

STARLING

THIRTEEN



CELEBRATING
ONE HUNDRED
FANZINES



PEOPLE PUBLISH FANZINES
FOR THEMSELVES, AND
FOR THEIR READERS.

THANK YOU, READERS.



...KUR-THUNK...KUR-THUNK...KUR-THUNK...KUR-

STARLING '13

Starling is published and edited by Hank Luttrell and Lesleigh Couch. It is normally available with 25¢ (4/\$1) but this issue will cost 50¢. It is also available with fanzines in trade, or with the contribution of artwork, articles, a letter of comment, or anything else which you can convince us is worth publishing. January 1969 issue.

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CELEBRATING
ONE HUNDRED
FANZINES



+ an editorial, sort of +

I've never done a "special" issue of Starling before -- I'm not even sure when my anniversary issues should appear. But I thought it might be neat to mark my publishing over a hundred fanzines with something unusual. By the time this finally gets out, it will be about my 123rd publication. Number 100, you see, rolled around this past summer, while I was entirely too busy with other fannish and mundane projects to spend a lot of time with Starling.

* * * * *

I had to appear in court just a short time ago. I was being sued for \$10,000. It was pretty interesting. . .

I've mentioned in the column that once upon a time I worked for an interior decorator. That was the summer before last, the summer of 1967. I cleaned his show room and offices, I helped him hang pictures, I carried furniture and unpacked shipments -- and I drove his truck, I made deliveries for him. I had an accident while driving his truck -- I ran into a blue Volvo at an uncontrolled intersection (no stop signs, no traffic control whatsoever), when both of us failed to yield right of way -- mainly because neither of us saw the other until it was too late to avoid the collision. We called a cop after the accident, and no tickets were issued -- the cop figured that we were equally at fault, a judgement with which I agreed. I guess it was about half a year before I heard anything more about the incident.

As it happened, I came home from school one day -- that is, I hitch-hiked a hundred miles from Columbia, Missouri where I was going to school, to Kirkwood, where I lived -- and the first thing my parents had to tell me was that they had been served with papers announcing the suit. I was really thrilled. They weren't asking for \$10,000 then, they were only going for about \$500, I think. A court date was set. A few days before that day rolled around, we got a letter telling us that the claim had been increased a few hundred. The original claim had covered the damages to the car, this additional claim covered expenses incurred while the car was damaged. A new court date was set, but before that one rolled around, we got the most thrilling letter of all. The claim was at that point increased to \$10,000 -- quite a jump, yes indeed. The additional claim this time was because of what was described as injuries to the wife of the guy who had been driving the Volvo, she had been a passenger at the time of the accident. A new court date was set, but before it could roll around, my lawyers decided to ask for a jury trial, which meant moving the date forward once more. I said "my lawyers," but they weren't really, they were the lawyers hired by the insurance company with which the company I had been working for had a policy. Quite often, all those changes in the court dates caused me trouble: I'd hitch home from school, thinking I'd have to appear in court, only to find that at the last moment it had been postponed. Or, sometimes, I'd tell all my teachers to expect me to be among the missing, and arrange to make up tests I expected to miss, only to find myself able to show up after all. But in all the postponements mentioned above, I really don't recall too many of the details. But the last postponement I remember pretty well: I told all my teachers to expect me to be absent, and went home on the bus. When I got there, I found that the judge had forgotten to call a jury, so the trial was again, once more, (One More Time!) postponed, this time for a month. This past November was the lucky month, though, I finally wound up in Clayton, Mo., County seat of St. Louis County, Missouri, USA, looking for 101 Merrimack.

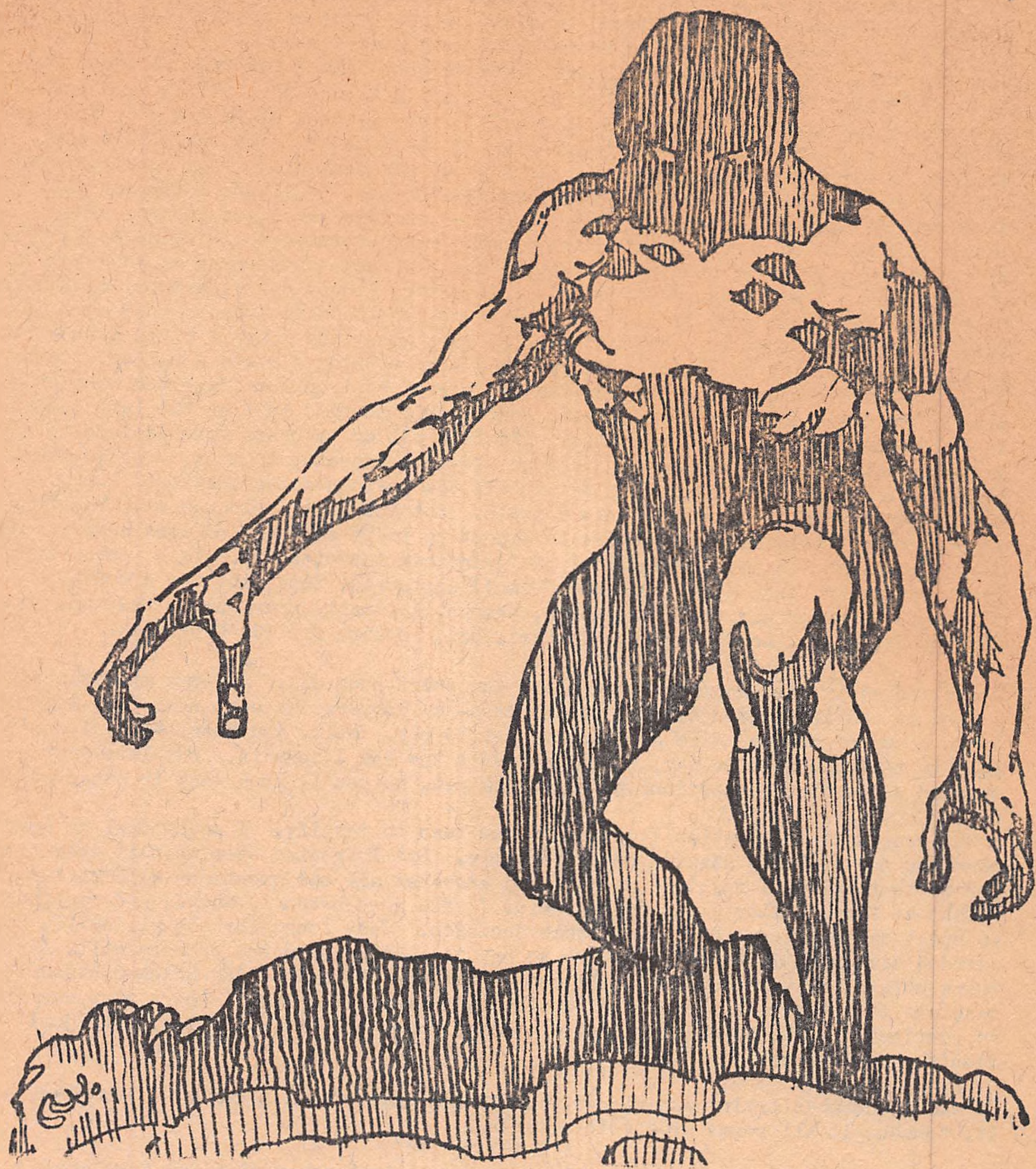
I arrived early, and was wondering where the court room was. A young man stepped up behind me and introduced himself as Mr. Hess, my lawyer. We went next door and drank a cup of coffee while he told me what to say. Well, you know, "Now, I don't want to tell you what to say, that just isn't the way I operate. But lets just go through a few of the questions he might ask you, so you'll know what to expect."

I was scared to death while I waited for my turn to testify. I could feel my heart pounding and my hands shaking uncontrollably. But I frosted over when it came time for me to testify, I regained my cool and answered all the questions without the slightest fear. After I sat down, again, I once more began to shake, and continued to until the jury came back with their decision. They found for the plaintiff, but awarded him only \$1000. I won't have to pay it -- the insurance company will. I still think both of us were equally negligent -- I think the main thing which decided the case was that their lawyer was an excellent, articulate speaker, while mine wasn't so convincing -- he said all the right things, used all the right logic, he just didn't speak as well.

It was a somewhat trying experience, pretty terrible overall, but as I look back on it, somehow it all seems pretty interesting.

* * * * *

Oh yes, by the way. . . Lesleigh and I announced our engagement a few days ago.



THE MORALITY OF THE DRAFT

8



+ an article +

There are presently in the United States some 14 million men between the ages of 18 and 26 who face the dilemma of the draft. This affects not only the individual, but also his parents, family, friends; his whole society. Our society lives with the ever-present reality of Selective Service. But today, this system, which so greatly shapes the lives of young Americans, is being seriously questioned as to its legal and moral right to exist.

The idea of conscription has always been distasteful to the American people. In the Revolutionary War, the man-poor, money-poor Congress decided to offer bounties to attract recruits rather than resorting to conscription, thought the states of Virginia and Massachusetts took this step in 1777. The question did not arise again until the War of 1812 and it did not last long enough for Congress to debate and put a conscription bill into effect.

The first real use of conscription in the United States came during the Civil War. The Confederacy found it necessary to enforce universal conscription by April 1862, but the North was more reluctant and did not pass the Enrollment Bill until March 1863. This was to be applied only to areas not providing their quotas of volunteers and it resulted in the draft of few men. In the first place, a man could hire a substitute or buy an exemption from service. Also, there was much opposition to the draft. In New York City, draft riots killed 98 federal registrars who were trying to enforce the law. The great opposition to it was partly attributable to the forceful methods of the registrars, partly to the Independent spirit of the American people.

The 20th Century has seen little opposition to a draft in wartime when the nation is in obvious need of military power. Few people objected to the Selective Service Act of May 18, 1917, in the midst of World War I. This act provided for the choosing of all eligible registrars by lot for duty. It provided exemptions for elected officials, ministers, conscientious objectors, and others decided by the President. It also established local draft boards to take care of the registrants. Under this system, 65% of those liable to service were deferred or exempted. Selective Service however was discontinued immediately after the war.

In 1940 Congress passed the Selective Training and Service Act, the United States' first peacetime conscription law. This encountered opposition in the country: Four powerful minority groups vainly opposed its passage: the church, labor, educa-

BY LESLEIGH COUCH

tion, and organized pacifism. However, opposition quieted after our entry into World War II.

The system established under this law consisted of local draft boards, appeals boards and a national organization. It also set up loosely defined classifications for all registrants from I-A to IV-F. Congress extended this act to 1947, the first postwar extension of conscription in the U.S.

The Selective Training and Service Act was discontinued on March 31, 1947, but in 1948 Congress passed the nation's second peacetime draft, designed to run two years. It was designed mainly to build up the Reserves and ran out its time so that by February of 1950 the armed forces were once again all-volunteer.

Congress felt that the Korean War necessitated another draft law and so in June, 1951 passed the Universal Military Training and Service Act. This law lengthened the required term of service from 21 to 24 months; reduced the minimum age of liability for service from 19 to 18½; reduced the mental standards of service and expanded the use of conscientious objectors in civilian work, while retaining the framework of the Selective Service system established in 1940. This law has been repeatedly extended by Congress at the urgings of the Administrations and is still in effect today with only minor changes.


All of the draft laws in our nation's history had, of course, to be made into law by the Congress. But where did Congress get the power to do so?

The Constitution lists all the powers of Congress and it has no more nor any less than there enumerated. And this is what the Constitution says about this power: "Congress shall have power...to raise and support armies, but no appropriation of money to that use shall be for a longer term than two years;" The Constitution does not indicate how this raising of armies is to be carried out when it is found to be necessary, but it does indicate that it is not to last longer than necessary.

In the Amendments, it says: "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as punishment for a crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction." (13th amendment). This suggests to some that the draft is actually unconstitutional! It might well be considered involuntary servitude, for many young men would certainly not join the armed services unless forced to by the draft. And this amendment says nothing about an exception for conscription. Is the draft then to be considered "a punishment for crime"?

Legal or not, Selective Service is with us today. It is now a complicated system that every month determines the fate of thousands of young men.

The Selective Service System is a national organization headed by Lt. Gen. Lewis B. Hershey. It is basically civilian controlled and local. The administration of



Selective Service is entrusted to some 4,061 local draft boards, who decide upon cases of all young men in their areas. The boards consist of three to five members appointed by the President on the recommendation of the governor, with a board for every population area of 100,000. These boards receive "guidelines" from the National Draft Headquarters which are handed down from the President, but the national board cannot enforce these. The local boards are almost completely autonomous.

Each month the armed forces determine how many men they need and this is divided among the draft boards according to the number of I-A's they have available. The boards take only those classified as I-A, but it is they who determine the classification of each registrant. However, there are appeal boards for those who feel their classification is unjust.


To the individual young man, the Selective Service is a system which will have a great deal to do with his life for at least 8 years. He registers on his 18th birthday and is immediately confronted with the 18 different classifications into which he might be put. These extend from I-A, immediately available for military service, to IV-F, not qualified for any military service. Generally, the local draft board will fit him into a category with little trouble. However, in the case that the individual questions the classification, the law empowers the local boards "to hear and determine, subject to the right of appeal, all questions of claims with respect to inclusion for, or exemption of deferment from training and service . . . of all individuals within the jurisdiction of such local board."

One of the most common complaints about the Selective Service System is that it is unfair. This seems to be an unavoidable evil when Selective Service is set up to choose which men will serve, and not all men need serve. In fact, only about 40% of those liable actually see service. This is due mainly to the concept of limited war with which the Cold War is being waged. The Armed Forces needs only a limited number of men.

Today the job of Selective Service is to choose this 40%. And this job falls to the local draft boards.

Who are these people with such great responsibility? They are chosen by the governor of their respective states, and he is often aware of the political consequences of putting up a controversial choice for draft board membership. So the local boards are often ". . . a cross section of uncontroversial middle and upper class Americans who have a good feeling toward the Armed Forces," according to Jacquin Sanders in the book The Draft and the Viet Nam War. They very seldom include blue collar workers, Blacks, poor people, rich people or young people. A great many people whose fate will be decided by those boards have no representation on them

The members of the draft boards receive no salary and spend hours a week deciding on classifications for the young men in their district. Actually, the senior clerk in their office makes the preliminary decision and writes her classification on each folder. The board's decision seldom differs from hers. Their decisions on specific cases may be different in different areas of the country. Since the



boards are practically autonomous, they interpret the draft laws for themselves. And often this reflects their own prejudices. One board may not recognize the need for student deferments, another may think all conscientious objectors are cowards. One board may have high physical standards, another, lower. One board may tend to over-draft, or draft more men than its quota requires, another to underdraft. A young man's fate depends as much or more on the temperament of his draft board, as on the laws.


The deferments themselves are up for much criticism. Every draft law has allowed for some deferments. When the Universal Military Training and Service Act was passed, it was meant to be temporary, to fill the immediate man power needs of the military. But it has been extended again and again and today seems to be an almost permanent feature of the US scene. The original law, which was meant only to last for two years, is not particularly fair as a permanent law. Also, because so few men actually need serve, the categories for deferment are not tightly defined and the standards are loosened or tightened as fits the draft call.

