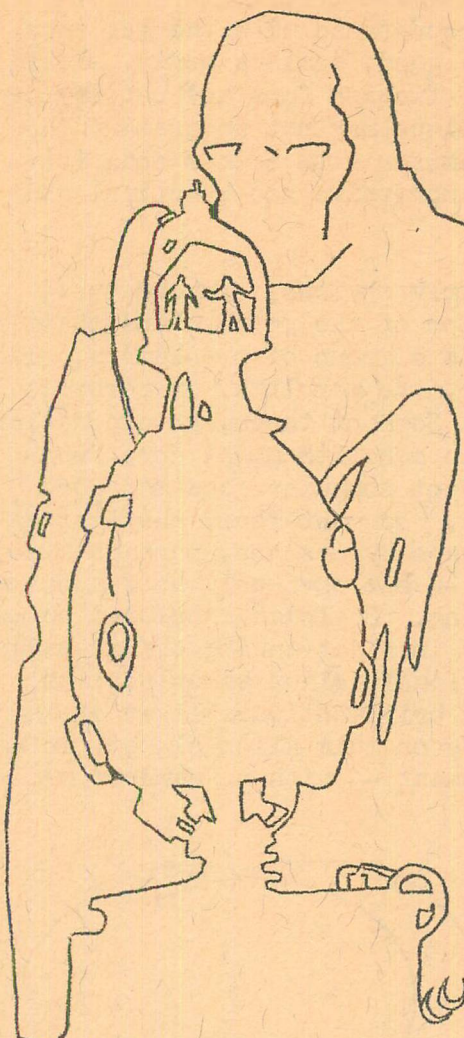
There are a few things about the movie that seem fairly obvious. Beyond these points you'll probably disagree with my interpretation of the movie. And that is great. But, here: Segment one, a monolith influences a group of pre-humans, allowing them to first begin to use weapons. Segment two, the monolith, or perhaps another one, is found on the moon in the year 2001. Segment three, an expedition is sent to Jupiter because there is evidence that the monolith might come from there. On the way, the sentient, or seemingly sentient computer goes mad (or malfunctions), killing all but one of the astronauts. Segment four, the last remaining astronaut is drawn through something -- perhaps hyperspace, perhaps time, as was suggested by a friend after seeing the movie -- but obviously he was being drawn through a time warp or a space warp or something. Lesleigh mentioned to me that at times it reminded her of watching the ground in a jet taking off at night. Yes! Then the astronaut arrives someplace -- an obviously alien someplace; an alien planet, perhaps. This whole segment is really brilliantly realized on the screen. The astronaut lives out the rest of his life on this alien planet, in an almost familiar seeming habitat, a victorian apartment -- with no windows or doors, and indirect lighting: -- weirdly alien. We are shown the astronaut aging in a sequence that is really no more confusing than the cuts back and forth in time and space in The Graduate (a movie most people have seen), but it might stop some of you if you aren't looking for it.

As the astronaut is dying, the monolith appears again, and at death the astronaut is transformed to a sun-like form containing an embryo of human form, orbiting the earth. Personally, I don't think this needs to be interpreted literally, all it means is that men were at this point brought into the next level of existence. The monolith, at the beginning of the film, influenced the start of our present level, and the end showed the creation of the next.

There has been some dissatisfaction expressed by some over the sub-plot involved with Hal 9000, the computer already mentioned -- it has been called a digression. I don't think so. I think this failure of an unfailable, virtually sentient computer, marks the end, the failure, of the present level of civilisation in the movie, a level where people beat each other over the head with bones and drop bombs and build computers which murder people, as much as the creation of the embryo marked the beginning of the next.

This movie is incredible. It almost has no right to exist. It is a brilliant movie. Were are all the science fiction movies better than, say, Forbidden Planet, but not as good as a totally staggering 2001? F451 is with us, but that is only one.





Planet of the Apes is amusing and fairly good, but rather trite. I feel like we don't deserve something as good as 2001 without first having seen the field of the science fiction movie developed through a number of reasonably good, but less than brilliant movies.

Don't wait for 2001 to be released to television. 2001 is really a movie worthy of the media it is being presented in: it needs Cinerama, really, and anything less than a normal screening on a large screen at your friendly neighborhood theatre would be unacceptable. Even on color TV it would be disappointing compared to the effect it has on a large screen -- and it would be completely meaningless on black & white TV. Please do make it a point to drag yourself out of the house for this one.

2001 will win a Hugo in 1969. That excites me.

NEXT ISSUE. . .

will be celebrating the publishing of my 100th publication. I've never bothered with a special issue of Starling before, I've never done an "annish." I've lofty plans for the issue; lots of pages, art folios, a few experiments -- not everything is definite yet, in fact, nothing will be definite until we start stapelling them together. I want this issue to be as good as we can manage. You are invited to contribute. Hurry, though! I'll probably mail #13 in early August, and it will be done by late July, in time for Ozarkon 3 this year -- details on

that convention are elsewhere in this issue. If you trade with me, or write regular letters of comment, or something, you'll get the issue as per normal. Those of you who subscribe, and subscribed previous to this issue, will get it as per normal, for 25¢. But for those of you who will be buying next issue, I'm going to charge 50¢ -- I assure you I will be spending more than that on it!

Maybe I'll publish another special issue when I publish my 200th publication -- at the present rate, that shouldn't be more than 3 or 3½ years from now.

* * * * *

Starling is my "major" publication -- but obviously not my only publication -- this is only Starling #12, and as I mentioned above, I've published around 100 fanzines. Very few of you ever see all of them. In fact, I can think of no one besides myself who might have all my publications, or who have received all of them, or even close to all. Let me tell you about it -- last issue I told you about fan clubs, this time publishing, maybe --:

Starling was my first fanzine, at least in a way! How many of you remember the first two issues? I wasn't really the editor then, nearly a co-editor, and one that lived several hundred miles from the main editor, at that. I never saw much of the issues until they were finished. Do you remember the other editor's name? Tim Eklund. Eklund was one of the first fans I ever knew -- his only activity within fandom was Starling, a brief membership in the N3F, and some correspondence, then later, more recently, a brief membership in SFPA. The first issues were miserable, really the perfect

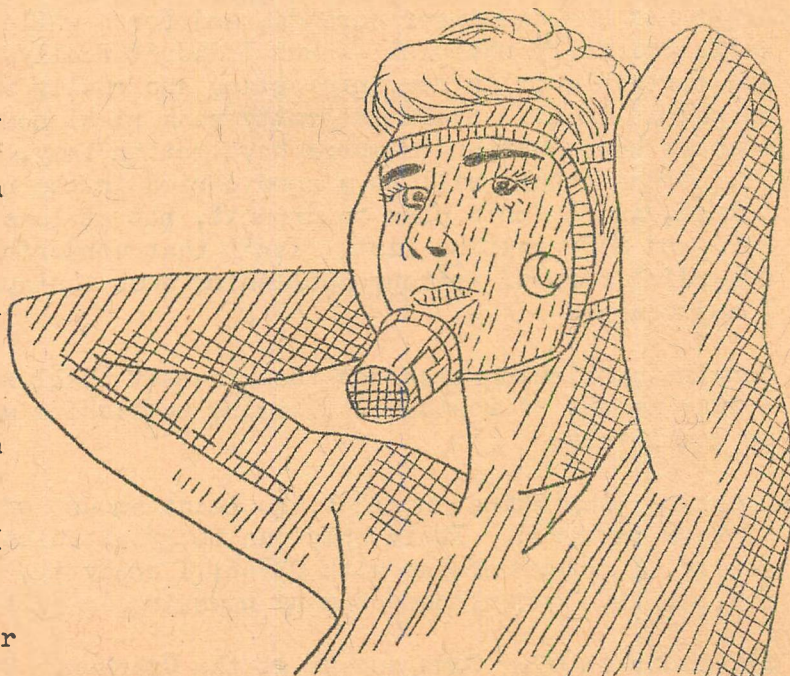
neofanzine. Long, enthusiastic, badly written and typed even worse. I sort of wonder what those first few issues would have been like had I done them myself. I'm sure they would have been just as bad, though certainly slightly different. Even then Eklund seemed to me to be over doing things. I certainly wouldn't have called this silly thing Starling -- that was Eklund's idea -- I didn't like it at all. But I've since grown to think it amusingly appropriate -- "an unpoetic little dicky bird." Probably, left to my own devices, I would have never started a fanzine until much, much later.

The first fanzine I published all by myself was called Kerchief -- an apazine for N^oAPA. I find this all sort of painful to report, embarrassing, but I reassure myself that most of you have never seen it, and never will. If it was as awful as I remember it, it must be awful indeed. I certainly don't intend to drag out a copy to look at it. I didn't actually print the first few issues of Kerchief. Redd Boggs was then printing fanzines for eager young neofans like myself, and did mine. It wasn't until Eklund turned over Starling to me completely that I invested in a cheap Vari-Color mimeo, which has served faithfully, if with some difficulty, to this day. To give credit where it is due and over due, Starling is now published on the Couch family mimeograph, a fine A.B. Dick machine.

Kerchief, the name, began to sicken me after just a few issues! I got out a dictionary one day and opened it a few times at random. I found the word Troglodyte, which I liked, so that is what I renamed my N^oAPazine. I still think that is one of the better names I've inflicted upon something I publish.

I'm also a member of two other amateur press alliances, APA45, an apa for people born not previous to January, 1945, and SFPA, the Southern Fan Press Alliance. I was a charter member of APA45, and now one of only three remaining. Almost everyone else has disappeared from fandom. Those people, among others, are the very people who entered fandom the same time I did. Remember Rich Mann? Or St. Louis fan Paul Gilster? Apa45 was started by a group of fans more or less to provide a place for newer fans to publish without feeling self-conscious. It was a good idea. The age restriction is going to become less and less important as years go by. It will get to the point that most fans interested in publishing for an apa will either be eligible for membership in Apa45 or will already be so busy in longer established apas that they wouldn't consider an Apa45 membership anyway. It will become just another apa, another good apa. Right now it is a very good apa, an apa in which I'm happy to be a member!