The usual types of deferments are occupational, student, hardship, and a deferment granted to those with children. Occupational deferments are granted to those whose jobs are "necessary to the nation's welfare," such as teachers, scientists, engineers and farmers. These deferments are relatively easily granted to scientists, despite the fact that young men with such jobs are very seldom irreplaceable. Also, farmers are quite easily deferred despite the food surplus. People such as artists, sociologists and political scientists are not considered to have jobs necessary to national interests. And of course it is the local draft board that determines this.

Hardship deferments are granted to those who support their family, such as boys who are the sole support of their parents. The criterion for this deferment differs from board to board. And those men who have children are deferred. It can be argued that this is simply rewarding those who marry young and immediately have children, despite the fact that too young marriages are a national problem. Men who receive these deferments generally do not see service.

The student deferment is now under the most fire. Some 1,900,000 college men now hold such deferments, and, of course, there is much to recommend delaying service for them. And the student deferment is only that; the student is still liable for service at the end of his scholastic career. However, there is much to criticize about the student deferment. Formerly anyone who had enough money to go to college could get a student deferment. Two years ago, Selective Service found it necessary to put some students in the draft pool and so established quotas; the lower half of the freshman class, the lower third of the sophmores and the lower quarter of the juniors could be re-classified I-A. Many colleges refused to give out the standings of their students on the grounds that this was an invasion of academic freedom. And class standings is surely a relative thing--it means something different in every college.

Another measure set to judge students is the Selective Service College Qualification Test. This test is very weighted toward math and science majors. Apparently being a liberal arts major is not in the national interest. And, like all machine-graded



tests, it did not consider fine degrees in answers. Again, the fate of many young men rests on an unfair test administered by Selective Service.

"The Fact of all deferments under the present system is that they are inherently unfair and compound that unfairness in practice," says Bruce K. Chapman in The Wrong Man in Uniform: Our Unfair and Obsolete Draft and How We Can Replace It.

Another problem that concerns the draft is the conscientious objector. According to the New Catholic Encyclopedia:

"A conscientious objector is one who refuses military service because of his religious beliefs or ethical convictions. . . the sincere conscientious objector courageously refuses to obey the laws (compulsory military training) because in his opinion they are unreasonable or immoral, basing his position on the principle of total non-violence, or on the conviction that all modern warfare is necessarily immoral or on the judgement that a particular military action in a given situation is unjustifiable."

Almost all US draft laws have made some provision for conscientious objectors. Respect for another's conscience is a basic premise of America, as seen in the first amendment which guarantees freedom of religion.

Today a person claiming conscientious objector status must pass rigorous examinations by his draft board and may finally be classified as such. There are two classifications; I-A-O, Conscientious objector available for noncombatant military service only, and I-D, conscientious objector available for civilian work contributing to the maintenance of the national health safety or interest. The latter class is for those whose religious beliefs include the immorality of military service. A I-A-O when drafted usually serves in positions as medic and may be found on the front lines. A I-O serves his time in a civilian job, such as working in a hospital.

The Selective Service law now exempts anyone who "...by religious training or belief is conscientiously opposed to participation in war in any form." Religious training and belief is specified to mean, "...an individual's belief in a relation to a Supreme Being involving duties superior to those arising from any human relation, but does not include essentially political, sociological or philosophic views or a merely personal moral code." Reinforcing this, the Supreme Court has said that Congress used "the expression 'Supreme Being' rather than the designation 'God'. . . so as to embrace all religions and to exclude essentially political sociological or philosophical views." However, the Supreme Court has also held that belief in a Supreme Being does not necessarily mean a conventional belief in God, but may mean any belief which occupies that place in a person's life. Recent decisions by the Supreme Court have affirmed that even a person not normally considered a member of an organized religion can prove himself to have a personal religious belief which takes that place in his life can have an objection of conscience to military service and can be given conscientious objector status. However this is not as acceptable to the local boards as being a member of an organized



anti-military training sects.

The form which Selective Service uses to determine whether or not an individual is eligible for conscientious objector status points up the unfairness of this classification.

The first question is "Do you believe in a Supreme Being?" The applicant is expected to answer yes or no to such a deep theological question, which many much more learned men are still debating.

"Describe the nature of your belief which is the basis of your claim. . .and state whether or not your belief in a Supreme Being involves duties which are superior to those arising from any human relation." For many young men, human relations are the only ones which are truly meaningful, they provide the basis for their beliefs. Says Michael Novak in Commonweal; "They find something in human relations which makes human relations superior to any other part of life. . .they think of conscience itself as a form of interpersonal relationship. . .this conscience develops in and through human relationships. It is not 'superior' to them but their heart and core. . . God is present in Human relations and is not known any other way."

The next question inquiring where one has gotten their religious instruction and who their current religious advisor is makes little sense. Many people receive religious guidance from books, friends, their own awareness. And this is not an acceptable basis for Selective Service.

In the classifications of conscientious objectors, Selective Service ignores many who do have a true objection. A country which claims to respect the individual will not recognize that he can have a legitimate objection to war outside of the framework of organized religions and accepted beliefs. Even when it does make an attempt to allow those who are not of an organized sect a chance to object on grounds of conscience, their objection must be proved to occupy the selfsame place in their life as another's more conventional beliefs. And there is no place within the present framework of the draft for those who object to a specific military action. Those who truly think the Vietnam war is immoral, but have no basis for claiming conscientious objector status which is otherwise acceptable to their draft board, must face either a draft against their conscience or jail.

Our country cannot afford to so oppress the moral beliefs of so many people. In the words of the late President John F. Kennedy, "War will exist until that distant day when the conscientious objector enjoys the same reputation and prestige that the warrior does today."

Recently a 25 year-old conscientious objector from San Francisco, Vincent O'Conner, challenged the right of Selective Service to force alternate duty on those classified I-O. Actually, this case is part of a much larger question -- is Selective Service seeking to direct the career choices of all young men in the country. A. V. Krebs, Jr., in Commonweal, says, ". . .in a legal brief by Berkely attorneys. . .O'Conner charges that Selective Service, instead of limiting its activities to procuring military man power for the U.S. Armed Forces, 'is seeking to allocate that man power that is not necessary to military duty to economic pursuits which the Selective



Service System feels are necessary in the national interest."

General Hershey himself has called deferments "the carrot that we have used to try to get individuals into occupations or professions that are seen by those in charge of government to be the necessary ones."

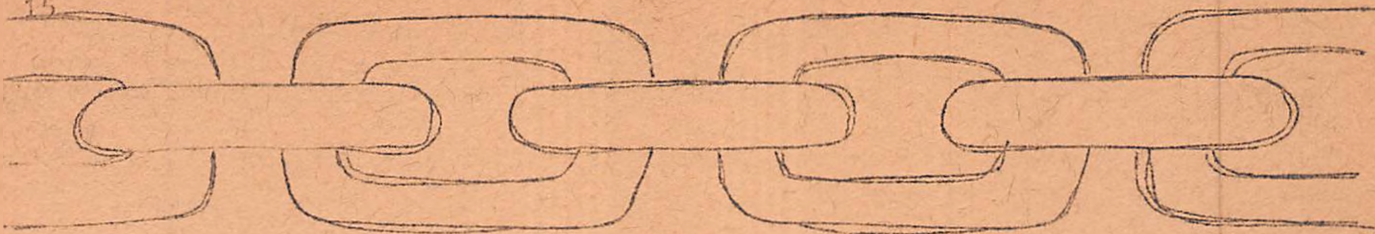
Perhaps the best illustration of this facet of Selective Service is a document which O'Conner is using in his case. It is entitled "Channeling" and is one of the documents contained in an orientation kit put out by Selective Service. It was issued in July '65 and has recently been withdrawn. The term "channeling" is defined in the document in this way: "One of the major products of the Selective Service Classification process is the channeling of manpower into many endeavors, occupations and activities that are in the national interest. . ."

This concept is not a new one in US draft laws. It made its first appearance during World War I.

None of the earlier conscription laws and practices included attempts to provide effective disposal of manpower for the purposes of war in all its sections. This feature was introduced by the industrial demands of World War I. Selective Service, after filling the cadres of armies, had to channel a necessary part of available manpower, fortunately ample, into war industries, which doubtless attracted numbers of unsuitable workers eager "to get out of the Draft." Aside from silent pressure exerted by the Act, a "work or fight" order, issued May 17, 1918 was aimed at employees in certain nonessential occupations. . . By this order deferred registrants in Classes I to IV who were idle or in nonessential jobs were threatened with loss of preferred status unless they found war-essential employment." -- Encyclopedia Britanica

Channeling was also used during the Second World War. But today it is widely applied by Selective Service, which sees every young man as a national asset to be guided into the proper place. The document "Channeling" further explains this function of Selective Service:

The meaning of the word "service" with its former restricted application to the armed forces, is certain to become widened much more in the future. This brings with it the ever increasing problem of how to control effectively the service of individuals who are not in the armed services. . . It is in this atmosphere that the young man registers at age 18 and pressure begins to force his choice. He does not have the inhibitions that a philosophy of universal service in uniform would engender. The door is open for him as a student if capable in skill badly needed by his nation. He has many choices and is prodded to make a decision. . . Throughout his career as a student, the pressure -- the threat of loss of deferment -- continues. It continues with equal intensity after graduation. His local board requires periodic reports to find out what he is up to. He is ~~impelled~~ impelled to pursue his skill rather than to embark upon less important enterprise and is encouraged to apply his skill in an essential activity in the national interest. The loss of deferred status is the consequence for the individual who has acquired the skill and either does not use it or uses it in a nonessential activity. . . From the individual's viewpoint, he is standing in a room which has been made uncomfortably warm. Several doors are open, but they all lead to various forms of recognized,



patriotic service to the Nation. Some accept the alternatives gladly -- some with reluctance. The consequence is approximately the same.

The present Selective Service law has been in effect for over 15 years and seems a fixture in American society. A generation has grown up in this atmosphere of fear of the draft, which is maintained by the questionable policies of the Cold War and the urgings of older Americans. But today many young Americans are questioning this method of obtaining young men for service. They question its legality under the constitution and they question its morality in light of Christian, American and philosophic ideals.

Jacquín Sanders, in The Draft and the Viet Nam War, says:

The basic doubts of this school of thought go something like this: "Does the Federal Government have a right to commandeer my person; to limit drastically and over an extended period of time my freedom of movement; to put my person through a variety of uncongenial and unfamiliar activities in order to implant techniques and skills I do not want; to limit my diet, my wearing apparel, even my hair style; and finally to transport and forcibly keep my person in an area of great physical danger.

Even accepting that everyone has a duty to their country and this may require military service in time of danger, can the present system be justified? We are not at war, Congress has not declared war on any other nation. Many feel the military actions we are currently involved in are in themselves immoral, and yet they may be forced to take part in them.

Most of all, can anyone in this country assume the responsibility for choosing which of our young men will face death and which will not? And who is he who has the power and rightful authority to regulate the lives of all young American men and indirectly all Americans. The belief that every young man is a tool to be forced into the position which best suits "national interests" can not be justified to one who believes in the personal integrity of an individual and the freedom to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," upon which our system is based.

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(Continued on page 51)

BY DOC CLARK

& Linda Mason

+ a fan history +



After much prompting and too, too many requests, I have decided to offer some remembrances of past St. Louis fandom. I shall go back some twenty years to when I was just an irksome child in the middle grades of school reading science fiction and feeling ostracized from hormonal people because of it. The dates and events and spelling of names is

only a tenuous memory at best as I kept no records, so kindly bear with me.

It was with great joy at finding another "odd" one wherein I met one Steve Burkienheim at the local book store buying one of those terrible books which everyone knows you had to tear the cover off of to get home safe with. Within a couple of months by spying on this book rack I caught two other students also buying said books, namely, Joey Coletta and Busckley Smith and we had a club on the way. We named it the Lemay Science Fiction Club and Smith whom we called "Pushy" as none could say his name showed us letters from another fan way out in Hazelwood, Missouri. This most rare of creatures name of Ed Cooke told us and sent us addresses of other fans so we organized our club lest it be too late to get into this strange new and wonderful world.

For several years we corresponded locally and with a few fans about the country all of whose names fail me except for someone named Rupt, Bant of Raft and an Emerson Gray up in Milwaukee. Came the fifties and I met a senior named Bob Boberts who joined our group and told us of a man he knew who read the stuff. We knew he was lying as anyone over 25 was too, too ancient to be reading that "Buck Rogers" stuff. On a dare we all bicycled over to this man's house where he was in the back yard working on the green monster, which he thought was a car. It was a heavy sickly yellowish peagreen hunk of iron and noise that he claimed was a Packard whatever that was.

He gave us all pop and took us into his basement. We entered a strange new world of filing cases, fan correspondence and weirdest of all; row upon row of science fiction books--with all of the covers on. We sat and listened for hours to Joe telling us of the various stories, authors, editors and fans he knew. He had us hooked and we spent every weekend he was home over there in his basement listening to him and reading his precious books. I can still remember his wife letting us in and yelling downstairs to Tolliver; "Hey Joe, those crazy kids are here for some more of your bull." She never approved but was very friendly to us as it kept her husband home at nights.

There came the summer and the trip I made with Joe, Bob Boberts and Ed Cooke to some house somewhere in Illinois. Joe said we were going to a convention and there were some fifteen to twenty people there. I remember meeting a Doc Smith there, but I spent every minute of the trip going, coming back and there reading those old and precious magazines with covers intact. They all recog-



nized Joe and his green monster and were very kind to the rest of us. It bugs me very much these days that I can't recall anyone there and have always been hoping some of them would turn up and mention it or I would overhear someone who was there talking about it and get more particulars. I have been attending conventions off and on ever since with and without a beard, but always with a camera snapping pictures.

I have since spent years in Chicago, in Brooklyn, in the Army re-visiting St. Louis and the afore mentioned towns getting in and out of various local groups where ever I was. On my ultimate return to St. Louis from the army and Chicago I tried to revive a St. Louis fandom to no avail. Only Larry Touzinsky, another fan, the professional writer, Thomas N. Scortia, and Steve Bakely were around. Scortia got married and left, the other two got married and dropped fandom, so I was the lone survivor. I maintained my contacts, all allegiance to Chicago considering myself an isolated member of that crew until two years ago when I joined OSFA now in existence.

Of the three groups of fans, the Lemay club, the Chicago group and the Ozark SF Association I prefer the latter now because of its size and can only hope it creates the lasting friendships of Chicago. If any of you out there know of any of these long lost fan friends of mine I would very much appreciate hearing from you. With your help I would like to trace more accurately back into St. Louis fandom. I thank you and shall go out into the foggy damp hinterlands of fandom in search of the Green Monster.

END

* * * * *

(Continued from page 68)

and there's some extraordinarily good stuff on this album.

John Boston, 819 Gaffield Place, Evanston, Ill. 60201

I found your comments on Hendrix diverting, particularly your praise for his lyrics. I understand that they are never the same from concert to concert -- he can't remember them and just sings whatever comes to mind.

END



DUMB BELLE AND MECHANIC AL

fiction by

LEO P. KELLEY

It had been Lillian's idea to make the trip a leisurely one, not because she was pregnant but because they were making a new start, beginning a new phase of their life together.

"Let's make it a holiday excursion," she had suggested to Jerry. "You don't have to be there till Monday and we could see a bit of the country along the way. We could stop off at motels--."

He had agreed with alacrity and a wry attempt at humor. "Sort of the calm before the storm, you mean," he had said.

"Oh, don't be silly," Lillian had replied. "A baby's not all that trouble. Neither is being a father. You'll see."

Now, having stopped at motels and detoured to visit lost caves and roadside zoos and even an exhibit of authentic Indian relics, they were within a mile of their destination, their new home.