I joined SFPA just shortly after I started in APA45. I had written an article for Al Andrew's SFPAzine, and had been hearing from several correspondents for some time that I really should join SFPA. For some reason it seemed a shame to waste the page credit I would receive for the Andrew's article if I joined; there wasn't a waiting list, so I



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joined. I publish Such & Such for SFPA. Such & Such is one of the few fanzines that I publish that I haven't changed the name since it was started -- thought I guess it needs it! Like my Apa45zine (which I forgot to mention) was first named Ajax, the foaming fanzine -- remember the Ajax the foaming cleanser commercials? Yes indeed. But that was changed before too long, renamed Abdiel, a name again found with random dictionary opening.



As some of you know, I am currently busy with the monthly OSFA newszine, OSFAn. Now pay attention: When our newsletter was first started, the purpose behind it was to help organize local fandom. The circulation was pretty much limited to local fans. After the club was well started, we got to the point that we wanted a genzine. From the very first, there had been some mumbling that Sirruish was a pretty silly name for a newszine -- but we all agreed that it was a fine name for a genzine. So we named the genzine Sirruish and renamed the newszine OSFAn. Got it? This is going to confuse collectors. I edited the first two issues of Sirruish. Currently Sirruish is flourishing under the editorialship of Leigh Couch, Rt. 2, Box 889, Arnold, Missouri 63010. Send her a quarter for a sample copy. And I want to plug OSFAn, too: You can get it from me, 15¢ for a sample copy or 12/\$1.50. I try to cover both professional and fan news as completely as possible, and Chris Couch contributes a column of fanzine reviews, probably one of the most current and complete available. Or, you can join OSFA. A year's non-attending membership is \$2. Join and receive both. You can send the dues to me, I'll take care of them.

So. Let me summarize this stuff for you: I publish an apazine every month, one each for Apa45, SFPA and N°APA. I publish a monthly newszine. I publish Starling with Lesleigh. It is probably clear to you, and it is only too clear to me, that if I would drop a couple things, and concentrate more on one or just a few, I'd be able to do something more ambitious and probably much better. But so far at least, I don't see my way clear to do that. I enjoy each activity quite a bit.

Like the apas: SFPA is a good apa, usually it is considered one of the very best. APA45 has had some poor periods, and for a while after its start it was really quite painfully childish -- but I didn't really notice it, as neoish as I was. And certainly it is now interesting and really rather good. There are many talented people in it. N°APA is pretty weak right now. We've had some OE problems, members have quit and members have gotten lazy. Roy Tackett was recently elected OE, perhaps there will be a good period in the near future. It was the first apa I joined, and I don't plan to drop it, not at least right away. I'm also on the FAPA and SAPS waiting list. Isn't that wonderful? Apa publishing may be the most rewarding form of amateur publishing when the apa in question is in a good period. I enjoy apas.

Genzine publishing presents the greatest challenge to the individual, and provides a fair amount of response. Genzine publishing would be the last type I would give up completely.

Newszine publishing provides the least amount of response in relation to the amount of work involved. It is only due to my altruistic nature that I continue. . . not really, I enjoy working with OSFAn; I enjoy it, or I wouldn't bother myself with it. But the life expectancy of many newszine is quite short for good reasons.

St. Louis in 69. Come see us at the Ozarkon. Or the Baycon. Frank Zappa is watching you. Doesn't it give you a weird feeling to know that?

SEX AND THE SINGLE FEMME FAN

OR CAN A GIRL FIND HAPPINESS IN FANDOM

Recently there have been several articles about femme fans, by female fans. I am referring to "Are Femme Fans Human?" by Robin White in *Algo 13* and "With Tattered Tennis Shoes" by Jean Berman in *Nous 2*. Being a female fan myself, I felt compelled to express my views on the subject.

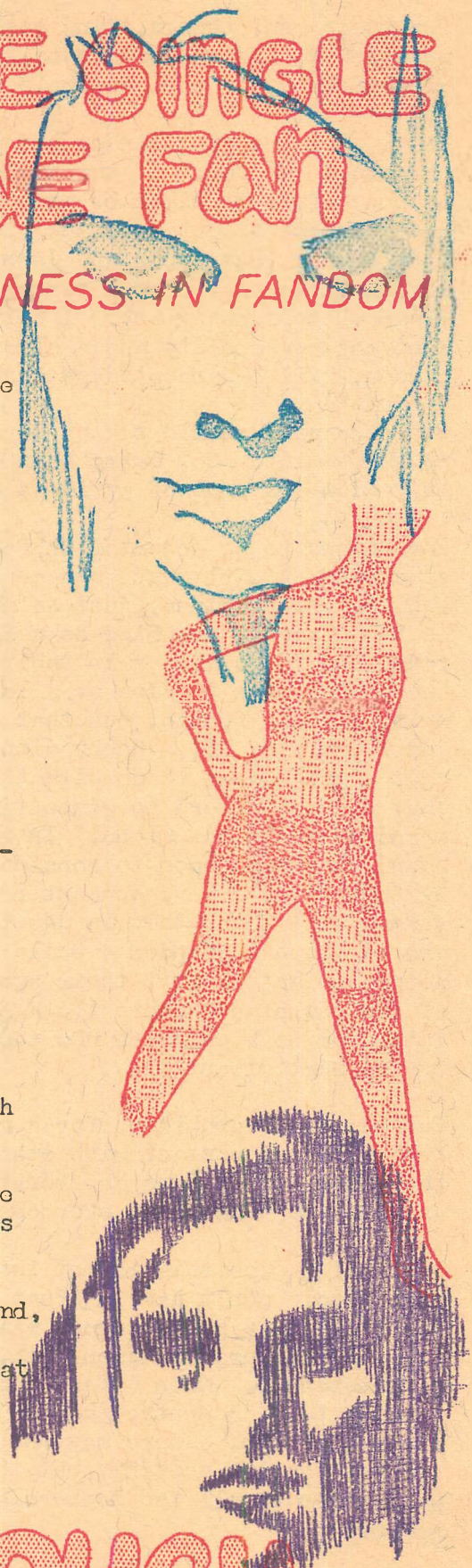
Robin and Jean are discussing a problem that is not peculiar to female fans, that is, of a girl's being recognized as a "female" rather than a person. Despite women suffrage and the equal employment opportunity laws, women are still in an odd position in relation to men. They are inferior until proven otherwise. They are not quite human until proven to be so.

This is not to say all males feel superior to all females, that they refuse to treat a female as human. But to merit this treatment, a girl must prove herself a worthwhile person. As a girl, she is already worth some time and attention if she is sexy. But as another human being, she is not worth much until she has proven herself possessing of such qualities as a sense of ~~wonder~~ humor and the ability to converse intelligently. Once she has shown these, most males will accept her as a person, at least any worth her time and attention will.

In fandom the situation is somewhat aggravated by the relative scarcity of females. This increases a girl's importance as a "female of the opposite sex."

Fandom is a great place for a girl to get a boy friend, but I don't think any male could enter it with the specific idea of getting a girl friend; it is not that

BY
LESLEIGH COUCH



easy. All male fans are supposed to want a femme fan for their own, though. And most females, if they are unattached, are assumed to be in fandom mostly to get a boy friend, or at least male attention.

So, a girl entering fandom has all the male attention she could ask for. If she is not absolutely, stunningly beautiful, it might be more attention than she could expect to get anyplace else. And it is very flattering. But Robin and Jean contend that it is difficult to emerge as a person from this situation. I agree, to some extent. I believe that a girl with a strong personality and a strong desire to be a person, will be accepted as such in fandom.

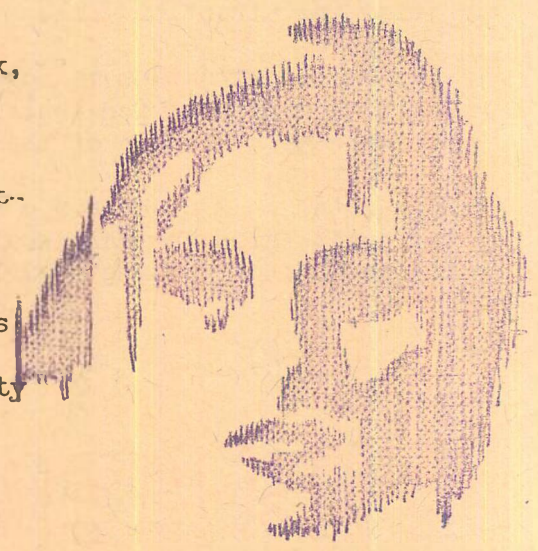
But perhaps I should take a more devious route to get to this point. So, using some of my own experiences in fandom and some of my ideas on the subject. . .:

For anyone to be accepted in fandom, they must be worth something. A girl must come across as a person in letters and fanzines, just as much as a male, if she is to be really accepted as a fan. I know that some fans tend to be kinder in their expressed opinions if the editor of a fanzine or a letter writer they are writing to is female, but that doesn't last long. Fandom is, after all, a hobby with most fan and they have a great deal to do with their time besides fanac. They can not afford to waste time writing to fans who stand on their sex alone. In this respect, I have found fans more open to considering my opinions seriously than males I have encountered under other circumstances. I think this is due to the fact that anyone who has been in fandom a while has learned to accept people no matter what their age or sex. Fandom is one of the few places where the age of the person has little or no bearing on how their words are accepted by the participants.

But the real "problems" for a girl in fandom result from personal contact with other fans. It is then that these other fans are constantly aware of her sex, and then that she must overcome this handicap.