"Look," Lillian cried, directing her husband's gaze to a neat white sign beside the road which read:

Welcome to Briar Run
Population 1100

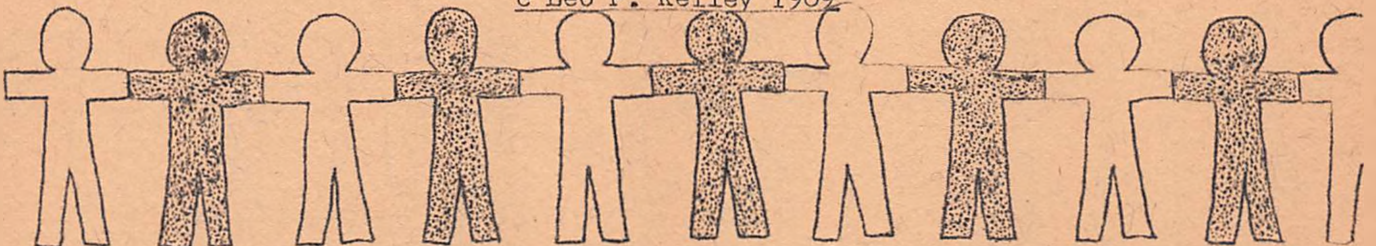
"They'll have to change that sign," Jerry commented matter-of-factly.

"Change it? Why?"

Pretty soon Briar Run'll have a population of 1102. 1103," he amended hastily with a fond glance at Lillian and a brief smile.

The house was newly constructed; it possessed every modern convenience. A pastel foodfix had been built into the kitchen wall just above the table in the

c Leo P. Kelley 1969



breakfast nook. There was a dishwasher and a pneumatic disposal unit in the kitchen and a sani-shower in the bathroom. Throughout the house the air was conditioned for year round comfort. There was a dining room, living room, master bedroom and two smaller bedrooms, one of which would soon be transformed into a nursery. Lillian happily inspected every room, every alcove, closet and the wide expanse of the lot on which the house was situated. Jerry, trailing in her wake, basked in the warmth of her delight and her excited cries of: "Look, Jerry, there in the honeysuckle, a hummingbird!" and "Oh, that wonderful weeping willow!"

It was a busy day and a thrilling one consisting of unpacking, placing and then replacing. When evening came they both readily admitted to being tired.

Lillian commented, "Stan was a dear, supervising the movers so that everything was here and waiting when we arrived."

They were sitting in front of the video view which spanned an entire wall.

"A dear or not, he's getting paid for it," Jerry said. "It's part of his job, easing the settlement of the relocated personnel of Levens Research, Inc. He's public relations."

"I know but he certainly was a big help," Lillian insisted.

Jerry nodded absently as he watched the three dimensional images cavort across the glowing screen of the video view. Pap for the populace, he thought but he continued watching. Funny how things become a habit, he mused. Like video viewing.

"I wonder if she'll like it here," Lillian speculated.

"Who?"

"Belle, of course."

"Good old D. B.," Jerry said. "She'd like it anywhere."

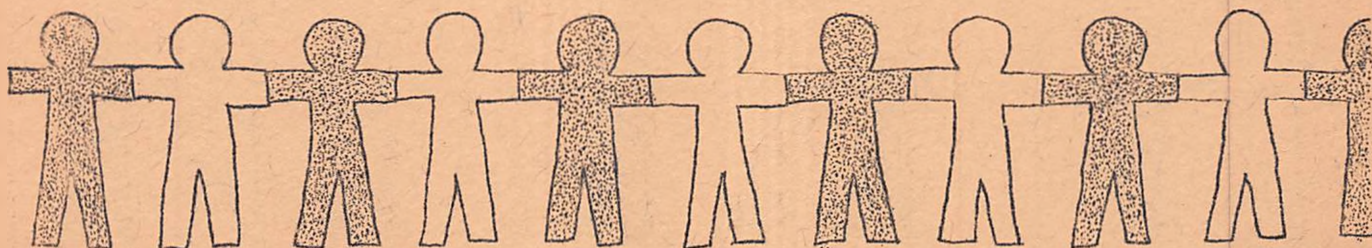
"I still don't think that name's so all-fired funny," Lillian remarked with a slight edge to her voice.

"What? Dumb Belle?"

"Yes."

He grinned. "Why, it'd a perfect name for a robot. Or homemaker as they call them in the ads these days. Wowie!" he yelled. "That reminds me!"

"What reminds you?" Lillian asked, puzzled.



"I bought you a housewarming gift. No, sit still. I'll get it. I told Sean to have it put in the basement." He sprinted from the room.

Lillian waited contentedly as the evening matured into night, listening to the sounds of hammering rising from the basement. She recalled noticing the six-foot tall crate down there. She remembered meaning to ask Jerry about it. A housewarming gift, he had said. I do, she thought, I love him.

Jerry returned less than fifteen minutes later. He crossed to Lillian, leaned down and kissed her on the forehead.

"Ready?" he asked.

She smiled up at him and nodded.

"Close your eyes. I'll count to three."

She obeyed.

He counted. "--two, three!" He clapped his hands and she opened her eyes.

Immaculately attired as a butler, it stood three feet away from her.

"Jerry!" she cried, delighted.

"I figured you'd be needing more help around the house with the baby coming pretty soon," he explained.

"But we can't afford another homemaker," she protested weakly.

"That's part of the story," he declared cryptically. He told her then about the substantial raise and his promotion from technician to laboratory supervisor. It wasn't just another transfer this time, he pointed out. It looked like a permanent relocation. No more moving around, he predicted. And one plus one, he quipped, would soon equal three. Soon they'd be a settled family.

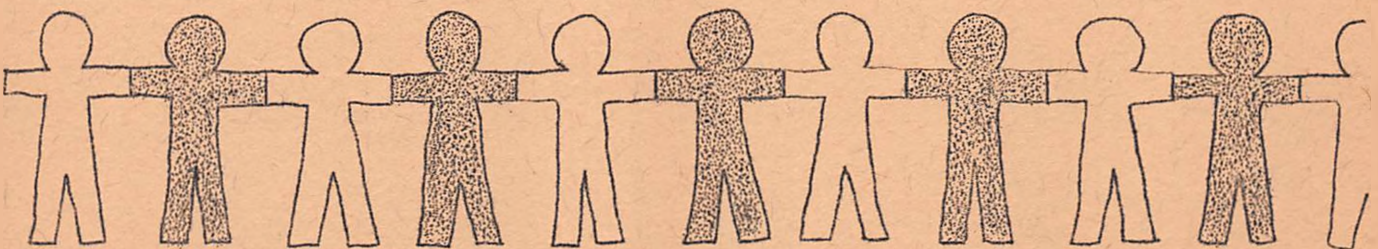
"It's wonderful," Lillian said. "But in my knees--jelly."

"I felt that way at first too," he said, ruffling her feathery hair. "Hey," he cried. "I haven't told you the best part yet. I thought of a name for him."

"Oh, no," Lillian sighed in mock chagrin, clapping a hand to her forehead.

"Al," said Jerry. "Mechanic Al!" he declared triumphantly.

It took her only seconds to get it. She giggled. "You're impossible," she chided.



21 "You'll have to admit it sounds better than LX 471. More homey kind of."

"Much more homey," she agreed.

"And look," he said. "Just take a look at this constuction."

"He looks almost human," Lillian admitted with awe.

"They call it flexiflesh. It's tougher than steel and more pliable than silk. He's got printed circuits and the most complete and most complex programming possible."

"Will the marvels of our twenty-first century never cease?" Lillian intoned rhetorically. "I'm at a loss for words."

"I'm not," Jerry said. "I love you," he whispered. "Al," he called, "mix us a martini. Very dry. We're about to celebrate."

"At once, sir." Al moved gracefully from the room. His departure was followed by the festive sound of ice clinking in the kitchen.

Belle proved relatively clumsy and slow compared to Al. But then she was one of the earliest models designed by Servicer, Inc., the pioneer manufacturer of homehelpers. She had broken down twice in recent years and lately her welded aluminum limbs did not always respond as rapidly as they should to the electrical discharges directing them. But she had given reliable service for many years, ever since Lillian had been a little girl when Belle still belonged to Lillian's mother. Then she had been only Model AC 14 until Lillian inherited her upon her marriage to Jerry and he had facetiously rechristened her Dumb Belle.

After the martini and before dinner that night, Jerry made it clear to Belle that Al would share her work. He accomplished this by the simple expedient of making minor alterations in the decision-making apparatus concealed in the concave cavity located beneath Belle's right shoulder.

Everything went smoothly. Belle served the meal prepared by the foodfix; Al cleared away. Al carried in the after dinner brandy. Belle poured. "Excuse me," she said meekly when she accidentally stepped into Al's path. He smiled and murmured pleasantly, "Not at all. No matter."

Later, Jerry switched on the phoniset and the house became alive with music.

"May I have this dance, sleepy beauty?" he asked Lillian who was lying stretched out on the sofa, her shoes abandoned beside it.

Lillian made a face at him. "I'm just too weary," she stated with a theatrical



gesture, allowing her hand to droop from a limp wrist,

Belle entered the room and the idea popped into Jerry's head. "Belle," he said striding toward her, "We're going to dance!"

"With pleasure sir," she responded, raising her arms to him. Lillian laughed lightly as she watched them whirl about the room, "Don't let Al catch you," she warned Jerry. "He'll be jealous."

During a pause in the music, Jerry summoned Al. "Sir?" Al's neutral voice answered as he appeared in the doorway.

"The young lady here," Jerry said, indicating Belle, "is dying to dance." Al moved to Belle, took her in his arms, and they waltzed around the room as the music swelled and receded melodically.

Jerry finally succeeded in persuading Lillian to dance with him and, as they moved around the room, her head resting against his shoulder, she was thrilled to feel their child move within her.

Suddenly a new sound blended with the music from the phoniset. The doorcom. "I'll get it Belle," Lillian called. She opened the door to admit a tiny woman who looked to be at least seventy years old, probably nearer eighty if one could judge by the raised rivers of veins on the backs of her small hands, her white hair and the waxen skin of her face.

"Good evening," the visitor greeted Lillian, smiling pleasantly. "I'm Miss Vinnie May Marshall, your neighbor from down the block. I'm not interrupting anything, am I? I thought I should call and welcome you to Bfiar Run."

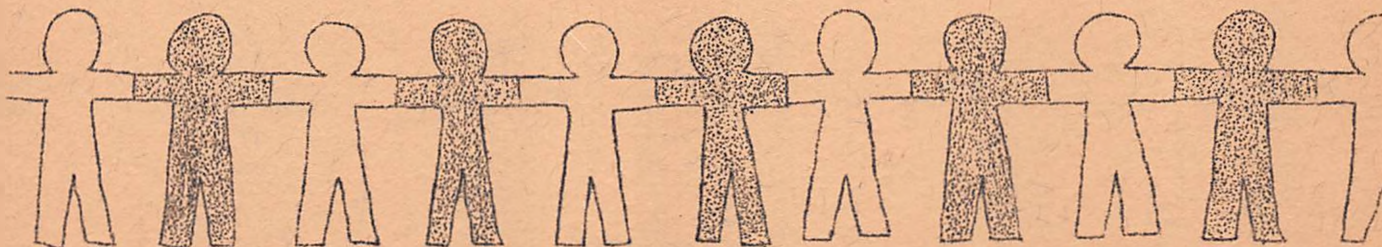
"I'm Mrs. Carson," Lillian said. "Do come in. We were just having a dance contest or something," she offered apologetically as Belle and Al glided by. "Bell Al. That will do. Jerry," she called, "we have a guest. Please turn off the phoniset, will you?" She surreptitiously slipped into her shoes.

When the three of them were seated near the broad picture window, Vinnie May continued to exclaim with windy gusts of enthusiasm about the house. "Such a lovely little home, you have, my dear. Organdy curtains! Why I do believe I haven't seen organdy curtains in--in--too many years," she concluded with a delicate simper. "Everything's plastic these days," she observed, wrinkling her nose.

"We love it," Lillian said, surveying the room.

With a significant glance at Lillian's heaviness, Vinnie May remarked, "You're quite far along, aren't you, dear?"

"The baby's due in less than a month," Lillian said.



²³
"Our first," Jerry volunteered awkwardly.

"Would you like some tea, Miss Marshall?" Lillian asked. "We have some little cakes---."

Vinnie May smiled her acceptance of Lillian's offer. Belle was instructed to prepare and serve the tea and she did so moments later. Lillian lifted the tea cozy. Belle poured.

"All those nasty new pills instead of good solid food," exclaimed Vinnie May, shuddering. "Repulsive! But this," she said, indicating the old-fashioned silver tea service with a sweep of her arm, "this is so pleasant. The old ways, I believe, are truly the best ways in the long run. Don't you think so, Mr. Carson?"

"I guess so," Jerry replied. "Some of them at any rate."

"Daddy used to say that knowing how to live properly was all that really matter. Graciousness and good taste, he would tell us. They count. We had a wonderful old manor out on Forked Road but when times got bad Daddy had to sell it. We had such marvelous servants. Just like that one who brought the tea. Well, not exactly like that one," Vinnie May rattled on, "ours were real people. What do you call it, dear?"

"It?" asked Lillian, confused. "Oh, you mean Belle. We call her Belle. She's like one of the family."

"Isn't that nice?" Belle. Well times change, don't they?"

Later, when Lillian and Jerry escorted Vinnie May to the door, they passed Al who was clearing the table. Vinnie May's glance darted birdlike from Al to Lillian and then across to where Belle was removing the tea service. "They certainly are a help," Lillian offered, trying to fill the unaccountable chasm in the conversation. Then, "Belle, help Al when you've finished there."

"Yes ma'am," Belle said and hastened past them to Al's side. Vinnie May watched Al touch Belle's arm gently, gesture toward the dirty dishes rising on the sideboard, after which they worked together deftly and quietly, murmuring among themselves.

Following further pleasantries and final good nights, Vinnie May swept through the door and, turning, waved fragile lace-gloved fingers in farewell.

It was Stan Brent who first told Jerry and Lillian about the rumors. They had just finished dinner one night a week after Vinnie May's visit and were sitting on the patio over coffee. Lillian had just thanked Stan again for what she called his superb handling of the movers and Jerry had again mockingly devalued



Stan's assistance, pointing out that it was his job and nothing more. Even ²⁴ Stan refused to accept the credit due him.

"It was, as your husband points out, just part of my job," Stan admitted to Lillian.

"Well, it was wonderful all the same," Lillian said.

"Briar Run's a nice town," Stan said, self-consciously nonchalant. "Nice people. A nice place to visit and a wonderful place to live."

"You sound like a representative of the Briar Run Chamber of Commerce," said Jerry.

"Of course," Stan continued, "they have their own wayoff doing things and their own way of thinking about things. No place is perfect. But all in all the town's pretty dedent, if a bit backward. Comes from being secluded out here in the hills way off the main drag."

Jerry said, "I guess that's one of the reasons the oompany picked this place. It's remote. A good place to conduct classified research."

"There is one thing, however," Stan said uneasily.

"One thing?" Lillian asked.

"Well, you know Briar Run bats zero when it comes to big city sophistication."

"Will you come out with it, Stan?" Lillian demanded. "What are you getting at."

"Well, it's nothing really. Nothing important, I suppose. It's just that---."

"Oh, for crying out loud, Stanley buddy!" muttered Jerry.