In local groups this is not too difficult a problem. Most people don't have a great deal of trouble accepting those they go to school with, work with, or belong to some organization with. These are familiar circumstances. When a fan sees someone at least once or twice a month, they do come to accept them as another person. There may not be too many girls at a local fanclub meeting, but the ones there are pretty well known by all the members and treated as another member.

Recently OSFA has been gaining female membership. I



have been a member for almost two years now and know most of the members pretty well. I feel that most of them think of me as Lesleigh, a particular person and member of OSFA! We discuss science fiction and other things with no end other than to have an interesting conversation with someone of similar interests.

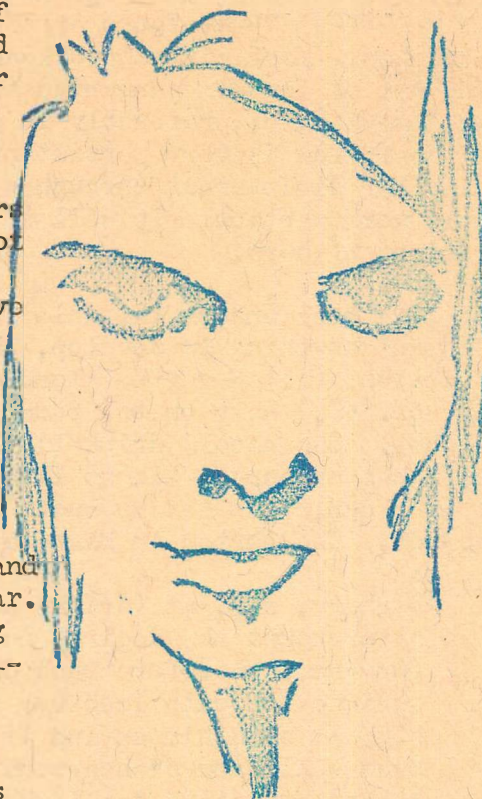
But I have seen some of the more recent female members treated with the "geez, a girl" attitude. This is not meant to reflect badly on OSFA members -- it seems a natural attitude. Some of the new female members have proven by their conversation and attitude to be very interesting, worthwhile people and are accepted as such. The others haven't caught on yet -- but maybe they don't want to.

However the real problem emerges at conventions. Cons are brief affairs, lasting only several days, where one sees lots of people they have never seen before and might never see again -- at least not for another year. People come to cons with the idea primarily of having fun. In this atmosphere, a girl might have some difficulty being recognized as a person.

The ratio of females to males at cons seems actually not too staggering, but the ratio of single femme fans to single male fans is rather large. So a femme fan is assured of a great deal of attention from fans who believe having a girl around adds to their fun at cons. And perhaps some of these fans are motivated by the thought that this is their chance to get a femme fan. But what does a girl do in such a situation?

I entered fandom at a con, Ozarkcon I, and I was practically the only single female there. I have been told that I made a bigger stir because of this than I noticed. But I do remember a number of enjoyable, intelligent conversations with people who did not seem to be at every moment aware of my sex. I was, of course, dreadfully ignorant of fandom and so was very interested in hearing about it, but I did know something about science fiction, and could talk about that. But this is perhaps not a valid example, being more in the nature of a local gathering than a convention.

I have attended several convention since then and have enjoyed every one. At each, I found my sex the object of some attention, and to be frank, I enjoyed it. But most of this attention was from people I did not know very well. People I had met by letter and fanzine before the con accepted me as a person because they already knew me as one. So, the solution as I see it, is to enjoy the anonymous attentions, if they are not too obnoxious, and seek out people I already know and probably want to spend some time with anyway, to be treated as a person.



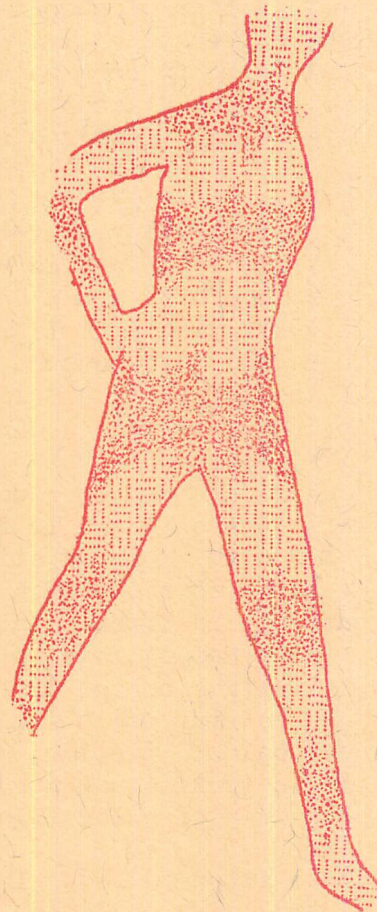
However, there is still the problem of what to do with the obnoxious ones! There are several ways of dealing with them. Most girls have learned to practice the fine art of ignoring unwanted attentions. Or a girl can always hide, preferably in a group of male BNF's. If the fellow is very persistant, a girl can always relay her disinterest through a male friend. This could work particularly well if an Elliot Shorter is a friend of hers!

But if a girl enjoys the male fan's company but does not want anything to develop, there are two courses of action. (1.) Never be alone with a fan she isn't sure of. (2.) Rely on the femme fan's friend -- Alcohol! She should drink little or nothing herself, but encourage him to live it up. After all, it is a con. But let me quote Shakespeare on the subject. The porter in Macbeth says it better than I can:

Lechery, sir, it (drink) provokes and unprovokes; it provokes the desire, but it takes away the performance: therefore much drink may be said to be an equivocator with lechery; it makes him and it mars him; it sets him on and it takes him off; it persuades him and disheartens him; makes him stand to and not stand to; in conclusion, equivocates him in a sleep, and giving him the lie, leaves him.

One last point: both Robin and Jean mentioned the advantages of being already attached to one fan in relieving somewhat this awkward situation! I think this a very valid point, in any social situation. Because of our culture and social myths, it is expected that man and woman are constantly on the hunt for one another and this is liable to have some effect on any situation where people of the opposite sex are involved! But if one or both parties are already committed in some way to some one, it relaxes the tension of the eternal prowl and allows the two to treat each other as people, sexual people surely, but none the less with the emphasis on "person" rather than on sex.

* * * * *



WITH MALICE TOWARD ALL

A COLUMN ABOUT BOOKS BY

Joe Sanders

From the Land of Fear, by Harlan Ellison. Belmont, 60¢

I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream, by Harlan Ellison. Pyramid, 60¢

An excerpt from my report on the 1958 Midwestcon: "Another person at the party was Harlan Ellison. As he was leaving, I wanted to say something nice, so I told him I liked his stories. 'Oh?' he said, 'Why?' And he walked away."

And that's Ellison. . .proud, irritating, a difficult man to like. But impossible not to notice.

From the Land of Fear, for example, comes on like the Apocalypse -- "Winner Of The Nebula & Hugo Science Fiction Awards," "Where Did Harlan Ellison Come From?" etc. Self-confident and loud. Unfortunately, most of the stories in this book are culls and juvenilia. They are taken from early Ellison collections, from second-rate magazines, and from Ellison's desk drawer. Thus, not being able to say much about the stories, Ellison and Roger Zelazny spend their introduction and forward, respectively, talking about Ellison, the Growing Young Talent. Each has some perceptive things to say on this subject, but it seems grotesquely inappropriate that "Harlan Ellison is a pilgrim, and in this book we have a chance to observe his progress." True enough, but Zelazny writes with knowledge of how far Ellison has come since most of these stories were written. And, in fact, that's almost all the pleasure a reader can draw from this book -- watching Ellison start to grope around himself as a writer and find out just what he can do. Here, naked and bloody, is the raw stuff of Ellison's later accomplishment.

Take "My Brother Paulie," one of the really flat failures. The central character is Brad, pilot of "the first ship to attempt a circumnavigation of the Moon" (p.33). Unfortunately, Brad's twin brother Paulie has stowed away on the spaceship and is

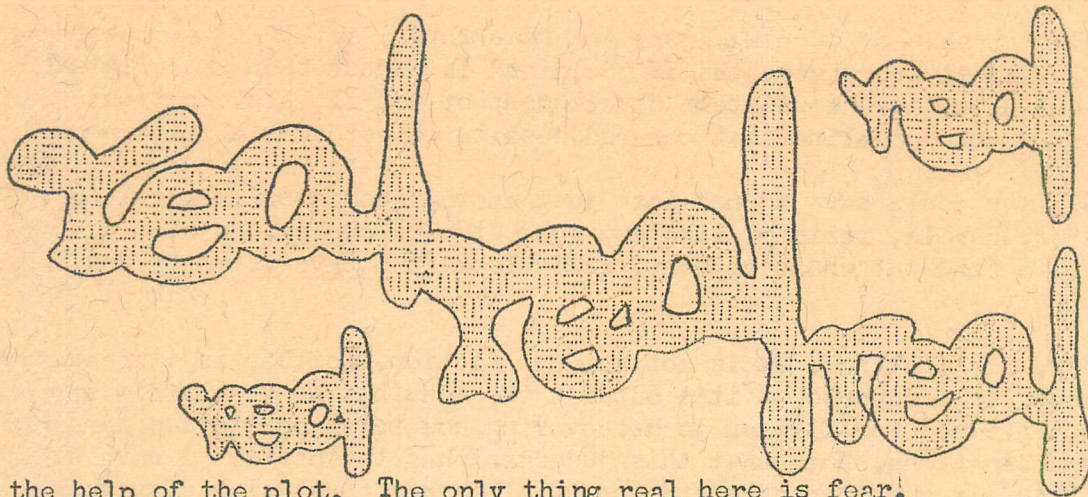
"Pilgrim"

trying to kill him in order to take his place and receive fame, fortune, and all that good stuff. So Paulie chases Brad all over the ship; Brad hides behind the fuel tanks in the rocket's third stage, while Paulie paces around on an overhead catwalk. . . . (Okay, time out: This spaceship is incredibly large and roomy; and the size limitations of space capsules must have been apparent even in 1958 when Ellison wrote the story.) Brad manages to elude his brother and maneuver the ship as he's supposed to. Then, just as Paulie is about to blast him, Brad blacks out, and when he awakens Paulie is gone. When he lands the ship successfully, Brad is led away to be deconditioned, for "Paulie" was only a deliberately induced delusion, to keep Brad too busy to go psycho: "We sent up eight ships. Each trip was a failure simply because all eight pilots went mad. Space does that to the general run of pilots, apparently" (p.40) (Second time out: Why? Why is that so? Or "apparently" so? How did our brave space scientists decide that the solution was to drive the spaceman batty before he was sent up? The man doing the explaining is a General, okay, but not even most generals are this dense.) But as the explanation is being delivered, a reporter points to the door into the control compartment of the spaceship -- melted into slag by the blaster Paulie fired at Brad.