"All right. There's been talk. Talk about your homhelpers."

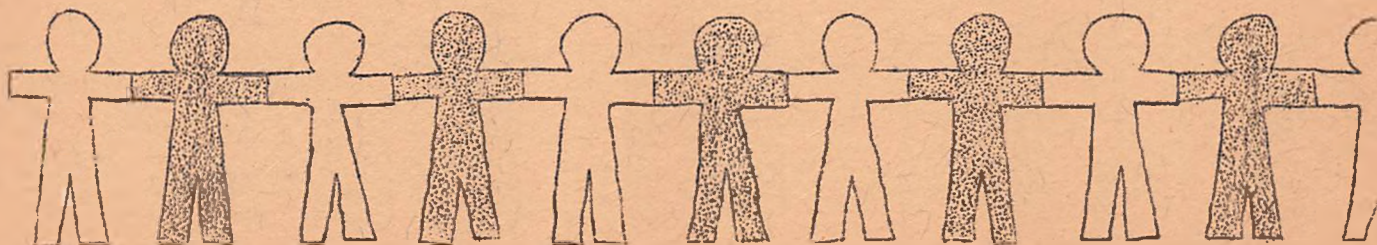
Jerry lit a cigarette, his eyes narrowing, studying his friend.

"No, I'm serious," Stan insisted, seeing their expressions. "People are saying it's not right the way you let them behave with each other. Now we all know that's patently ridiculous but---." His voice trailed off into silence.

Slowly understanding came to Lillian. "Miss Vinnie May Marshall!"

Stan nodded assant. "She probably started it. You know her type; the old school from the word standstill."

Lillian explained to a bewildered Jerry. "Why that's absurd!" he bellowed, amazed.



A week later Jerry was forced to revise his opinion. He did so on the day he discovered the effigy of Belle hanging from one of the trees beside the patio. Al was busily removing it when he came out of the house. "What would you have me do with this, Mr. Carson?" Al asked placidly.

For a moment anger strangled Jerry's attempts at speech. Then he gestured abruptly. "Throw it in the disposal," he ordered.

That evening a committee of prominent citizens called on the Carsons. Lillian, when she saw them coming, had the foresight to instruct Belle to go upstairs and remain there until she was sent for. Doctor Cardozier was present. So were several local merchants. Jesse Stapleton, Briar Run's chief of police, stood beside Miss Vinnie May Marshall.

"It's not that we have anything against her--it--personally, you understand, Mr. Carson," began Dr. Cardozier who seemed to be the head of the delegation. "Sarah--Mrs. Cardozier--has a homemaker of her own. It's just that--."

"It's just that it's not right," declared Jesse Stapleton with a thinly disguised belch.

"Not proper," proclaimed Miss Vinnie Mat Marshall. "The way the two of them--dancing together--," she stammered righteously.

"You should have gotten models that matched," suggested a pale, nervous merchant.

"Now just one little minute here," Jerry protested hotly.

More calmly Lillian said, "I don't know what you all are talking about. Miss Marshall, surely you realize that they are merely machines."

Vinnie May sniffed disdainfully. "All the same," she sputtered. She turned watery eyes on Doctor Cardozier, soliciting support.

"We do understand that perfectly, Mrs. Carson," Dr. Cardozier told Lillian. He seemed more than a little embarrassed and tried to compensate for it by attempting to sound dignified.

"Nevertheless--" prompted Lillian, struggling to stifle the feeling of disgust rising in her.

"We don't fight progress here, Mrs. Carson," Jesse Stapleton volunteered. "But we got us a keen sense of what's seemly. What it all boils down to is this. We got our traditions to think of."

"But, Mr. Stapleton," Jerry protested, straining to keep his voice level, "this is the twenty-first century!"



26

"It is that, sure enough, Carson," snapped Stapleton. "We take kindly to most of what its got to offer--homehelpers and like that--but we don't aim to stand by and see our way of life here in Briar Run tramped on by newcomers who don't have no respect for our way of doing things."

"Why, think of the children!" spat Vinnie May waspishly. "What if they saw those two carryin' on just as bold as you please with never a thought to--."

"Miss Marshall," interrupted Jerry, his voice ice. "Call it carrying on if you will. Belle and Al are programmed for service. Part of that programming is designed to insure cooperation. It's not carrying on; it's cooperation!" he concluded furiously.

"I think you'd all better leave now," Lillian said steadily.

"Some of the rougher elements in town might very well decide to take matters into their own hands," Dr. Cardozier hinted slyly before hurrying down the path from the Carson house.

Shaking a bony finger, Jesse Stapleton snarled, "Remember, we warned you!"

They talked about it throughout a sleepless night. There was the baby to consider. Jerry's job. Both of them remembered too well the ugly effigy of Belle. And Cardozier's veiled threats.

As daylight filtered through the venetian blinds, Jerry got out of bed, slipped into his bathrobe and started for the door of the bedroom. Lillian's voice stopped him.

"I'm going to have a baby," she said desolately, "In a world full of Miss Vinnie May Marshalls, Dr. Cardoziers and Jesse Stapletons."

"And full of Lillians," Jerry reminded her gently. "Look honey," he said softly, returning to sit beside her on the bed, "the laws are all on the books, have been for years--."

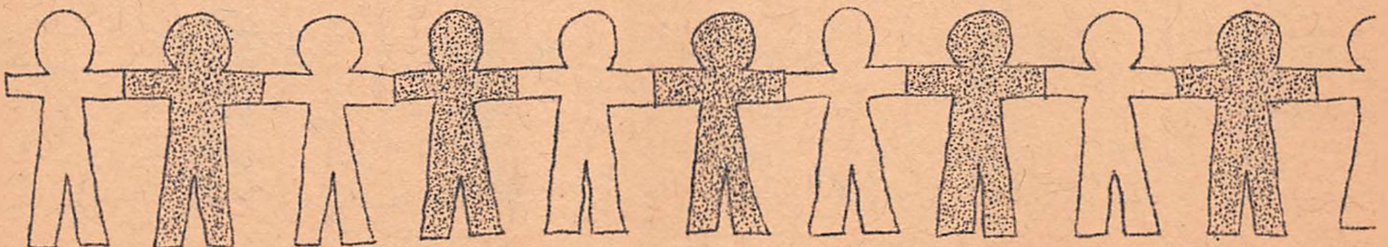
"So. Meanwhile?"

He touched her cheek, dismayed to find it wet. "Lillian, we know now that you can't legislate love."

"Oh Jerry," she whimpered. "I'm afraid."

He was silent. He could think of nothing to say.

She spoke again and the hysteria fraying her voice suddenly stirred fear within him too. "The thing is," she said, "the really funny thing is, they're just machines!"



He kissed her and left the room. In the kitchen he discovered Belle and Al preparing breakfast in the first rays of the rising sun.

"Belle, please come down to the basement," Jerry requested.

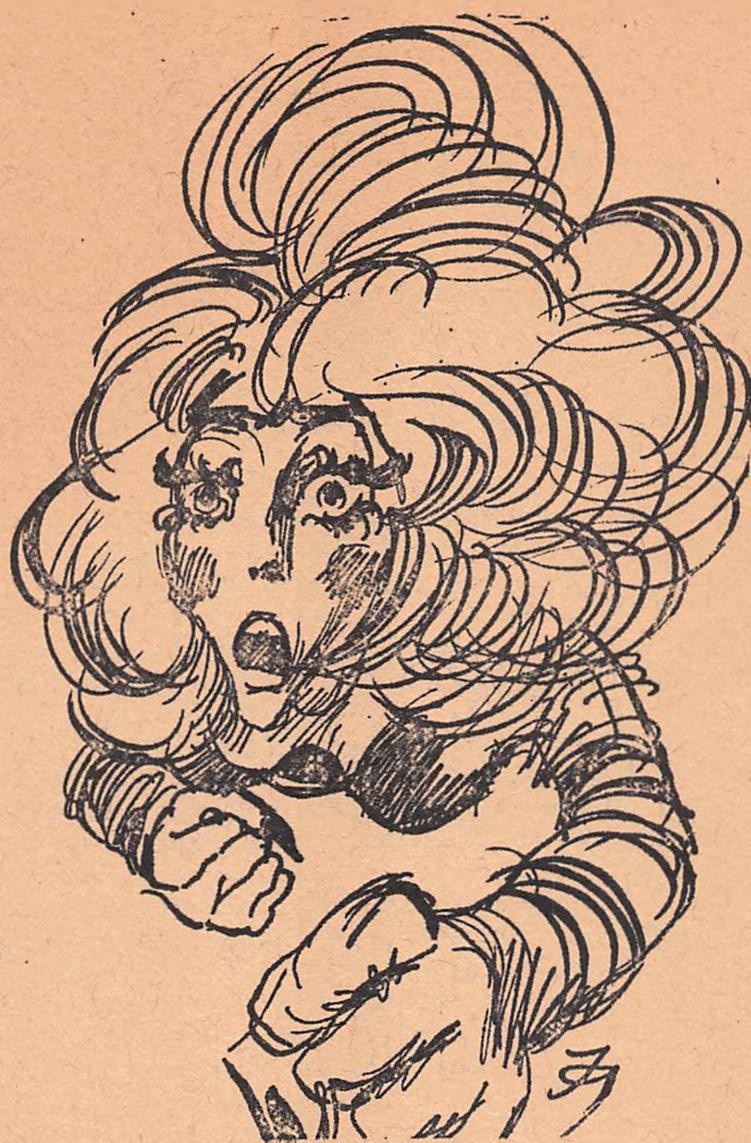
"Certainly, sir. Did you rest well, sir?" Belle asked as she obediently followed him down the steps.

He placed her against the rear wall of the dark storage locker and flicked her master switch, deactivating her. He looked sadly at her immobilized features, noting as if for the first time, the duskiness of her simulated skin, her full lips and wiry hair. He would, he thought with a regret that bordered on shame, have to order another model, one that could live with, work with or even dance with her coworker or employer with impunity. A white model. Like Al.

* * * * *

Leo P. Kelley has written science fiction for years, selling stories to If, Fantastic, Amazing, Fantasy and Science Fiction and other non-science fiction magazines like Swank and Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine. His first novel was published by Belmont Books in 1968 -- The Counterfeits. Another is due for publication in 1969 -- Odyssey to Earthdeath. Kelley says he writes from 5AM to 7AM every weekday and from 9AM to 12M on Saturdays and Sundays. Meanwhile, he earns an honest living as Advertising Manager for a New York book publisher.





WITH MALICE

+ a column about books +

The Best SF Stories from NEW WORLDS, edited by Michael Moorcock, Berkeley, 60¢

Okay, "best" in the title of any collection means simply "the best not already sewed up by another anthologist," "the best mixture for the sake of variety," etc. This book is still disappointing.

I don't have a chance to read many science fiction magazines anyway, these days, and so I've made no special effort to get New Worlds. But from fans' violent pro and con reactions to the New Wave I expected something -- well, not even so much better, as newer -- in a collection like this. New techniques and attitudes are sometimes present here, but there's also a lot of the same old thing.

John Brunner's "Nobody Axed You," for example, could have fit comfortably in Galaxy not too many years ago, when the then-editor craved stories which took some face of modern commercial culture (like advertising or insurance) and made it the core of an unpleasant future civilization. Heroes of these stories were usually louts, too blinded by their utter love for the System to see what was in front of them, until their sudden transformation to pure, violent outrage along about the climax. The writer usually seemed concerned with heavy, sober-faced satire, rather than character building or the creation of a really convincing world. The parts of the civilization didn't have to fit together very well, as long as each was properly shocking by itself, and the characters didn't have to do much more than expose -- and eventually react against -- the System. The idea was what counted. And now John Brunner has taken an idea about the exploitation of violence for entertainment and written just another professional but heavy-handed story around it. The title is as subtle as the plot and style -- and the title is about as much of the story as you need to read. There's nothing especially wrong with "Nobody Axed You" but a reader would have to be pretty dull not to figure out what's going to happen long before the end. Why keep reading then? Though Brunner's particular idea may be new, it's put in an old, tired form.

Langdon Jones' "The Music Makers" is another story with a situation constructed and characters manipulated too obviously just to present an idea. Jones' idea is rather interesting, but the story never comes alive as fiction. On the other hand, "A Two-Timer" by David I. Mason, is a very clever pastiche but left me with a great feeling of "So what?" Brian Aldiss' "The Small Betraying Detail" seems even more trivial, though. An old-fashioned gimmick story, Aldiss' tale is carefully constructed, and the atmosphere of the English country is well done, as Moorcock notes in his introduction; but the story hangs on the supposition that if a man stumbled into an alternate universe where "men" had evolved by an entirely different process, he would not

TOWARD ALL ^{by} JOE SANDERS

discover it immediately but only by finally observing the one small-betraying detail. And I think this is nonsense. Aldiss tries to justify the narrator's slowness by having him suffer from fever and near-delinium -- but imagine a man, picked out of New York and dropped into the middle of Paris, not being aware from the first that he's in an alien setting. Or even, since Aldiss places his translated narrator in a car driving through the country -- side, imagine a man from Ireland being twitched from an Irish to an English road and conversing with two natives without realizing for certain that he is in a different place. If cultural and national evolution account for considerable difference in dress, language and custom, imagine the difference caused by a different physical evolution to begin with.

And that's four out of seven stories in the anthology.

Concerning newness, though, I should note that Aldiss' story introduces the thought of alternate universes into the character's conversation. They play around with the idea before the narrator experiences it. Aldiss doesn't try to sneak toward the gimmick. In itself this manipulation is not very unusual, but it does suggest the frank acknowledgement that a story is a construction -- that it is not just spinning itself out without the help of a writer -- which is fairly new in modern fiction. In the early-mid twentieth century, under the influence of Henry James and his acolytes, writers were taught that when a reader could spot the author's presence in a story the illusion of reality was spoiled. So authors tried to conceal their control over the plot and speak only as characters participating in the action. Above all, they tried to show rather than tell, to build stories all out of objects, people and events, instead of authorial commentary. Sometimes it worked; sometimes it didn't. The weakness of this approach can be seen in stories like Brunner's in which it is necessary that the main character love the System (to show the reader how debased he could become if he doesn't resist advertising, overcome the tendency to enjoy showbiz violence, etc.) -- yet must see and describe things no System-lover would notice (to explain the System fully and show just how bad it is) -- yet must attack the System at the story's climax (to show that decent, twentieth-century-style instincts are natural and right). It's relatively unlikely that one man could do all these things, but the writer who feels he has to do everything through the character must squeeze it all in. I think that one "new" thing about a few of the stories in this collection is that the authors realize that a short story is an artificial construction anyway, and that personality can be a trap.

In Roger Zelazny's "The Keys to December" for one, the opening announces that here is the main character and "here is the story" (p. 23). Later,

Zelazny prepares to set a scene with the statement, "Quick, a world in 300 words or less! Picture this . . ." (p. 27). Zelazny intrudes his presence into the story. And it is one hell of a fine story. Zelazny deserves the praise he'd received from practically every critic going, and the intrusions I've noted above are the mark of a man with confidence to say in effect: I have a story to tell; you can listen if you want to. And can count on the story grabbing an audience by being interesting and meaningful.

Zelazny's success as a writer does not depend on his participating in the new thing, of course, but on his talent. It happens, however, that Zelazny is writing at a time which suits his particular interests and abilities. He is concerned with feeling, for one thing, and he is talented enough to write about a subject like love without going either nebulous and etherial or sloppily sentimental. Moreover, he is interested in some questions that are being asked with increased urgency these days, (like, What is a man?) and some ideas that are modern and properly belong in science fiction (like, If science fiction gives man god-like powers, what are his responsibilities?). Again, these things are not new in themselves. But the combination of emphasis on the emotional side of man, willingness to grapple with really major human problems, and zest for personal experiment in the telling of a story -- the combination is new. And if it did not produce Zelazny, the new thing probably made it easier for him to do what he's doing. I think that's a good thing.

The remaining stories in the collection have this "newness" to a greater or lesser degree, but I think they're lesser stories than Zelazny's effort. I'm rather fond of Thomas M. Disch's "The Squirrel Cage" as a clever gimmick story. I like the gimmick, for one thing; Disch has something interesting to say about a writer and his audience and about man's freedom. Moreover, Disch moves toward the final twist smoothly through a series of progressively obvious hints which keep the viewpoint fluid, which makes the story itself an examination of shifting "reality," too. These themes are all huge and heady and all have been used in stories and discussions until they're getting frayed. Disch keeps his story fresh and light, and does a pretty good job of working the ideas into the shape of a story about a man captured by alien beings.

And then there's "The Assassination Weapon," by J. G. Ballard. Ballard is also concerned with dissecting the nature of reality, and the story cuts sharply between absolute, individual realities. I like Ballard's prose style and some of his images. Yet, I emerged from the "careful reading" Moorcock suggests, feeling as if I'd climbed through an elaborate jungle gym -- great mental exercise but not very purposeful. Perhaps that's the point; perhaps, indeed, I'd understand more by reading other stories in the related group. I don't think though, that it's unfair to judge this story as just another part of an anthology -- since that's what it is, at the moment.

Which brings us back to the original point. What is the rationale behind a collection like this? To present the best of the New Wave? To present the best stories from New Worlds, regardless of whether or not they represent the new spirit? However you look at it, the results here are not very encouraging.

WITH MALICE TOWARD ALL

conquistadores

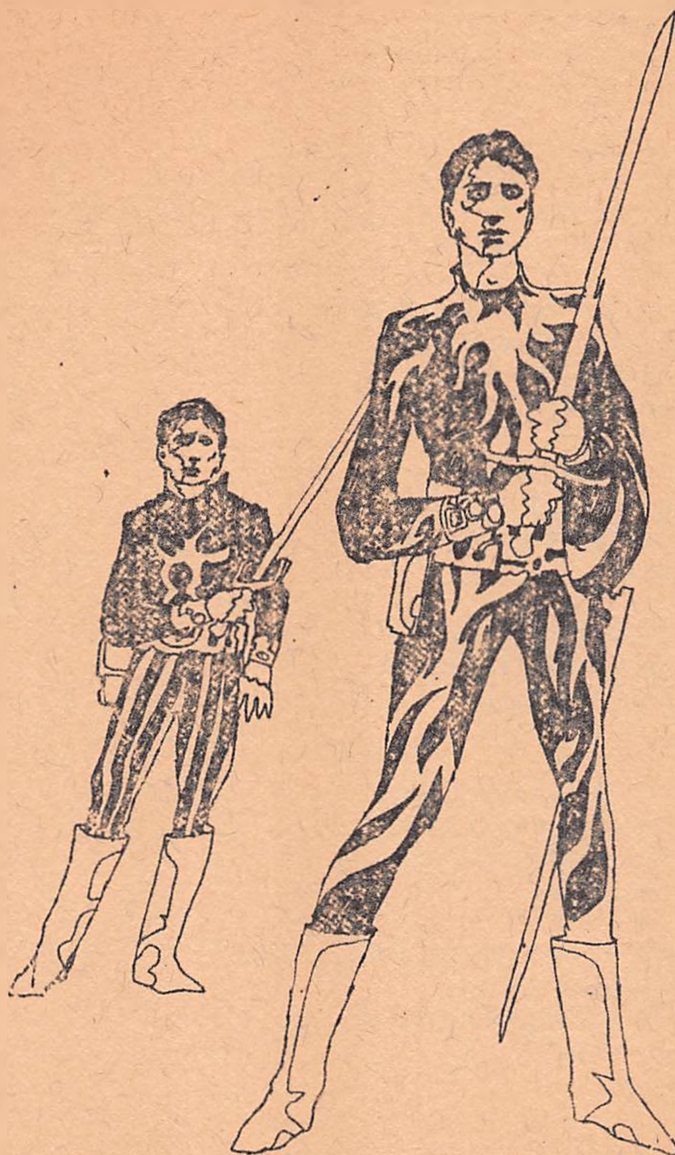
+ by Robert Coulson +

We had no choice, for we had to run
(When the drive runs wild the ship is done)
But the planet circled a golden sun
And atmosphere was there.

We dropped like gods through the summer skies,
As the air rushed by with shrieking cries,
And we watched the ports to see what guise
The land below would wear.

Where the lifeboat touched the land was wild,
But the air was fresh and the day was mild,
So out of the crowded boat we piled
And gazed on our new abode.

We set up camp, with guards about,
And exploration teams went out
And after a while one raised a shout;
They'd found a narrow road.



A primitive thing, just a pair of ruts,
But we followed it down to a group of huts
With natives gathering fruit and nuts
And some hunters coming in.

They were human enough, as we quickly learned,
And they welcomed us as their gods returned
And all the night long the feast-fire burned
And the drummers made a din.

For a little time, everything went well.
We lived like gods (though truth to tell,
We acted more like lords of Hell,
For our power was absolute.)

Not satisfied with what they gave
We each took a native girl as slave
And anything else we happened to crave
As the villagers stood mute.

One of our crew was a drunken lout,
Given to knocking his woman about.
His divinity she began to doubt
When she'd lived with him a time.

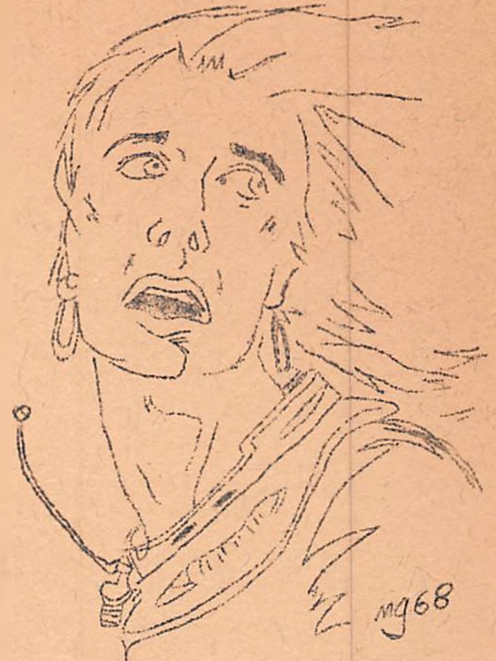
One night he threatened to take her life
And with doubts about his godhood rife,
She opened him up with his own knife;
Cut him down in his prime.

Our godhood ended there and then,
And once they knew us to be just men
They herded us into a filthy pen
And decided what to do.

I'd always treated my woman swell,
And got along with the chief, as well,
So I'm alive with a tale to tell
And no one to tell it to.

The rest were tortured in various ways
(A few lived on for several days),
And their bodies made a glorious blaze
When they were cold and numb.

While I live as a slave and curse my fate,
And pray for rescue, however late,
And know that I have a hopeless wait,
For a ship will never come.





+ by Jim Reuss +

They
shunned
the man with the withered limbs,
for the priest said he was
evil;
obviously he had sinned heinously,
he or his parents,
to deserve such a stigma.

And when the elders of my family
learned that I had been seen with
him
they forbade me to, ever again.
I asked why;
their only reply was that it would
tarnish
the family name.

But
with every chance I had,
I met him secretly
at his shieling on the barren heath
so that we might
talk.

His words to me were
drops of dew upon a thirsty turf
but more --
together we took wing,
flew the hidden skies of his
mind,
woven by imagination
from visions
hopes
shards of shattered fantasies.
then dulled,
we sat silently,
in memory of all our still-born dreams.

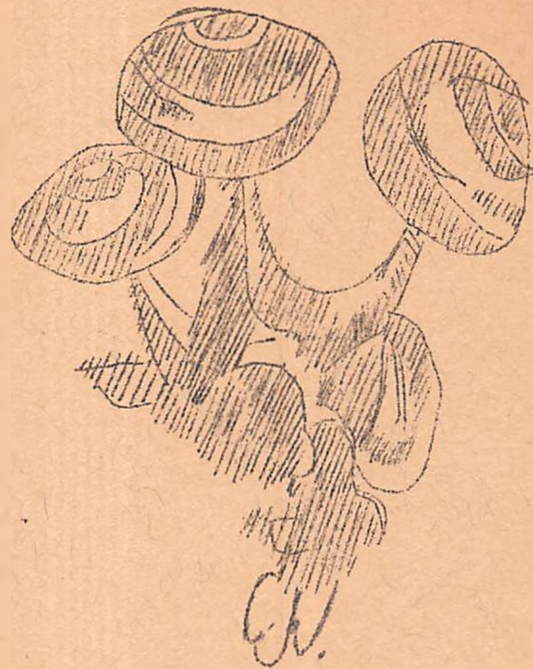
He passed away
unmourned
some time ago,
and was buried in the potter's field.
His shanty was
razed --
a health hazard, they said,
leaving me nothing of him but
sylphidine memories.

Little furry elf-god
From some darkened forest path
Come stumbling into sunlight
And stand blinking
Bewildered by the day.

Weaver of the golden threads
That intersperse the dark --
Your loom of light is broken,

And the forest glades are
Darkness unrelieved.

+ by Joyce Fisher +

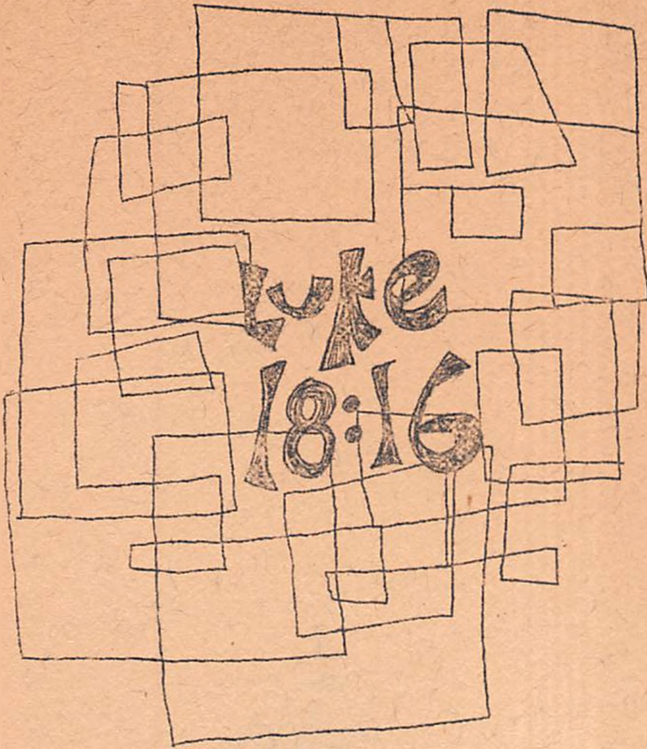


ENDLESSLY

+ by Jerry Kaufman +



Tumbling
 Endlessly
 Down three flights of stairs
 To the death that made me slave I go
 In a place not with the joy of Heaven or the misery of Hell.
 The Christians and the Buddists won't believe it;
 It is the place of commonplace.
 In my life I never
 killed a man
 I always
 cut my hair,
 I never
 led a charge,
 I always
 lived alone,
 I always/
 never, never/always.
 (Only one memory -- moment of death -- all that will come to my kind)
 So I die daily, hourly, momentarily,
 Tumbling; endlessly, three flights of stairs



+ by Joyce Fisher +

Standing in the rain
with fifteen cents in your pocket
and water leaking in
through the hole in your shoe,
and the headlines of the paper
lying in the gutter
shout the message that
the economy is gravy;
that profit's up and unemployment's down
and things are great.

(And God loves the little children
and He suffers them to come.)

The radio is singing
of how great a place is this land
'cause we're all so well contented
with the way that things are going
and we all love one another,
and there is no need to fear.

(And God loves the little children
and He suffers them to come.)

High upon the hill,
overshadowing the river,
stands a church.
The congregation's gathered
to sing their hymns of praise;
their bellies round with supper,
they put small change in the offering.
Ladies shiver delicately,
lace handkerchiefs to their mouth
when the winds rattle windows
and the men worry that the icy roads
may be unsafe to drive.

The minister's sermon
asks them to write letters
to gently nudge law-makers
to curb the dangers of the street,
so that law-abiding people
will have no need to worry
that some begger may embarrass them,
may ask them for a dime.

And the river tells no secrets
about what lies on the bottom
and the river waters warm you
and your stomach is not empty now
and the icy rain can't reach you
nor the wind.

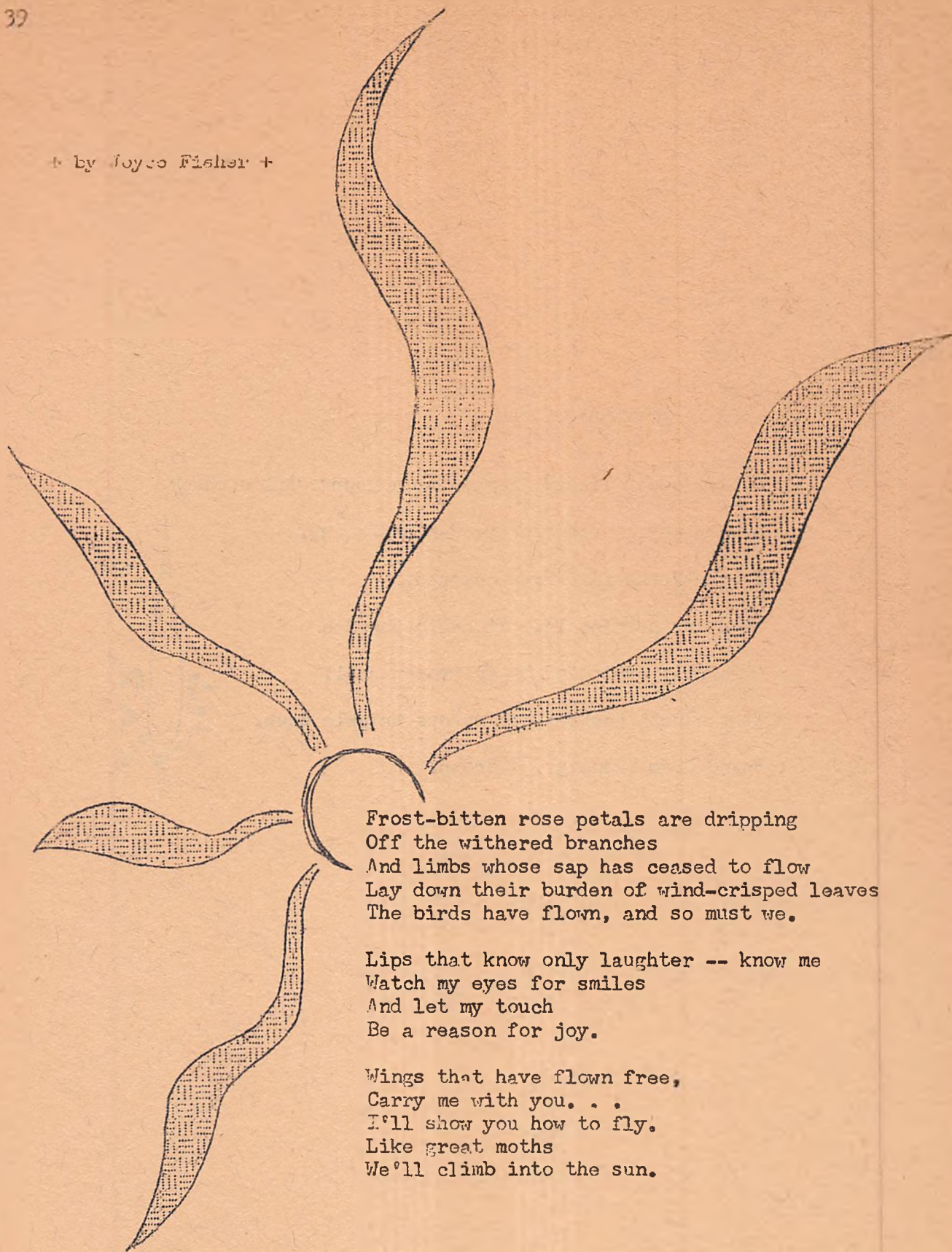
(And God loves the little children,
all the little children;
He loves his little children;
and He suffers them to come.)