That's the story's plot; that's what happens. As Ellison says in his introduction, it's a gimmick story, although it does have a double-twist ending (the melted door to confirm Brad's nightmare) instead of a single twist (the simple revelation that the pursuit and fight had been unreal all along.) And gimmick stories usually work only once, anyway. Once he has seen the gimmick, the reader will -- usually -- find it unrewarding to look at the story again just to see the author preparing for that final switcheroo. But "My Brother Paulie" doesn't even work the first time. I've suggested the reasons above: The action is not convincing because it takes place in an obviously unbelievable setting, and the primary gimmick is not convincing because it is too grossly contrived. Ellison doesn't even begin to offer a plausible explanation for what is done to Brad. The only reason for the creation of Paulie is that Ellison wanted to write "My Brother Paulie." Everything in this jerrybuilt plot grates, creaks, and crumbles at the slightest touch. But this criticism doesn't quite take care of everything in the story. We are left with the basic action of a man being chased by someone he knows and fears desperately -- by someone who knows him inside out, too, and who happily understands that fear. There are a few flashes of life in this level of the story, as when Ellison describes Brad's physical reactions of barely repressed panic or when Brad remembers hiding from Paulie years before, when they were children (p. 34; the feeling of momentary safety comes through nicely, along with the certainty that it won't last.)

"My Brother Paulie," then, is not much of a science fiction short or much of a gimmick story. It does create a mood, at times, but this happens in spite rather than

Flashes of life



with the help of the plot. The only thing real here is fear!

The same holds true for most of these early stories. They contain -- repeatedly -- real fear, real anger, and a real thirst for revenge. But the fictional "causes" of these feelings are only clever devices or even more stfnal cliches. Too often, what is deeply felt and vividly real is trapped in stories cut out of grey cardboard. In the magazine version of "Soldier," for example, Ellison is good at depicting the disorientation felt by Carlo, a soldier zapped back to our time by a criss-cross of raybeams on a nightmare future battlefield. In fact, Ellison's description of future warfare at the personal level is quite stunning (pp. 131-133)! The story itself is a lot less impressive. To put it bluntly, I don't think Ellison knew much more about what to do with the soldier, once he had grasped Carlo's pain and bewilderment, than the contemporary, only rudimentarily developed characters Soams and Sims do. Finally turning Carlo into a Peace lecturer is ingenious, sure, but the whole conclusion is forced and unconvincing. Ellison is not very persuasive when he tries to offer hope.

The best story in the collection is "The Time of the Eye," which was first printed in The Saint Mystery Magazine and which is not science fiction and barely, barely fantasy. I originally read it in Ellison's first, non-stf collection, Gentleman Junkie. And at that time I thought that this kind of semi-mundane story, in which a situation suddenly opens itself up to reveal ugliness and horror, fitted Ellison's talents and hangups very well. I seem to remember that several stories in that collection fitted the same pattern. I wondered, though: Would Ellison be trapped within that pattern, and would he go on trying to do something -- science fiction -- which didn't seem to give him much chance to do what he could do best?

The stories in From the Land of Fear offer few clues to help answer these questions. The most recent work in the collection is the TV script version of "Soldier." It's the second best thing in the book, with some strong reservations which I'll get to in a moment; it's also a false indication of Ellison's later growth.

My reservations about the TV "Soldier": To make the story visual, Ellison has built up a conflict between The System, which believes Carlo is an unalterably trained killer, and Kagen, a sympathetic philologist who thinks the boy is good at heart. Kagen probably never-met-a-man-he-didn't-like, or at least didn't try like blazes to understand. But I've never met a man quite like Kagen at all. I've seen him on TV in various guises -- Doc Adams on Gunsmoke, for one -- but this brand of crusty, soft-hearted intellectual seems to exist only in the minds of scriptwriters. The members of Kagen's family, into whose midst Carlo is dropped as an experiment in civilian living, are closer to good situation comedy -- Father Knows Best, for example -- but I've never met them in real life either. In short, Ellison has turned a badly flawed

story containing flashes of burning agony and fear into a skillful script for commercial TV. In almost every way, the TV "Soldier" is better than the original story -- tighter plot, more consistent development of detail, etc. But the flashes of intensity, of powerful feeling that occurred despite the story's plot, are gone.

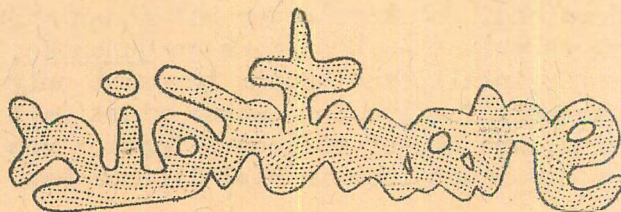
Okay, then: Ellison could have turned into just another competent woodcutter, chopping out stories, novels, scripts, like any good steady laborer. He didn't stop there, though. To find out where he went, let's look at I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream.

The title story, for instance. It is not science fiction. Neither is it fantasy. Call it "science fantasy," I suppose -- it's outside the conventions that Ellison kept tripping over earlier! For Ellison is discovering how to shape stories directly out of his own preoccupations. Note that this judgement has two parts: "I Have No Mouth And I Must Scream" is a sharper presentation of Ellison's personal vision than anything in From The Land of Fear; at the same time it's a successful story, with everything alive and working in place.

It takes place in a world created by hate. Literally.

Ellison has always seen man as a victim, ultimately at the mercy of hostile forces. Now, however, he is a good enough writer to create objects powerful enough to embody the horror he feels. AM, the super computer which -- or who -- tortures the last five humans alive, is a malevolent semi-God; Ellison makes this explicit (p. 32). AM can do almost anything to the narrator and his companions, and thus can symbolize the irresistible power that Ellison has always wanted to depict as terrifying and maiming his characters. But AM's role as symbol arises out of a concrete situation; his/its presence is immediately and vividly felt. Mood and plot are united. The story spins itself out as loosely but purposely as a nightmare, but the details are too unpleasantly solid to let the reader pass it off as simply that! Ellison writes with skill -- and nerve! He uses a title which lends itself to parody by its gushiness. He works on his audience with an all-out physical attack, keeping up the pressure until the reader would be glad to seize on any blunder to escape the world of the story; it is a harrowing experience to read. Finally, Ellison is willing to bet that he can create a convincing story told from the viewpoint of a character whose consciousness is distorted at unpredictable intervals by an all-powerful computer. And I think he wins his gamble.

Not all the stories are so successful. "Lonelyache" must have been good therapy for Ellison -- as he says in his introduction -- but it doesn't do very much for me, an outsider. "Eyes of Dust" is allegory of a much more stripped-down kind than that



Beautiful

present in THNMAIMS. Restraint is something that doesn't work too well for Ellison, however. He can't compress his feeling into the cool, innocent-surfaced form of the fable. At least not yet.

For Ellison is still traveling on. He is still learning what he can do and what he is. He comments on one change: His stories are much less hopeful now than they were a few years ago (p.21). True; at least Ellison used to wish that man could take some revenge for the injury done to him. Now he realizes that this satisfaction is not really possible. As the theme of revenge has disappeared from his work, however, Ellison has picked up something else. These new stories grapple with the knowledge that man hurts himself -- that it is the man himself that causes his pain, that he must be afraid of. In a way, of course, this idea can be seen in barely embryonic form in a story like "My Brother Paulie." It comes through much more intelligibly in later stories, though. AM is, after all, a man-made God, and Ellison even half suggests that AM acts in a human manner, true to what was implicit in his creators. In his ignorance and idolent selfishness, man creates his own hell. The idea of horror springing from within the individual was tried out in "World of the Myth," in I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream, but the story is too obviously written to try out an idea. A failure. "Delusions for a Dragon Slayer" is much better, but it goes a little flat towards the end, when Ellison takes chalk in hand and writes his message on the board, just in case any dumb slob reader has missed it! He avoids this preachiness in "Pretty Maggie Moneyeyes." But I'm not going to discuss "Pretty Maggie Moneyeyes" at all. No. Read it.

To sum up, though, I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream is a better collection than From the Land of Fear because Ellison is an older man and a better writer than he was a few years ago. What he'll be doing a few years from now, I can't begin to guess. As these two collections show, he's already gone farther than we had any right to expect. And he's done it in his own way. Ellison's way -- and this is, naturally, a provisional judgment, based on the-evidence-to-date -- is to write stories directly from his emotions. Two things seem to be happening to him: He seems to be discovering how to get his feelings to take shape in stories which really express them accurately; also, he seems to be exploring his characteristic themes, to see what his feelings really are.

And this is a beautiful thing to watch. It's beautiful to see someone who can do it. Ellison can.

* * * * *

Joe wants me to mention that in the last Starling, p. 18, paragraph 3, the line reading, "We used to think that sex was not a respectable subject; now it seems no less disreputable than a lot of other human activities." should say, ". . . it seems no more disreputable" or "no less reputable." --HL

BY JIM REUSS

Blayde!
be keen, flame bright
in jungle of moonlight and
flash!

Blayde!
does Universe revolve about your
razor edge? it must! so
guide my arm like brilliant beacon
give me strength
to drive your length
through hated foe
and then retreat encrimsoned
to jungle of moonlight

Blayde!
man is weak
and given over easily to
sniveling emotions or coaxing intellect
make me Strong!

Blayde!
the date is immaterial -- forever is it true, that
War is peace, and
Hate is love

BLAYDE!

WORDS FROM READERS

THE LETTER COLUMN

Bob Roehm, 316, E. Maple Street, Jeffersonville, Indiana 47130

Your words of wisdom about fan clubs were much appreciated. When I get to the main I.U. campus at Bloomington in '69, I am hopefully going to try to set up some sort of organization. If nothing else, it may prove that Indiana is not entirely dead, fan-wise. (But then we have the Coulsons. . .) I briefly considered a fan group here at I.U. Southeastern Campus, but discarded it when I found out that this area is practically destitute of fans!

//James Suhrer Dorf . . . attends I.U. at Bloomington, I think! Joe Sanders lives in Indianapolis, Ind. -HL//

Lesleigh's Con report was quite enjoyable. I can hardly wait until 1969 to attend the Worldcon (at St. Louis?) wherever it may be. And while I'm here, could you please give me the line-up of the Couch family? Like, who is who and all that? As sort of a neo, I am a bit confused with five of them!

//Being "sort of a neo" has nothing to do with being confused about the Couch family! There are a lot of them! Leigh and Norbert are the elders; Lesleigh, my co-editor, is the eldest daughter; Chris is the next oldest (a boy), and Mike is the youngest son. HL//

Steve Johnson, 1018 N 31 St., Corvallis, Ore. 97330

The hair-cutting incident in Fahrenheit 451 which Creath mentioned reminds me of a local one. A long haired acquaintance of mine was jumped by four big lugs (in broad daylight and in a residential section of town) and shorn of his Dylanesque curls with a seven inch butcher knife. They were stupid louts who probably didn't know any better, but the reaction of the police and some teachers did little to teach them that they had done wrong -- the incident was almost laughed off! Finally, under pressure, the police agreed to prosecute but they let the "barbers" off lamentably easy considering the charge was assault with a deadly weapon! (I think they were put

A REMINDER:

OZARKON III

The Third Annual Ozarkon will take place July 26-29 at the Ben

Franklin Motor Hotel, 825 Washington, St. Louis, Mo., 63101.

GoH: Harlan Ellison. Program will be informal, with movies,

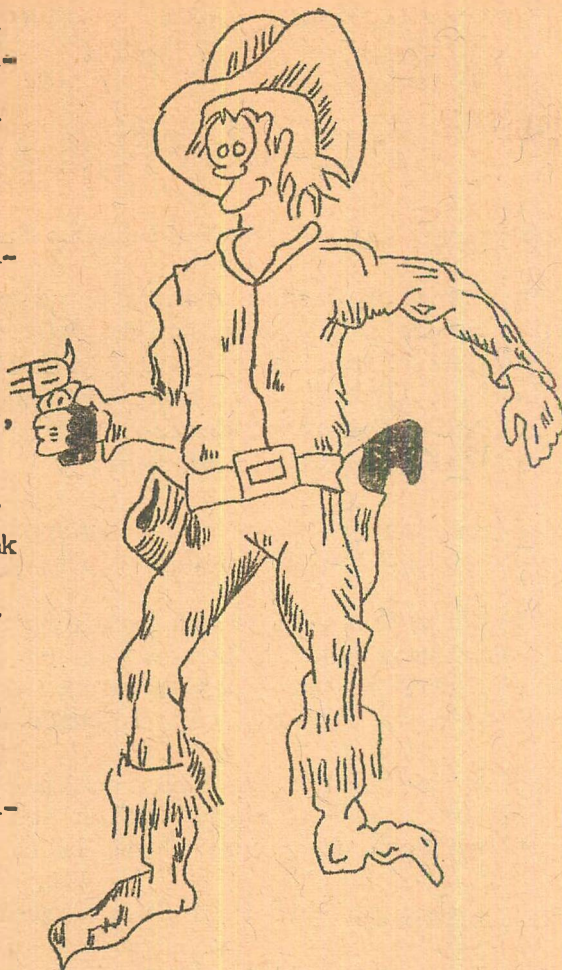
a Banquet (\$4.50), GoH speech, an auction, etc. Registration or

Information: Norbert Couch, Route 2, Box 889, Arnold, Mo. 63010.

on parole and had their drivers licenses temporarily suspended.) Some friends of mine were wondering what the reaction would have been if they had jumped some girl and cut her hair off -- they could have been up the creek permanently with assault charges.

Which brings one to the delightful subject of equality of the sexes -- a controversial subject, and the prospect of the sexes (3,4, 7?) ever being equal is certainly science-fictional. Could one call that possibility "soft" sf, as opposed to the "hard sf" written by Ray Palmer, Dick Shaver, and Gardner Fox! . !?

//That incident with your acquaintance did kind of make me mad -- they could have killed him. I think that it might not be fair to compare their actual penalty to what would have happened to them if it would have been a girl! Somehow the law still seems to believe women are to be especially protected. I think it might consider something like this as a sexual assault. I think that probably the seeming preferential treatment of women under the law results from the days when they didn't have much voice in government and when they were regarded as fit for nothing but house keeping, child bearing and maybe teaching. Women are actually only now overcoming the attitude that they are inferior! Do you remember how the civil rights law of '64 was used against people who had denied women jobs allegedly on the basis of their sex? --LMC //



When the subject of censorship comes up, I almost always think of those who "run the blockade," so to speak -- the underground publishers! The administration has been having trouble with undergrounders at the local highschool (the same happy house I once attended.) Come the 7th of October (or is it November?) a young Marxist girl decided to publish a sheet commemorating the Russian Revolution! Since she knew I had a mimeo she came to me for printing! I then suggested it be run off on some of this school district stationary I have lying about! The results were neigh disastrous -- principal almost threw her out of school! The funny thing is, this stationary is out of date by some three or four years -- the school district it was from no longer exists! Then some high school people decided to do an underground magazine The Garden of Joy Review and again I was pulled in on the mimeo side. 320 copies were printed up and readied for distribution when the administration, upon seeing a sample copy, stated it could not be passed out in school! So the staff passed it out right across the street from school. The funny part was the reaction to it -- as the administration denounced it, townspeople and college teachers wrote letters to the school and the local newspaper praising the students who put it together and congratulating the principal for having a high school full of people interested in politics at such an early age! The newspaper did a big editorial also, again praising the mag, and the administration did a prompt about face when interviewed by the press, saying that they had not been consulted about the possibility of distributing the journal in school! It's hard to convey how funny this was; you'll have to take my word for it, I guess!

//High Schools are notably administration controlled and I think you are describing some of the rebellion against this! High School kids today are as aware and responsible as the college student of 20 years ago, while their school is still with the idea that they are little better than grade school kids! They might be allowed to work on administration approved projects, but are never allowed to really think for themselves or have any real responsibilities! I wouldn't be surprised to see "student power" spreading to high schools, though the kids that really get fed up usually drop-out rather than doing anything!-LMC//

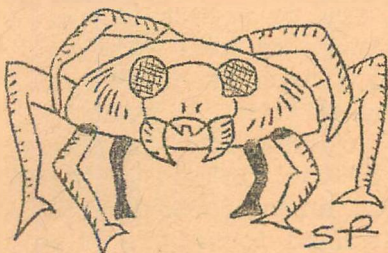
//I collaborated with some friends on an underground publication while I was in high school! While a Junior, we published a short, 4 page comic book thing -- called Ammann Comics -- Ammann being the name of a particularly disliked teacher! While a senior, we published a second issue, 24 or 25 pages long; a complicated spy-spoof, in which we had good old Joe Ammann slapping the same shit on secret agents that he regularly slapped on students in his class room! ## While we are talking about underground publishers, I want to point out that fandom is probably the largest group of underground publishers in the world! Not terribly controversial all the time, certainly, but underground just the same!-HL//

Frederick S. Clarke, 7470 Diversey, Elmwood Park, Ill. 60635

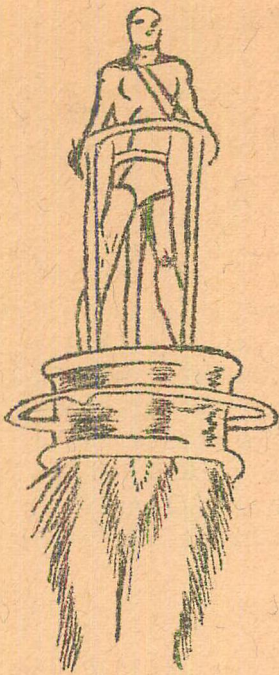
Most fans I talked to who saw Fahrenheit 451 expressed their dislike for it, most people hadn't seen it! To me the mere fact that any episode of Star Trek or anything else was nominated for the Dramatic Hugo instead of F 451 indicates that the majority of those who voted had not seen the film. It seems to me that those who vehemently dislike the film are those who avidly enjoy the writings of Ray Bradbury! I truly believe that F 451 is the finest piece of visual sf ever created. I read Bradbury's novel after seeing the film, and while I enjoyed it (in itself unusual as I do not usually like Bradbury) it seemed quite inadequate in comparison to the film. As a coherent novel Bradbury's work seems a failure, and my prime source of enjoyment in the book was his writing style, his oft touted poetic description! However Francois Truffaut's film (and I believe any measure of its success or failure owes to him) has unity as well as visual poetics whose beauty surpasses that in Bradbury's novel! Perhaps the controversy boils down only to a matter of tastes! John Boland was bored by it; I saw it four times, recorded its soundtrack and have listened to that several times! The film admittedly had little pulse-pounding action (perhaps that is what Boland looks for in his film fare -- I suggest The Dirty Dozen) however I found the excellent performances, the thrilling musical score of Bernard Herrman, the beautiful color camerawork, indeed every facet of the artistic creation going on before me to be thoroughly engrossing!