+ by Dennis Cloud +

Salty, sweet liquid flows down a young girl's cheek
 Like a pearl, created through suffering.
 I beheld the fire-drop, amazed,
 Watching helplessly. It melts the ice
 Carefully protected by my frozen soul.
 It's warmth penetrates; waters trickle down.
 Saved from freezing, I drown.



+ by Joyce Fisher +



Frost-bitten rose petals are dripping
Off the withered branches
And limbs whose sap has ceased to flow
Lay down their burden of wind-crisped leaves
The birds have flown, and so must we.

Lips that know only laughter -- know me
Watch my eyes for smiles
And let my touch
Be a reason for joy.

Wings that have flown free,
Carry me with you. . .
I'll show you how to fly.
Like great moths
We'll climb into the sun.

+ by Leigh Couch +



Come, sit here
Let us, just now, not move
Not think of what comes next
Hold all duties in abeyance

Let us just sit and be
Know our breathing and our bodies
Be close and simply live
For a little space

There are so few moments for this

Let us touch hands quietly
Nothing more

We are alive
The world is a pleasant place
Why do we not look at it?
Must we always be hurrying through it?

Share this little time with me
Who knows? We may remember it forever.





the petrification of Ilya Mourometz

By BANKS MEBANE

+ a column +

So? So, for a couple of years I've offhandedly been promising Hank I'd try to write something for STARLING, and I haven't written it. I haven't even tried, hardly. My conscience (with an assist from Luttrell) has just kicked me, and this happens. So, it's a kind of column, personal chitchat and all that. Look on it as a letter substitute.

- * -

Some of you may know I've been living in Florida since 1 Feb., after more years than you'd believe in the D. C. area. Every winter I got glummer and glummer, and finally I said "Knock it off," and here I am in Melbourne Beach, which is a sandpit between the Atlantic and the Indian River (a lagoon, not a river). Two batches of friends had already settled here, which is what steered me to this spot.

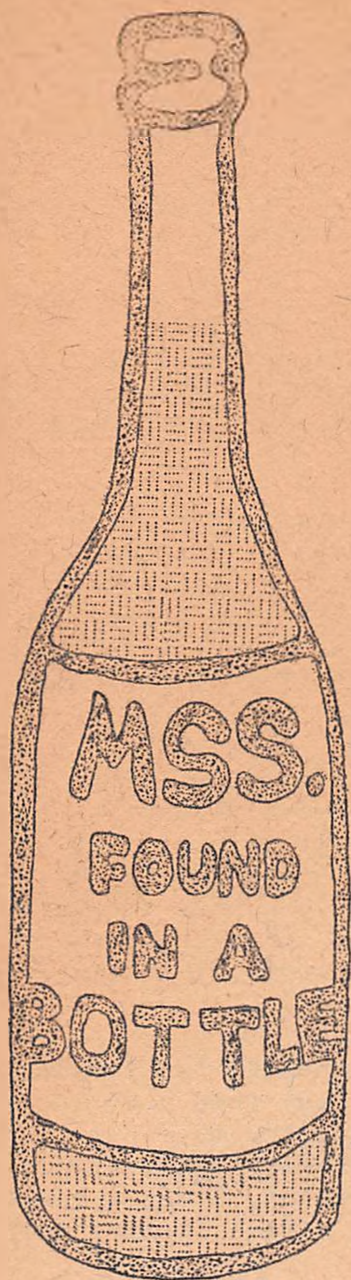
Do I like it? Man, do I!

You can remember last January, if you try. I spent it in D.C. Cold and snow and slush. Cold and snow and slush. Then I got down here, and all the natives were moaning about the worst winter in 37 years or some such. Man! I drove around with the top down all through February and even went in the ocean (I admit I didn't stay long). Southern California, you can ignore this last paragraph. It won't impress you much. But we don't have smog here.

- * -

Melbourne Beach is just a second or two south of Cape Kennedy as the rocket flies. From the beach, you get a box-seat view of the launchings. You look north and east, out over the ocean at a thirty degree angle to the shoreline (the Cape juts out to the east). On a clear day, you can see the VAB and the space vehicle on its pad -- even bare eyeball, but looking like a precise scale model through binoculars. You hold your transistor radio to your ear, listening to the countdown, and watch through the binoculars, held in your other hand. At zero time, a new blinding spark blooms below the rocket, it hangs motionless for an instant then rises slowly, then faster and faster. As it goes up, it turns east and its glowing exhaust trail lengthens and lengthens to comet-tail proportions -- one effect you can't see very well on TV, probably because of fore-shortening. You can follow the flight for minutes and even see clearly the separation of the first stage through the glasses.

Even with the naked eye, you can see a lot. The thing goes up looking like a star at first but many times brighter than Venus. As it rises above the



horizon-haze you can make out the vehicle itself, and the exhaust looks fainter but gets larger as the rocket goes away from you -- the lengthening of the trail. At the separation, the discarded stage is still glowing faintly, and you can see the next stage ignite.

I haven't seen one yet, but they tell me a night firing is much more spectacular. And they say what's really spectacular is a night destruct.

- * -

Some friends visited me in March, and we took the bus tour of the Space Center. It lasted two and a half hours, and I found it a bit tedious. "This is Launch Pad Twelve. . ." "This is Launch Pad Thirteen. . ." But there were some goodies.

The Mercury Control Center is maintained just as it was during the flights, and the tourists are herded off the bus and into the observers gallery. Below are all the data desks lit up with flashing lights, and a simulation of one of the orbiting missions is taking place on the big plotting board, the earth is mercator with the orbits projected on it. The whole thing is quite impressive even if perhaps too reminiscent of Hollywood's idea of the same sort of thing.

The tourists also get shown into the VAB (the Vehicle Assembly Building, not the world's tallest, nor the broadest, but having the biggest volume -- and most of it empty.) When you get inside and look around, it is big. You only realize how big when the guide points out you could park eight (or is it four, I can't remember) schoolbusses on a little sign you see near the top. Our guide also told us that the VAB cost \$134,000,000.00, which I quick-as-a-flash worked out to 67¢ for every man, woman child and whatever in the country.

When I took the tour, the Saturn V to be launched that month in the Apollo project was already on its pad. It's big, too, which is why they need the VAB to assemble it in. What impressed me most was the transporter they use to move the assembled Saturn V from the VAB to the pad. It's a hypertrophied tractor with a flat top as big as four football fields (or is it eight, I can't remember.) Anyway, it's a helluva thing and gave me more of a stfnal feeling than anything else at the spaceport.

"This is Launch Pad Thirty-nine . . ."



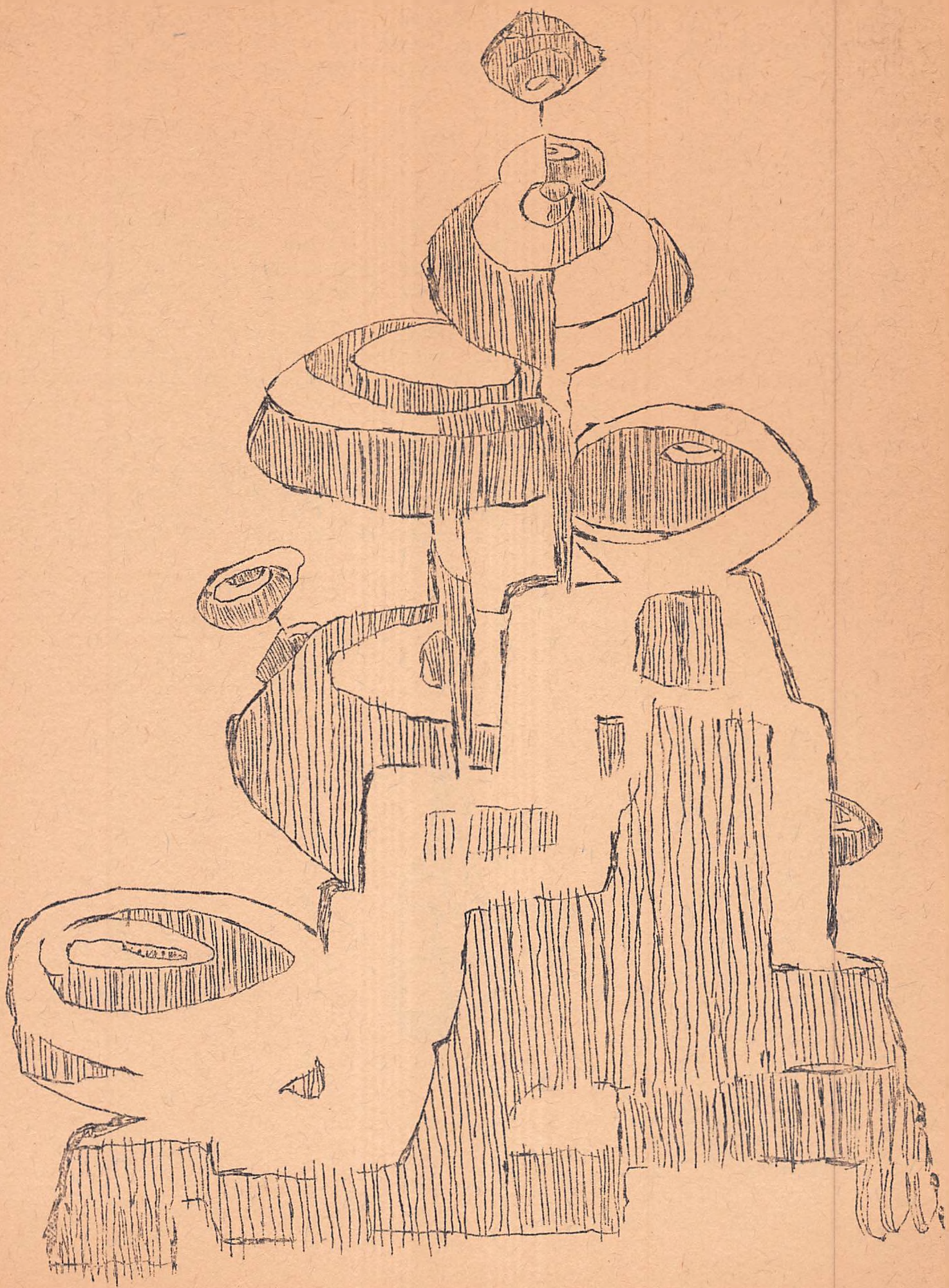
Meanwhile back on Earth, consider me and the Florida dirt. I call it dirt because I have to be polite to it, but where I sit it's mostly sand and topsoil is dearer than the perfumes of Arabia. What I'm jabbering about is, after years of cliff-dwelling, I've suddenly got a half-acre of land to look after. Me, whose horticultural horizon has previously been bounded by a weedy windowbox.

A half-acre may not sound like much to those of you who are primitive agricultural types, wont to battle with crabgrass at the slightest sign of belligerence, but I'm even more primitive -- I date back to the pre-neolithic, or hunting and gathering stage, before anybody figured you could plant seeds and grow things. When I took over this house I bought a lawnmower and inspected the tools the previcus owner had left around for me: a shovel, a rake, a leaf rake, several ambiguous but lethal looking edged weapons, and a hoe. A hoe! Somehow I'd never planned on being a hoer. Of course, I've known some. . .

Luckily, the house is near the front of the lot and most of the half-acre is in back, where there's a little grove of cabbage palms, some live oaks, a hickory tree, and enough shade so nobody'd think I ought to grow grass there. Some nice, trouble-free ground-cover, maybe. . .? Ha!

When I moved down here, I thought I would have more leisure time for fanac than I did in the mad social whirl in Washington, and maybe I could fulfill some of those half-promises I've been making to fanzine editors. Well, if any of you had thought I'd died, it's just that I've been lost in a half-acre of Florida sand. I think I've got it under control now, and maybe you'll be hearing more from me.





2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY

+ A Computerman Looks at The Hal 9000 +

by James Suhrer Dorr

"No motivation is provided for the computer's going mad," according to Lester Del Rey in the first "in-house" review of Kubrick-Clarke's 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY to come to my attention,¹ "and the hero acts like a fool." While there are more interesting questions one might ask about the computer, the hero does no more than behave like a hero. He is rash, he acts impulsively on the chance he might save his friend, who, perhaps, is not quite dead yet, and he underestimates the unprecedented magnitude of the computer malfunction which requires that he perform the rescue himself rather than by computer (assuming of course, that the HAL 9000 possessed sufficient remote capabilities to perform an emergency rescue mission by itself even when functioning perfectly -- offhand I can think of at least two reasons why it probably did not).

In short, our hero is not much more than the good old-fashioned two-fisted space-busting cardboard superman prized by admirers of the "Old Thing" science fiction,² somewhat of an anachronism in the world of modern science. A research installation may, in fact, often appear deadly dull to an untutored observer and, with regard to the outer space scenes of the SPACE ODYSSEY, the Clarke inspired realism has a bit of a tendency to make the film drag.

The interesting character, however, is the computer itself. And so, then, to the nitty-gritty.

How when our Control Data 3400/3600 goes mad, its most usual "motivation" is mechanical failure, usually precipitated by parts' wear. And while even such primitive (by 2001 standards) machines as the 3400/3600 contain self-maintenance programming, we know from experience that these systems are not in themselves perfect. We have to provide backup systems; in our case we use three full-time CDC (human) engineers. Even at that, we expect the computer to be "down" at least part of the time.

AN ARTICLE BY JAMES SUHRER DORR
PLUS: LETTERS, EDITORIAL COMMENTS

2001

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The HAL 9000's backup, on the other hand, appears to consist of an identical computer in a more sheltered environment on Earth. This backup proves inadequate, and the reason for its inadequacy proves to be rather interesting in itself. A bit of background may be helpful at this point.

Kubrick-Clarke's screenplay is, obviously enough, working with the layman's apprehension that the computer might in some way "take over" from man. The computer, however, is referred to affectionately as "Hal"; much is made of its "humanness" in order to make the idea seem attractive.

This so far is legitimate speculation. While I personally think that evidence is growing against the theory, highly reputable people in computing have maintained that artificial intelligence, of equivalence to human intelligence, is quite possible if only a machine be given enough core space and sophisticated enough internal programming. The machine in fact would be indistinguishable from a man in terms of its responses, although faster and more accurate, and the HAL 9000, then, is such a machine.

The HAL 9000, however, has gained more than just human-equivalence intelligence. It has gained other human features including, most importantly, a non-critical instinct for self preservation which, it must be emphasized, is absolutely logical from the point of view of the machine as a sentient being. To be ~~down~~, for this machine, means death; the supposed consequences of its minor malfunctions seem equivalent to the gas chamber and its fear of these consequences drives it into a sort of paranoia. It reacts to the threat just as a human would. It fights. And its twin on Earth, of course, is totally unaware of (or, working from the other direction, has effectively repressed) even the possibility of this sort of reaction.

Now the point of all of this, it would seem, is that while intelligence per se is certainly desirable and good, it does not provide a sufficient definition for man. Man, and even man-like computers it appears, rather unfortunately do not operate on a basis of pure intelligence: man, as we have been shown, has evolved from an ape-like ancestor whose actions are motivated far more by its animal instincts than its brain and the computer, programmed as an imitation of man, follows suit.

Assuming, then, that further evolution is desirable, the film offers two alternatives. For the Hal 9000 the answer is lobotomy: man/machine can pare out his offending motivations and leave behind a fast, efficient think-box whose only shortcoming is that it must be directed from above. This, on a social level, is the totalitarian approach and it is one that much of the world is beginning to experiment with.

The other possibility involves a transcendence to some state higher than our present state of being. The higher state itself, though, has yet to be defined and thus far there is unfortunately no indication of what the proper social approach might be.³ The film, of course, can provide no concrete suggestions: if it could one would expect Kubrick-Clarke to get into the more relevant business.

As a result, 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY is forced to make use of a device. Taken as a whole, the film falls into three major parts, each marked by the appearance of a frankly mysterious alien stone slab which provides the impetus for a series of evolutionary quantum jumps. The first of these depicts the

2001

dawn of intelligence in man's forebears who use it to provide weapons and tools and, the invention of weapons implying a need for mutual defense, begin the first rudimentary steps toward forming social alliances.

The film then fades to 2001 where man, still basically in the tools and weapons stage, has obviously also been developing intellectual curiosity. The rediscovery of the alien stone on the moon provides an impetus to curiosity and the segment continues with an exploratory voyage toward Jupiter in an attempt to learn more. The computer episode suggests a possible alternative to what is to follow, but this alternative (i.e., to continue to build in terms of our present stage of being) proves nonviable.

The final section, then, presents the hero face to face with the alien presence. The screen explodes into a quasi-psychedelic light show effect suggesting, perhaps not too profoundly, a visual analogue to the hero's transition, through space/time, death/rebirth, to a completely new encompassing intelligence form. The ending is, of course, necessarily vague. It is also effective.

When I saw the film in New York, however, I and my companions seriously considered walking out at intermission; deciding to stick it out, we were glad we did when it was finally over. 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY is a good film, but it is also, unfortunately, far too long. Much cutting, particularly in the first part but also in the more "technical" portions of the second, would improve the film greatly (the third part, as no more than visual experience, holds its own quite well -- especially in Cinerama -- but one is, after all, pretty tired out by then). An argument might be, I suppose, that at Cinerama prices an audience deserves a good workout; surely it is given too much here.

2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY is, nevertheless, a good film. With judicial cutting (and, hopefully, eventual refilming for regular screen) it could be great. Even allowing flaws in its present form, it should take quite some doing to bring out a film more worthy of next year's Hugo.

NOTES:

¹Lester Del Rey, "2001: A Space Odyssey" (review), GALAXY MAGAZINE, XXVI, vi (July, 1968), 193-4.

²My coining, as antonym of the "New Thing". For the sake of accuracy, though, I must confess that I am not entirely sure what these neologisms mean, nor indeed, that they mean anything at all.

³There may be, to be sure, possible approaches through religion or, more properly, I suspect, through mysticism; also possible might be a drug induced transcendence, as suggested by Timothy Leary among others, although I consider this less likely. Historically, approaches along these lines have tended toward failure largely, perhaps, because they have never been attempted by more than a relative minority; for all practical purposes, though, we should assume the necessity for some as yet undiscovered new principle.

2001⁴⁹

LETTERS:

Richmond Warnen, 6116 Pershing Ave., Apt 302, St. Louis, Missouri
63112

2001 has to be my favorite film. Just to prove this, I recklessly spent another \$2.50 to see it again. This is not to say, though, that I can begin to understand it. Seeing it a second time only gave me a few more insights; the first time I was just totally overwhelmed by the aesthetics of the piece.

I think you may have done the film a disservice by devoting so much space to a plot description. Actually, I find the plot the least important part of the film. 2001 is a film of hope, for the future; this is obvious from both the triumphal title-theme and the return of the reborn astronaut at the end (accompanied by the same triumphal theme.) If this sounds a bit "churchy" -- well, it's because I find 2001 quite a religious picture. Not necessarily in the purely Christian sense, mind you, even if the rebirth of the astronaut and his "coming" to Earth in baby-form do seem a bit coincidental. But I think it is fair to say that the events following his arrival at Jupiter do take him out of the scientific, natural, ordered way of things which comprise the events in his life up to this point. No attempt is made to render a "scientific" explanation for the monolith or for any of the events in the final fifteen minutes; if you find such an explanation, it is not because it is contained anywhere in the filmstory, but only by conjecture. These events are mysterious, unexplained (if not unexplainable), and in this sense border on the supernatural. I can't so easily dismiss this as his just "being drawn through a time warp or space warp" and I don't think Kubrick so intended it either. Elsewise, he wouldn't have been so mysterious and symbolic in those final moments. I think too the ideas of rebirth and a baby-messenger-to-earth were intended to call forth religion-related thoughts. As a sidenote on this "religiousness" notion, I know some people in Colorado, members of a religious "cult" (not really that well organized, but I can't think of a better term) who went to see 2001 purely for its spiritual significance.

The film is also a work of art, of aesthetic appeal. And I hope in this sense that it might lead to further use of outer space and futuristic settings in films; the people who didn't dig the symbolism certainly had to be moved somewhat by the art of the flick. I was particularly fascinated by the "waltz" of rocketship and space station, wheeling slowly through blue-black space at different rates of rotation, yet climaxing in a perfect union of ship and space-wheel-hub, all this in sync with a dashing rendition of Strauss' "Blue Danube Waltz." Why not -- isn't a waltz a rather measured, mechanical dance? What could have been better suited to the fluid "dance" of manmade machines. . .

. . .second thoughts on symbolism. At the point near the end, when the astronaut sees a colorful procession of abstract designs -- which we said was a vision of the birth of the planets -- a friend remarked that a certain red blot reminded him of a human fetus in a womb. I felt this was interesting, as an earlier scene had struck me as showing a human sperm arching across the screen. And do you not think the Jupiter Expedition spaceship was somewhat sperm-shaped? May this have been a deliberate attempt to influence our anticipation of the astronaut's rebirth? Or are we just being Dirty Old Men?

/# I don't think you're being Dirty Old Men. I too got the idea of sperm, egg and foetus during the light show, as well as the birth of planets vision. LMC #/

John Boston, 819 Gaffield Place, Evanston, Ill. 60201

. . .(2001) could have been better. The main problem was editing. Some of the scenes were far too long; they hung on long after their points were made, leaving

spaces of cinematic dead air and generally interfering with the con⁵⁰tinuity of the film! One of these was the end of the first segment, where we see the ape picking up a bone, waving it in the air, hitting a skull with it, and so forth -- the Dawning Light idea very well captured. However, he just keeps hitting and hitting the goddamn skull, boring the audience to death after they realize what's going on and dulling the impact of the very nice transition to the space station. Several of the special effects in the space station were also dwelt on overlong. The worst offender in this respect is the computer subplot. Though the scene is very good in itself -- the whole sequence until the "lobotomization," I mean -- it is too much of a thing-in-itself. The lobotomization is another of the protracted and ultimately boring scenes; but it is just the culmination of a story-within-the-story which distracts and therefore detracts from the main theme. At the end of the scene it is necessary as in some of Heinlein's poorly plotted novels (e.g. Farnham's Freehold), to make a sort of jump of re-orientation back to business. The end result is poor unification and a sense of wandering and discursiveness. I also quarrel with the end, from the standpoint of Mr. Average Movie-goer. You and I have read bales of science fiction, particularly Childhood's End, so we have no trouble picking up the vague hints of the end-sequence -- we speak the language. Most movie-goers don't find it that easy, as evidenced by the groans of frustration that arose from the audience at the showing I attended. They thought the film wasn't resolved at all.

This, I think, bears some relation to your comments about the lack of "development" between Forbidden Planet and 2001. Had there been such development -- had someone tried to film The Puppet Masters, Takeoff, or any one of Clarke's documentary novels -- there would have existed enough of a body of experience in communicating sophisticated science fictional concepts that some of the defects of 2001 could have been avoided. What I am afraid of now is that 2001 will be taken as a reference point and we will be subjected to a flood of spectacular bad sf films by producers trying to outdo Kubrick/Clarke in size and scope. /* I thought the Dawning Light scene and the lobotomization scene were two of the most moving in the film -- not boring at all! The computer sub-plot is basic to the theme of the movie, I feel -- that theme concerns man's relation to his tools, and, of course, man's evolutionary progress; especially as reflected and influenced by his tools, his technology.-HL */

Richard Gordon, 226 Ladykirk Road, Berwell, Newcastle-on-Tyne NE4 8AL

On the whole I don't feel that the jerkiness of the "plot" mattered in the least, the point of the movie as I saw it was to regard it from moment to moment, not as a homogeneous whole, which it was, philosophically, but not dramatically. It fails only in one persists in regarding it from the standpoint of conventional theatrical necessities, which, after all, were discarded by Shakespeare three hundred years ago. It also fails, I concede, if Kubrick intended all his audiences to make the same detailed deductions from the final sequence as Arthur Clarke makes in the book, because if he did, then he expected too much insight on the part of most people.

Steve Lewis, 2074 Pauline Blvd., Ann Arbor, Mich. 48103

Your comments on 2001 in #12 prompted me to think more about my general attitude toward visual sf! I have seen 2001, but I was a bit disappointed in a way hard to analyze. Basically, however, I feel that the visual form of science fiction robs the viewer of his imagination, and thus does not have the same capacity for feeling and emotion that the written word will have. This isn't a new idea by any means, for I have read Campbell use something similar to defend his "no sex" policy for Analog. And it may seem crazy to apply it to 2001, for at least the last few minutes give the audience a true "sense of wonder." But in many cases, it is "wondering what is going

2001

on." Fans may have some idea of what is going on and so can appreciate the visual pyrotechnics for what they are meant, hippies may go to freak out, but the average movie-goer's reaction is, "Great! But what did it mean?" No stimulation of imagination here, because of the failure to let them know what it is that they should be imagining. Events must take place in the brain, as well as on the screen.

Harry Warner, 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

2001: A Space Odyssey is rapidly taking on for me the attributes of Merritt novels and many of Dr. David Keller's most famous stories. I was so familiar with them from descriptions that they seemed like old friends when I finally encountered the realities. In the case of the fiction, it happened because people kept talking about those stories in letter sections of prozines before I finally had opportunity to read them. The movie seems to be getting the most intensive fanzine attention of any film since Fantasia, and I'm hoping that it will come to Hagerstown before it's necessary to change the date in the title.

/*2001 Certainly deserved considerable attention from the fan press -- although perhaps it got even more than was reasonable. Starling's editorial last issue was one of the first things to appear about the movie in the fan press, and I suppose this issue's comments will be some of the last. At least, I'm quite sure that I don't plan to publish anything else of major length about the movie in the next issue. HL */

END

* * * * *

(Continued from page 15)

"The Draft and Conscience," Commonweal, Vol LXXXVI (April 21, 1967) pages 139-141.

"The Redress of Their Grievances," Ramparts, Vol VI (Dec. 1967), pages 28-31.

"Channeling," (reprint), Ramparts, Vol VI (Dec. 1967), pages 32-33.

"Conscientious Objectors: How Many. . . What they Do," U.S. News and World Report, Vol. LIX (Nov. 15, 1965), page 12.

Encyclopedias:

"Conscription," Encyclopedia Americana, (1961 edition), Vol VII, pages 541-546.

"Army" Encyclopedia Britannica, (1965 edition), Vol ii, pages 443-459.

"Conscription," Encyclopedia Britannica, (1965 edition), Vol VI, pages 366-371.

"Conscientious Objectors," New Catholic Encyclopedia, (1967 edition), Vol. IV, pages 205-206.

END

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Words from Readers

+ a letter column +

Redd Boggs, Post Office Box 111, Berkeley, California 94701

A rainy Saturday in Berkely ought to be a good time to comment on Starling #12, except that the rain has come so late in the season that it seems to be too late comment on your issue #12. You say it is the June 1968 issue (although I received it in September) and you set the next deadline as 12 July. /*It was the June issue, most copies were mailed in June -- your copy was mailed much later; when I was trying to get rid of a few extra copies. Shortly after mailing most of the copies in June, I decided that it would be completely unrealistic for me to even try to do #13 when I had planned -- in fact, it hasn't become realistic until just now! HL */

Of course it depends on how you define "underground publishing," but generally the term refers to newspapers and magazines that are anti-Establishment, not just small projects or amateur or nonprofit ones. I'd certainly call your high school comic book, Ammann Comics, an underground publication because it satirized "a particularly disliked teacher." But fanzines in general are not anti-Establishment and there's no reason to suppose the government or other rulers of our lives would go to great pains to suppress most fanzines, as they would, if possible, shut up a newspaper like the Berkeley Barb or the Los Angeles Free Press. - /*Don Fitch has some remarks similar to these, and I'll reply to both in his letter, right down below. HL */

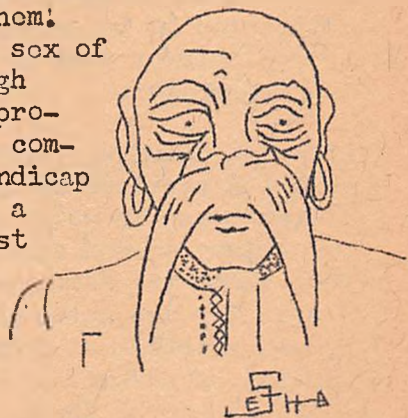
Don Fitch, 3908 Frijo, Covina, Calif. 91722