As for Star Trek, I never miss it. It is among the finest visual sf, and when you think about it, there are very few films and television programs that could be accounted "the finest." It is not consistently good, but occasionally there are real gems among the usually quite enjoyable episodes! I do feel it is above the quality of most pro-magazines!

Harry Warner, 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740



Your narrative of how you formed two fan clubs makes me feel guilty. I've been sitting here for more than a year, knowing perfectly well that there's another N3F member about 22 miles away in Chambersburg, Pa. , and I've done nothing about contacting him. Anyway, I've just written something for a fanzine about the increased importance of colleges as a recruiting ground for fandom! So your



experience at MU encourages me to believe that I'm on the right track, when I claim that campus recruitment will be the future equivalent of the prozine letter columns that used to produce fans. In your own case, the 20,000-student enrollment is nearly as large as the number of purchasers of a prozine. Of course, not all the students at your school read science fiction, but I suspect that not all prozine readers had the ability to write the English language, so those two handicaps cancel one another out. //MoSFA, the MU group, has yet to produce one person interested in general fandom, though a number are very interested in the local group. We shall see. --HL//

I enjoyed very much Lesleigh's conreport. The Nycon must be creating at least twice as many reports as any other recent worldcon, good news for a person who enjoys them and had begun to fear that the art form might be dying. The increase must be due to something more than the large attendance. Maybe the answer lies in the fact that the Nycon was different from most worldcons in many ways: the first big fight over the next worldcon site in several years, the dialogs that replaced big panels and solo speeches, the previous hassle over the Pongs, and so on.

If this theory is correct, it might be well for each worldcon committee to try deliberately to offer a couple of features not previously known, if only for the sake of the good fan press and the general air of approval that the Nycon has enjoyed despite gripes over certain episodes and the hotel facilities!

//I thought there weren't many Nycon reports. I saw more Tricon reports last year, and Nycon was almost twice as big. It rather disappointed me because I know I missed a great deal. I'd even like to know what people were there whom I missed seeing. I thought the hugeness of Nycon and the absolute impossibility of getting down everything that happened might have discouraged con reports! --LMC//

I'm delighted to find someone who approves of a television science fiction series other than Star Trek! //Joe Sanders said he liked The Invaders last issue. --HL// This leads me to continue hoping to find eventually someone who enjoys Lost In Space. I've seen it a half-dozen times, and have considered each of those episodes an excellent juvenile-market production, and I can't understand why it isn't accepted by fandom as the Heinlein juvenile novels are approved.

Robert Willingham, 21934 Millpoint Ave., Torrance, Calif. 90502

Please publish fiction in the future. A zine the size of Starling can afford to -- if a reader doesn't like fiction, he doesn't read 5% of the whole zine; if a reader likes it, he likes your zine the better. Now, as for "Time Out of Place": I wish D'Amassa would not have made his point so obviously; disguised it a little bit. He came right out and had his characters say what he, as an author, was trying to get across.

//I do publish fiction, but never more than one story per issue; and not that if I don't get something we like. One thing that bothers me a little bit -- I'm soft-hearted (and soft-headed), and dislike rejecting things. I try to reject things as kindly as possible, always with a letter of comments, explaining as well as I can why I won't be using the masterpiece in question. Even then, I usually never hear from the people again -- you people out there are much too sensitive. So be warned: I reject almost all the fiction sent me -- and not because I "don't like fiction." That just isn't true, I love fiction. It is just that most of the fiction written by amateurs isn't as good as non-fiction written by amateurs, on subjects they know something about, and have something to say about. Fiction is hard to write. In fact,

I'd go so far as to say that amateur science fiction is particularly hard to write, because it often involves situations and backgrounds and characters about which the writer really knows nothing -- it has to be all imagined, and is very often plastic and artificial as a result. I believe this is the reason fan fiction is often much better than amateur science fiction -- fan fiction draws upon backgrounds about which the writer really knows something. One more thing about fiction in Starling: when most people comment on it in LoCs, it is with a one sentence opinion, "I liked it." or "Arghh!" I always jump at the chance to publish any comment more than that. (The same thing is true of art work, which is probably even harder to comment on. Almost everyone who commented on "Time Out of Place" liked it to at least some extent, but Don -- or any of the rest of you -- certainly couldn't tell that from this letter column, I simply refuse to print comments which don't say something -- and feel it is the mark of an immature fanzine publisher when I read a letter column which does include comments of that type. It is certainly a tough life! ## If you are getting the impression that Lesleigh and I are writing most of this letter column, it is an impression you are sharing with me. I say something when I have something to say, sometimes I hardly poke my own prose in my letter column at all. You just got me started this time! --HL//

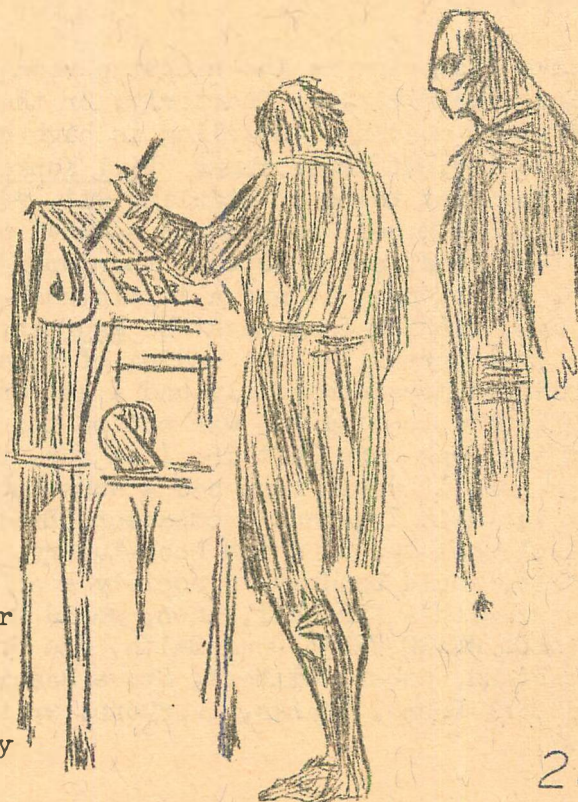
Richard Labonte, 971 Walkley Road, Ottawa 8, Ont., Canada

Your editorial or whatever on forming an sf fan group sounded oddly familiar. I formed ACUSFOOS (A Carleton University Science Fiction Organization of Sorts) in much the same way, taping up notices (hand-written notices, reading, "For people interested in Science Fiction: a new club on campus: Phone Richard, 731-5996") around the walls. Seven people phoned me, and we were on our way. Anyone who called I would arrange to meet in some stairwell on campus, and there was always the excitement of seeing what another fan actually looked like. I found they were all very personable. The same seven are in the club this year, along with 22 others! I only had 3500 people to reach, and I honestly didn't think there were 30 science fiction fans around. But there were, and we have a club, a Student Council grant of \$104.75, a 700 book library (that is, 700 pocket books mashed into one 14" by 14" by 5" locker) and weekly gatherings!

//Richard continues with comments provoked by last issue's talk of censorship://

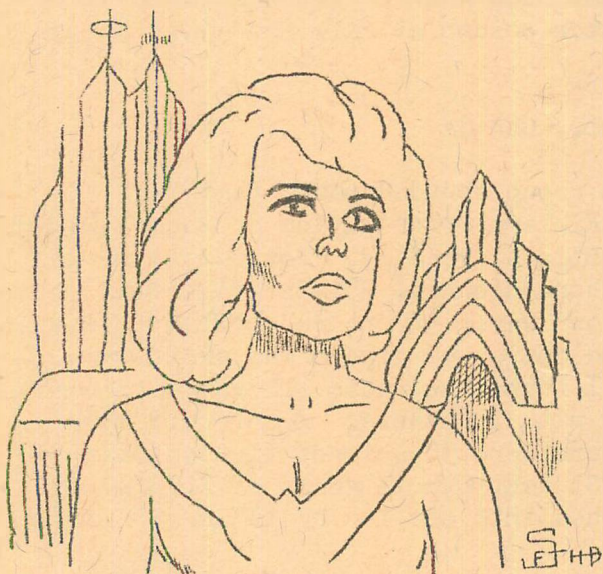
One thing which needs regulation of some kind, though, is the "science fiction" type of cartoon on TV. None of them are funny, but then I'm not in the age group the creators are aiming at. Still, they all depict aliens from space as bad'uns; the brave cartoon character always stomps them in the head or blasts at the spaceship of the alien, and drives him away. Little kids love it, of course; the small savages dote on violence. But who's to say that aliens will always be a menace? The first visitor from space to appear may well be peace-loving, friendly things. And they'll be met by cartoon-indoctrinated killers, suspicious and hating from the word go. Those cartoons need regulation, can't the aliens ever be nice?

Don D'Amassa wrote a good story in "Time Out of Place." The best of his I've read, probably because he said the same thing all the way



through. He had an idea, and he wrote a unified story around it.

SHORTER COMMENTS: Doug Lovenstein says, "The cover was beautiful -- Dick Flinchbaugh is getting to be one of the best artists in fandom." That caused Lesleigh to remind me that one night at Ray & Joyce Fisher's we had been talking about which fan artist might win a Hugo this year. We generally agreed that almost any of the better fan-artists could win a Hugo if they put their mind to it, and made it a point to contribute regularly to a number of fanzines. Flinchbaugh was mentioned! ## From Martin M. Horvat, "From what I've seen, one seldom finds a good, comfortable writer in the fanzines. . . Joe Sanders is certainly this." And later, "Lesleigh's column on Nycon 3 left me. Perhaps it went over my head because I've never attended a convention, but she seems to have a tendency for making the story of a convention the story of her activities at it. I'd prefer more concentration on what was said at the various meetings she went to. . ." Lesleigh says to tell him that at something as big as Nycon, about the only thing anyone can record is their own adventures. ##



Steve Lewis writes, on James Dorr's review, "I claim that quotes from the book have no relevance in describing the value of the movie. The movie must stand on its own." Sure, the movie must stand on its own, but why can't quotes from the book have some relevance to the movie, if, as in this case, they reflect important aspects of the movie as well as the book? Quotes from the book prove nothing, but they can illustrate. ## Jim Ashe wants me to make the left hand margins a bit wider, so Starling will go into his binder better. Yes, I should do that. Maybe next time I will. ## Gene Klein called Starling "high-brow" the last time he wrote, and I asked what he meant by that. He replies, "My definition of "high-browishness" is puzzling to say the least. In one instance, it means simply some thing that causes me to raise my eye-brows (like:

"Steve Pickering is the nicest person I've ever met.") Then, when refering to something like Riverside Quarterly, or the English New Wave, high-browism takes on a different meaning. Starling is high browish - like, I raise my eye brows, see?" Not really, but never mind. ## Bill Kunkel thought the review of F 451 by James Dorr was the best thing in Starling #11. ## Ann Chamberlain writes, "I'm enthused about Lesleigh's report on Nycon 3 -- what powers of recollection she has. . . it was almost as good, maybe better, than being there. ## Doug Smith liked the Nycon report too, but thought it was a little gosh-wowish. Come now, Doug! ## Jerry Coughdrops -- ugh, I think that might be Kaufman, says he didn't like the ending of F 451, "It was even worse that the ending of "The Birds." ## Jim Dorr (in a letter I would have published more completely had I gotten it sooner), writes: "John Boland considers Truffaut's leaving the war out of the movie a blunder. And so it is -- financially. Had the Bomb been left in, I am sure the liberal critics would have liked it better; I am sure it would have had a substantially bigger box office! Artistically, though, I agree with Truffaut's omission. Bradbury's theme, as I see it, is that anti-intellectual society, of which boob-tubery, book-burning, etc., are symptoms, is bad in itself. Would Bradbury's society really be any nicer if atomic bombs didn't exist? Ending with a fireball, then, would be a mis-emphasis." ##

WE ALSO HEARD FROM: Doug Smith, Joe B. Drapkin, John Ulrich, Frank Lunney, Paul Powesland, Robert Gilbert, Steve Rasnic, George Foster, Rick Seward, Gene Turnbull and Carl Bobke. Thanks, everyone; write.

The Castaway

No asteroid is usual. They vary in size, configuration, and composition. This one was of a fairly common size, some eighty miles in major diameter. It would have been completely without interest to space patrolman Ronald Donald 2203, except that the sensors of his patrolship had detected a trace of life there. A year before there had been a case of replacement kidneys in a wrecked cargo on another asteroid. He had not encountered cases of that sort in his three years as a patrolman, but there were rare cases of the medical unit in a space prospector's ship faithfully keeping a part of the prospector's body alive. The patrolship's computer homed in on the asteroid and set the patrolship alongside the object of interest, an obviously long ago abandoned military troop ship. For company on patrol Donald had a robot. The robot was considered to be more expendable in some circumstances, and could function in situations where he could not. It came and put him in his space suit. The ship was controlled mentally as well as having the usual manual controls. That became vital if a patrolman was disabled. Then the robot would become eyes, ears, arms and legs and hydraulic muscles. He could send the robot to investigate the old ship, but that was not the procedure for a routine investigation, so he would trek through the old ship himself and the patrolship would make a recording of the search. The robot picked him up and set him in the airlock, hesitated briefly as it was pumped down close to vacuum and not too gently set him down on the asteroid surface. There were times when he rather wished the ship was not quite so damned automatic. Mental control could mean a bit of command from the subconscious at times though. That was annoying, but then it was hardly possible to be very annoyed with one's self. The after hatch of the old ship was near. It would open into the debarkment compartment. A troopship only carried one troop. Upon arriving at the conflict the troop is duplicated as many times as the situation requires. After battle survivors are disposed of humanely as there is, of course, no available transport or supply for them. If circumstances permit, it is rarely they are not disposed of. The logistics of space warfare are harsh. The lock functioned smoothly. The debarkation compartment was in order. The helmet sensors concluded the ship's atmosphere was breathable and the faceplate went up. The odors of machinery, humans and hydroponics, the culture of gort root, confirmed the ship was lived in. Gort root is fairly tasty and completely nutritious and is the most efficient for hydroponic culture. It can be a very monotonous diet. There was an odd whistling melody coming from the main passageway. It came from the main control compartment. An old man leaned on the control console and held an instrument to his lips, making shrill notes by covering holes in the tube with his fingers. He laid it down between rows of toggles and said, "I devised it for my amusement. A primitive sort of music, but I have come to fancy it. To answer your question before you pose it, I'm not the troop."

"You are either a castaway or a prospector then."

"The former. It was a drive failure of a commercial ship while I was in passage in it to Riggi 2. There may have been other survivors, but that was far from this sector and a long time ago. I have been here a bit more than four hundred years, it does seem like half of an eternity. It is all in the log if you care to verify

that." He flipped it on for a moment to an early entry.

"A few people do live to be two hundred." The log was a permanent record, even an old man who liked to fancy himself as being impossibly ancient could not tamper with it. "My survival pod drifted for who knows how long as I lay in it with my metabolism suspended. Finally by the greatest good fortune it was collected by the weak gravity of this asteroid. The robot from this ship brought it inside and revived me. It treats me as though I was the troop and gives me the very best of care. The ship's computer can even be considerate of small things at times. Once I noted in the log that I was tired of the gort root. It has changed the taste of the gort root every three years since. In part my longevity is creditable to this ship. In a way of speaking it is entirely." A nervous attitude crept over the old man. He was short, almost bald, almost thin.

"We can leave anytime." Sometimes castaways did not want to leave, especially if they have had fairly comfortable circumstances for a long time. To change comfortable habit patterns was disquieting. At worst the old man would have to be tranquilized/anesthetized and would stay in the biological storage in the patrolship in good condition until they came to the next base: military, colonial, commercial, or independent, where he would be debarked. It was pointless to go through a long ramble to a leaving crisis. The old man, Silas Markam, by the log segment, did not reply and was obviously tense. "There is no reason now why you cannot leave."

"You have no idea of how I have anticipated this moment, yet dreaded it as. . ."

"Yes, so long and never knowing if this asteroid and ship would ever be found, such a small chance to hope on." Placate.

"You will find out for yourself anyway. I will show you. He is in the suspended metabolism storage compartment that was used for military captives."

As they walked along the main passageway the old man looked at him anxiously. The old man activated the screen on the bulkhead of the storage compartment. One cell was occupied by a young well muscled short man. "That is Silas Markam. He is still of the biological age of twenty. He has almost all of his life to live yet." They tell you at Patrol academy to expect the unexpected. It is a standing order that all duplicates are to be destroyed when their usefulness is terminated. He was the death that might come sometime that the old man anticipated. There had to be a reason for the duplication. . .

"Is the robot in working order?" asked Donald.

"It was barely so when it rescued us. Much of the ship was also in very poor repair as the robot did not function properly. I have had time to become learned and skilled. I have long ago managed to get the vital parts of the ship in functioning condition, perhaps not as the designer intended, but working dependably. I have done the most work in making the small machines to make the repairs of the robot. I had grand plans. With the robot functioning, I thought of blasting my home in the asteroid. Grand vaulted rooms and in one a melodious instrument of pipes for my music with all of the notes instead of a few shrill ones."

"As soon as you disconnect the cell I will proceed to rescue Silas Markam."

"You can do that as easily as I. My usefulness is ended. I do not fear dying, except that it is a final death. Every five years I have duplicated myself. I rigged an old blaster to kill my old self upon duplication. As you know, the

duplicator corrects minor defects such as connecting tissue that has aged a trifle. Every five years I have dragged my old remains back to the salvage. Still inevitably I have changed. In reading back over the log that is evident. The Silas Markam in the cell is a mere salesman, a very good one, but still a salesman. I have become a scientist of sorts, and certainly a technician which Silas definitely is not. I had great difficulty in the first decade with technical things. I have invented my own music and am given to philosophizing. In many duplications I have come to have cause to wonder what is the individual, my old remains have everything but life: would multiple duplicates remain mentally identical, or would differences of personality become evident. I did never dare the experiment."

"All that I am here for is to rescue Silas Markam. Since you are the ship's technician and the robot is not in working order, I think it would be a good idea if you unhooked the cell yourself." The cell moved easily on the small gravitor pallet which suspended it above the floor of the main passageway. In to the lock and the robot waiting outside took it and stowed it in the patrolship. The old man was still uncertain of his fate. "Technically your usefulness is not ended until the robot here is in perfect working order. That can take as long as you want." Donald's faceplate went down and sealed. The lock cycled. When he was back in the patrolship the robot removed the suit and stowed it. Instruction to ship computer -- "decided not to destroy the duplicate of Silas Markam. That is my final decision on that." A patrolman always has the final word with his computer.

The computer quickly judged before making a permanent record. It hesitated and gave the matter slower consideration. It was valid to give a task of repairing a military robot to a duplicate without setting a definite time for the completion of the task except for perhaps the remaining lifespan of the duplicate which did appear to be another century plus. It was not required in these circumstances, but then there was no rule or directive against the decision even though the end result was one military robot repaired in an abandoned troopship. Abandoned. Decreed not repairable by the military or left damaged as an expediency, but now it would be servicable with the robot repaired. The patrolman have mental intuition that computers lack. The patrolman 2203 had not had to count of his fingers to arrive at his decision. At the next base the message would be coordinates: _____ (with drift factors) of the asteroid, inform military to recover troop ship no. _____ in repaired condition at time two centuries hence. Time to remind patrolman of eating scheduled meal of gort root. An image fixed for moments in the patrolman's mind, a do not disturb unless emergency condition. Many of the images in the patrolman's mind were recollections of females the patrolman knew. There was an image of the duplicate watching him enter the lock, leaving -- The purpose of holding that image was known only to the patrolman. The computer had had sixty patrolmen on seven ships. Still there were things it would never understand. The computer gave a small electronic sigh for itself. The image of the duplicate would always be indeleble in the patrolman's memory, though faded from its acute clarity -- the old man trying desperately to think of some way to thank him for giving to him the rest of his lifetime, trying to thank death after it had finally come time for leaving. It was time to eat.

Pangaea

Pangaea is a column about
pop music by Hank Luttrell

you don't have to read it,
of course.

Starling, you know, doesn't really pretend to be a science fiction fanzine so much as a fanzine which simply reflects our interests. Science fiction -- and, I might add, science fiction fandom, are major interests. So is rock music. I thought I'd mention all this again for the newcomers out there, who might be somewhat surprised to see something like this in a publication they might have thought devoted solely to something else.

I'm an enthusiastic rock music fan. When I find someone who is interested, I can talk or write at great lengths about it -- I might go on about leading electric blues groups, recently formed groups, historic figures (like Jerry Lee Lewis and Elvis Presley, or like Bo Diddley or Bill Haley), about pioneers, like Bob Dylan and The Beatles, about all the various tin pan alley abortions that top-40 radio still insists upon inflicting on the public, about just about anything related to the field. I talk about rock music a lot like I talk about science fiction. I especially get stars in my eyes and start making wild expansive gestures with my hands, just as I do with any topic in which I feel a great deal of interest, when talking about some of the people currently making sounds with which I communicate.

Like Jimi Hendrix, for instance. Hendrix is an electric blues guitarist and singer. He writes most of his own material. About a year ago, a bit longer perhaps, he was backing various rhythm and blues singers here in the US. Chas Chandler, a musician who was with Eric Burdon and The Animals back when they were known as just The Animals, heard him, and thought he was great. Chandler brought Hendrix to Britain and set him up on his own. He was tremendously successful. People who really followed rock music in the US began to take notice when Eric Clapton of The Cream called Hendrix the best, most exciting guitarist he had ever heard. This impressed people, Clapton is usually considered England's best guitarist, if not the best in the world -- some prefer maybe Mike Bloomfield, once with The Paul Butterfield Blues Band and now with The Electric Flag: An American Music Band, or maybe Robbie Krieger, lead guitarist of the Doors. I think it is a pretty pointless argument, myself.

I first heard of Hendrix from Richard Gordon, a fan from Scotland -- you've seen his by-line in horo. and Odd, as well as some of the early issue of Mike Moorcock's New World's and Bonfiglioli's Science Fantasy. He told me of attending some of Hendrix's shows while going to school in Newcastle, England. As some of you may remember, Richard stayed most of the summer with my family this past summer. When he came, Jimi Hendrix's first album, then released only in England, came with him. Richard told me that Hendrix, "made James Brown sound like a classic tenor." Yes indeed. That type of statement tends to get me interested. I might add that Hendrix makes Brown look like a classic tenor. Hendrix has completely abandoned the stereotyped motown-Negro image that most Black US rock musicians have adopted: conked hair and expensive tailored clothes, stylized stage acts with dance steps. Jungle Jimi acts and looks like a wild man, I do imagine he enjoys the image. He has wild, Dylanesque hair (for a while in England he went about wearing a button which proclaimed "Dylan is God"), hard-core hippy clothes, old uniforms and beads. His stage act supports his wild man appearance. He plays his guitar with his teeth, with his feet, by smashing it against the amp or the floor, sometimes he even plays it with his hands. He makes it very obvious in his act that the guitar can appear rather phallic. He bumps and grinds. For a while he would take a cheap guitar and pour lighter fluid on it, then

ignito it. (That was after one night his guitar shorted and caught on fire. He liked it so much he made it part of his act.) Recently I understand US firemen have been down on that part of his act -- it does seem a little much.

About his sound. In the most simple possible terms, it is electric blues. It is the sort of thing that Mike Bloomfield and Eric Clapton, both white guitar players, do. Actually, Hendrix doesn't play the guitar too much better, if at all better, than either of those two gentlemen. But his material is some of the most original and exciting in the field. And I think that is great, because Hendrix is the only Black rock musician doing this kind of thing and making a name and a lot of money at it -- this despite the fact that this whole sound was invented and refined by Negroes. Not only were the blues a part of American Negro culture, but funky blues, electric blues, which is what Hendrix offers, was first presented to the public by Black musicians like Muddy Waters and Howling Wolf, and less well known Black Chicago blues bands.

Jimi Hendrix's first album was called "Are You Experienced?" -- Hendrix had formed a group in England with two fine British performers on an electric bass and drums, called the Jimi Hendrix Experience. This first album was recorded in England, and then released in the US minus two of the less impressive tracks, and two of Hendrix's popular British singles substituted. The album was tremendous. It featured what was then some of the weirdest, freakiest guitar work ever put on plastic. One track, called "Third Stone from the Sun" was pure science fiction -- you may recall my somewhat cryptic backing of that recording for the Best Dramatic Presentation Hugo. I was joking, but I really did like the track. On the whole record, not only was the guitar work brilliantly original, the lyrics were great -- can you imagine what a hybrid of James Brown and Bob Dylan and Paul Simon might write like? I can -- I suspect that he might write a whole lot like Jimi Hendrix.

Hendrix has never had a popular single in the US -- that is supposed to be necessary for a hit album. But the first Hendrix album was a best seller anyway, without the support of top-40 radio -- they wouldn't touch his singles, most of them, he didn't fit into their categories. Billboard magazine had trouble with him, too -- should they list him in Rhythm & Blues, or in the regular Rock listing? He was after all, well, colored. They list Bill Cosby's humor album's in R&B, you know, because he is a Negro.

The second album released with Hendrix's name on it wasn't really his too much. It was recorded sometime before. Hendrix went to England, all he did was play a lead guitar for another R&B singer. It isn't a good record, but maybe you might want it for the historical value, if you have more money than you know what to do with.

Jimi Hendrix's second real album is a best seller right now. He calls it "Axis: Bold as Love." The cover shows him as the center of the universe. That would seem to imply a great deal of conceit. That is the central theme of the album: a wild, uncompromising, defiant conceit. It is one of the best albums released recently, among some outstanding albums. Several of the songs were science fiction again. It is very obvious that Hendrix is One of Us, at least in so far as some of his reading habits go.



The lyrics of this album are printed on the jacket -- one of the lyrics is quoted as "Pffffffttt!! . . .Pop!! . . .Bang!! . . .Etc!!!" You should hear how that sounds on the record. There are other parts I'd like to quote at you, but they would be longer sections, and I don't really think it would be necessary, and anyway, copyright laws with songs are a bit more sticky than in other areas. Do you remember "Summer Rain" the rather lyrical, pleasant song recorded by Johnny Rivers, and popular around the start of this past school year? Hendrix wrote that. He has also written some of the most violent songs I have ever heard. Hendrix has all the precise control over the English language that I'd expect from a gifted, educated poet. Hendrix probably isn't terribly educated, but he is a gifted poet. To come on like a James Brown -- to come on in such a manner as to make James Brown look timid -- and at the same time remain a serious, talented poet really impresses me. I think Jimi Hendrix is one of the most relevant performers, artists, currently enjoying a great deal of success within the field of pop music.

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This thing may turn out to be a regular column. I sort of hope so. I'd like it to remain short, three to five pages, say. Obviously Starling doesn't come out regularly enough to provide news, but there are a few things I would like to include: I'd like readers who are interested in such things to maybe send along reports/comments on concerts in their area. I'd like to know a little bit about what to expect from various groups. I'd also be interested in short reviews of recent records. I'm also going to continue to write essays like this one, as the spirit moves me. And probably you'll be seeing comments on any concerts in this area, and on the few new records I can afford to buy. There is a really fine series of summer concerts in St. Louis coming up. I'll say something about them.

So far we've had The Cream, Steppenwolf, and The Grateful Dead -- also The New Moby Grape. Were you aware that there were two groups called Moby Grape? But I didn't make it to that last one. The Cream were unbelievable. They played three numbers together, then each did a long solo -- Clapton sounded like a whole band on his guitar. I closed my eyes at times, and had to open them and look at the stage to remind myself that it was only him playing. Bruce, who plays a 6-string bass with the group, did his solo on a mouth harp. And it was hard to believe the music he was making was coming from such a limited instrument. Ginger Baker's drum solo most impressed the audience (though I thought Clapton's solo was just as good), and it was really unbelievable. He plays rolls with his feet. He plays three and four tempos at once, controlling them precisely. His was the only solo I recognized from their records, he did a long version of "Toad" from "Fresh Cream," their first album. The version on the record is a good version, giving a good representation of what Baker can do, but it can hardly be compared with the live version that I heard.

Steppenwolf didn't come across as something really great. Their material isn't too spectacular. It was a good concert, though, and I recommend that you see them if you have a chance. They are good musicians.

I wasn't over impressed by The Grateful Dead's first album -- I think they have a second one, but I haven't heard it. But their concert was great. The first set was shorter numbers -- you know, less than a half hour long, or so. The second set they let go for the entire time. They featured two drummers and some weird instruments -- and some good musicianship and fine music. They gave a good concert, see them if you can.

Next in town, Canned Heat, Mother's of Invention, Country Joe & The Fish, maybe Big Brother and the Holding Company. And others. I'm looking forward to them.