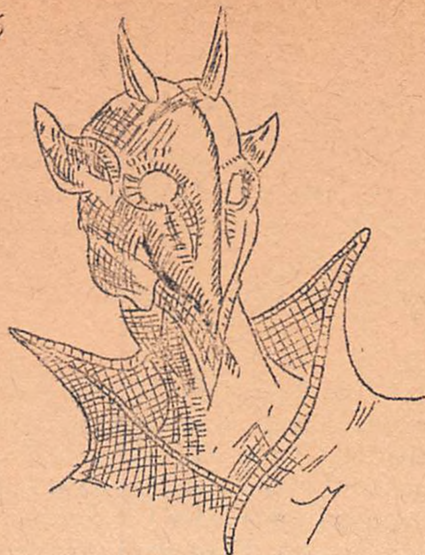
I would like to take issue with your implication that fanzines are representatives of, or even very similar to, the Underground Press. The word "underground" does have certain thrilling connotations, but I believe one would be stretching a point to apply it to the FreeP, The Oracle, The Berkeley Barb, Logos, Avatar, or others of that ilk, and the word is even less applicable in any solid sense to fanzines. These publications of ours are a direct outgrowth of amateur journalism -- Benjamin Franklin, Horace Walpole, Robert Louis Stevenson, Lewis Carroll, H.P. Lovecraft and many others were producing amateur publications -- done for friends, out of affection and a love of writing (or an itch to scribble) -- long before The Village Voice became an outlet for Social Criticism. There is a link, of dourse, between fanzines and "the underground press;" fans are rather above the norm in intelligence, they are readers, they are aware of more than their immediate environment, they are comfortable with the scientific challenge of Questioning Things, and many of them are in the age group to which the underground papers appeal. /* I think fandom is the most underground underground of all. Jim Reuss, in one of his fanzines, once mentioned that he had to fall down a rabbit hole to find out about it. On the other hand, they sell "Underground Newspapers" on street corners. Fandom isn't necessarily anti-Establishment, certainly -- some fans are; other fans are very pro-Establishment, many aren't completely either direction, many don't give a damn about the Establishment. In fandom, we publish little magazines about science fiction, about rock music, about politics, movies, literature, comics, navel contemplation, Sophisticated Stencil Cutting, raking leaves, decorating one's apartment, and last year's vacation. We

write about things which interest us -- if I may use a trite phrase, I think it fits well -- we do our own thing. I think it is much more honest and reasonable to publish just what we happen to be interested in, whether it happens to be anti-Establishment or Nixon-middleclass. And it is also much more underground, because it is being produced for the very limited number of people -- fans -- who happen to be interested in this type of publishing, rather than for all the tourists who happen to walk through a run down part of town and flip the board (can we take a picture?) a quarter for the "dirty" newspaper. Perhaps it is just as reasonable to suggest Benjamin Franklin, Horace Walpole, and all the others, were part of real underground, too? HL */

I don't know whether or not I like the idea of forming sf clubs in colleges, and thus indirectly recruiting for fandom. The LASFS has undergone three semi-traumatic experiences the past few years -- a group from Cal Tech, one from high schools in the Pomona area, and the 3rd Foundation from UCLA. It's not only the confusion when a whole gaggle of neos comes in at one time; it is a problem of assimilation -- and I would expect it to become even more of a problem as the population explosion catches up with us. The group-type newcomers, grasping the familiar in these strange surroundings, tend to associate largely with others in their own clique, reinforcing their interests and attitudes. In the old days, the solitary newcomer associated, preforce, with people already imbued with the traditions and skills of fandom, and in order to gain acceptance he emulated the long-time fans -- the best of them, if he was wise or lucky. This was valuable in preserving an Identity for fandom, and (because of the often-noted comparative lack of age-chauvinism) it encouraged the young neo to adopt a considerable degree of emotional and intellectual maturity beyond that of his mundane peer-group; in general, those who have gone through the process consider that it was, though sometimes painful, amply rewarding. Now, neos are beginning to enter in large groups, mostly ca. 20 and under in age, bringing with them the common mundane interest in . . . well, the Underground Press, Rock Music, contemporary slang, modern movies, etc.. This can enrich fandom, or it can inundate it. . . we shall see! /* I've been a fan for about five years, and I'm twenty years old -- I'm interested in all that stuff you mentioned, and more besides, and I don't plan to do any inundating, actually. Don't worry. But I will agree that there is a problem, perhaps, with fandom growing too large too fast. I'm not sure, and I certainly don't have any suggestions about what we should be doing. HL */

Peter Singleton, Block 4, Broadmoor Hospital, Crowthorne, Berkshire RG11 7EG, England
For a number of years all my fannish contact has been entirely through the mails and I've found that femininity rarely shows itself in print, with the missive being a sexless media of communication in general. A letter from a lover would be an entirely different matter, of course. I rarely think of my femmefan contacts as being emphatically female, because I think of them as individuals and I don't automatically make any sexual distinction when I write to them. After all, when only long distance contact is involved, the sex of a person isn't in the least important. As stated by Lesleigh in her absorbing article, the sexual factor is much more pronounced where personal contact is involved, though I'm at a complete loss to understand why she considers this to be a handicap at all! I suppose the more sensitive femmes would consider a concentration of male attention as a traumatic experience best avoided except in smaller and easier to manage doses.
/* A lot of male fans tend to forget a femme fan is also a fan when they meet her. She might want to discuss fanzines, Hugo-contenders, fans, but the male fan only wants to talk about whatever one talks about to girls when they want some sexual attention LMC */





Richard Gordon, 226 Ladykirk Road, Benwell, Newcastle-on-Tyne NE4 8AL England

As for Harlan Ellison, one could be uncharitable and dismiss him as a pseudo Norman Mailer possessed of the same magnificent talent for self-advertisement but unfortunately not the incredible talent to go with it. Although perhaps even to be damned by comparison with Mailer is some form of faint praise, I wouldn't know. As for his stories, their worth tends to be obscured by his own self-advertisement; perhaps his penchant for buffoonery hides what is an above-average ability to write short fiction, but the fiction hardly seems important in the light of his continual ability to turn himself into a twenty-five hours a day happening; which unfortunately tends to operate by turning the people around him into lumps of negative matter in comparison!

Many great artists are great not because their talent is innately superior to that of many other unknown exponents of the same art; it's simply that they have a greater talent for self-advertisement -- in Ellison's case, fortunately or unfortunately this talent is perhaps greater than his literary ability -- which isn't inconsiderable.

Hank Davis, Box 154, Loyall, Ky. 40854

The dynamic duo-type replies to the LoC's (or should that be L's o C?) are the finishing touch, giving me the impression that Starling is Yandro with the volume turned down. /* What? With the volume turned down? We suggest you play this fanzine at the highest possible volume in order to fully appreciate the material herein.HL */

In re. Jerry Kaufman's comment about The Birds. When that flick first came out, Saturday Review devoted its movie column to it, and mentioned that Hitchcock had originally wanted to make the ending different -- after the characters had escaped from the house and driven off, they were to keep on driving, jubilant at having eluded the birds, until they came in sight of the Golden Gate bridge. And the bridge would be covered with birds. The End. But "They" wouldn't let him do it that way.

Harry Warner, Jr. 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

(. . .) For me, the ideal situation would be a way of life that would permit all my interests and hobbies to be enjoyed and would still allow me to give a couple of hours to a fanzine of Starling 12's size, reading for a second time what particularly interested me before going further, stopping the reading process from time to time to meditate or just to rest, and writing the Loc mentally before sitting down to the typewriter.

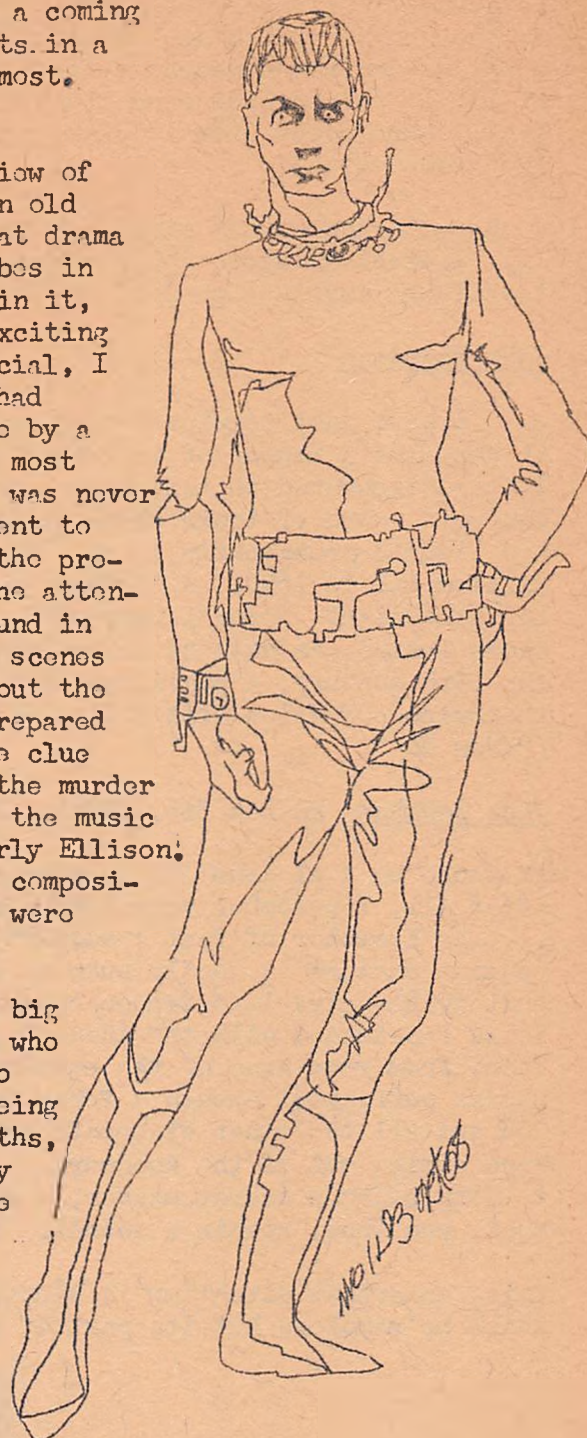
Lesleigh Couch was informative in her article. It might be instructive to reprint selected portions from these recent articles by fannes about fannes, including one I didn't see in which the young lady described such harrowing experiences that even Dr. Asimov seemed shocked. The comparison of how different females react to and feel about the same reality might provide a closer approach to the whole truth than a mere man can get by reading separate articles at considerable distances in time. My own reaction at cons involving females has been difficult mainly in the case of married ones whom I'm seeing for the first time. My intellect and common sense tells me that I should be as informal and friendly around them as I am around their husbands, and a lifetime of conditioning in a conventional small town warns me that

I must speak just a few words and move on lest I be accused of taking an adulterous interest in a total stranger. Obviously, I should go to cons more often to get practice in the saner way of behaving among friends whom I rarely see. /* I believe Andy Porter is going to have a section of comments on Robin's article on femme fans in a coming Algol. I at first considered putting my thoughts in a Loc to Algol, but I decided Starling needed it most. LMC */

Joe Sanders interested me in this extensive review of Ellison fiction. By chance, I saw last night an old Burke's Law episode which Ellison scripted. That drama illustrated perfectly the flaws that Joe describes in the older Ellison fiction. Almost every scene in it, taken out of context, was either brilliant or exciting or both. But ten minutes after the last commercial, I suddenly started to wonder what in the world it had meant. The introductory event, a recording made by a murder victim in which she describes the people most likely to murder her, was intriguing, but there was never any revelation of why this recording had been sent to Burke or why the murderer, who was involved in the preparation of the recording, brought herself to the attention of the law in this way; a friendly crow found in the victim's home provided diversion in several scenes and gave a clue to the solving of the mystery, but the manner in which it did so could not have been prepared by the people privy to the intrigue, and yet the clue was necessary to bring about the results which the murder was intended to create. And so it went. Maybe the music of Shostakovich might be a good parallel to early Ellison. It's wonderful to hear but you wonder after the composition has ended why those movements and sections were played after one another.

I'm not sure that the violence in cartoons is a big factor in making violent adults out of the kidz who watch superheroes shooting at bems, they might go along with their fathers to see bug-eyed fish being hooked and pulled out of the water to their deaths, or they might do their homework, involving study of the current war or for that matter the entire history of this nation, or they might watch American Sportsman in which all sorts of prominent people kill alien life for no reason at all except that it's alien.

"The Castaway" is superior to most fanzine fiction. But I can't conscientiously say that it's superb writing; I can imagine it as a little-noticed short-short in a modern prozine. Maybe it's too low key, in need of unabashed emotional transports to make the reader feel more sympathy and interest in the circumstances described.



57
Barlan Ellison

Starling 12 appeared at these environs, and was instantly read. The effect of your review, Joe, was considerable. I was knocked out, really wiped away, by the insight and honesty of the piece. It is more -- much more -- than merely book reviews. It is authentic literary criticism, of a depth and purpose that we see all too seldom in the genre. Blish does it as Atheling. Knight and Budrys do it. Busby used to do it as Renfrew Pemberton. I've seen Schuy Miller do it with pleasing regularity of late. But to encounter it in a fanzine, where the general muck of nonsense easily manages to suck down any intelligent comments on a serious note, was an unexpected delight!

I cannot argue with a single observation you've made, Joe. You have it pegged exactly. I might disagree about "Delusion For A Dragon-Slayer," but I'd be aware that the disagreement stems from my own personal liking of the story!

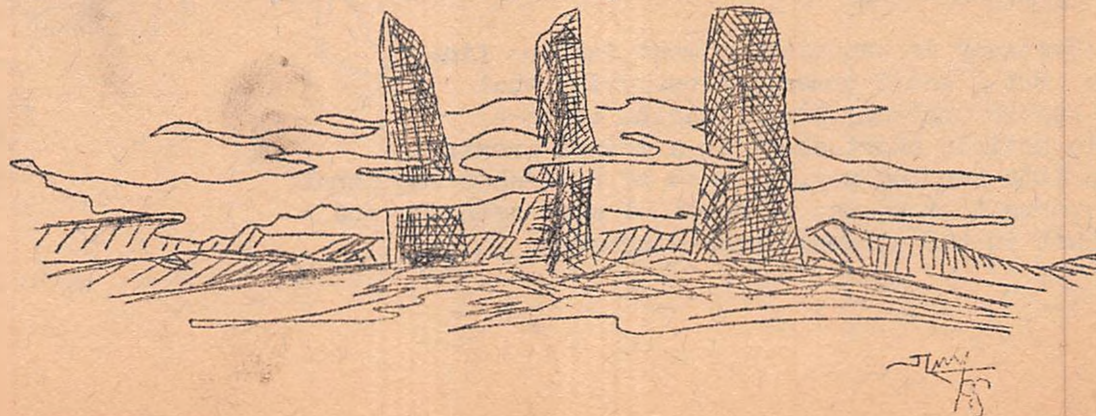
John Boardman

. . .I have just completed reading Thomas B. Macaulay's History of England and found it contains a number of trenchant observations on history and public life. However, I also discovered in this book a mention of several Luttrells, and wondered whether you were aware of their place in history. The family lived in Ireland at Luttrellstown, and figured prominently in the events following the conquest of that island by William III in 1690! A diarist named Narcissus Luttrell is an oft-quoted source for the historian. Several Luttrells obtained the bitter hatred of their countrymen, which lasted, as hatreds do in Ireland, for many generations! As late as the turn of the 19th century, a publicist of the times was fulminating against the marriage of the Prince of Wales (later King George IV) to a woman descended from the Luttrells.
/* Wow HL */

Jack Gaughan PO Box 516, Rifton, N.Y. 12471

It would be a pleasure to do something for Starling 13 and I'm honored you asked. After all, I remember your letter as the first I ever saw commenting on my drawings . . .as a matter of fact I suspect that somewhere in the middle of this search for "secret masters" a goodly suspect may have been overlooked! Namely you. It seems that my re-entry into fandom occurred right after your comment and our correspondence. I was fascinated with the idea of actually getting SOME reaction to my drawings. Then, from your area of the country, publications began pouring out and St. Louis became sufficient enough a force to contend for the 1969 convention! And we saw ODD and all the other elaborate offset magazines and it seemed like Missouri fans were coming out of the woodwork. . .swarming, so to speak! /* Blush! I would like to deny being a secret master, however. . .flattering as the suggestion may be. It must, you know, remain a secret. HL */

This fan artist situation is kinda, sort of, a problem. One of the magazines, which shall be nameless but its part of the only group of mags I do B/W drawings for,



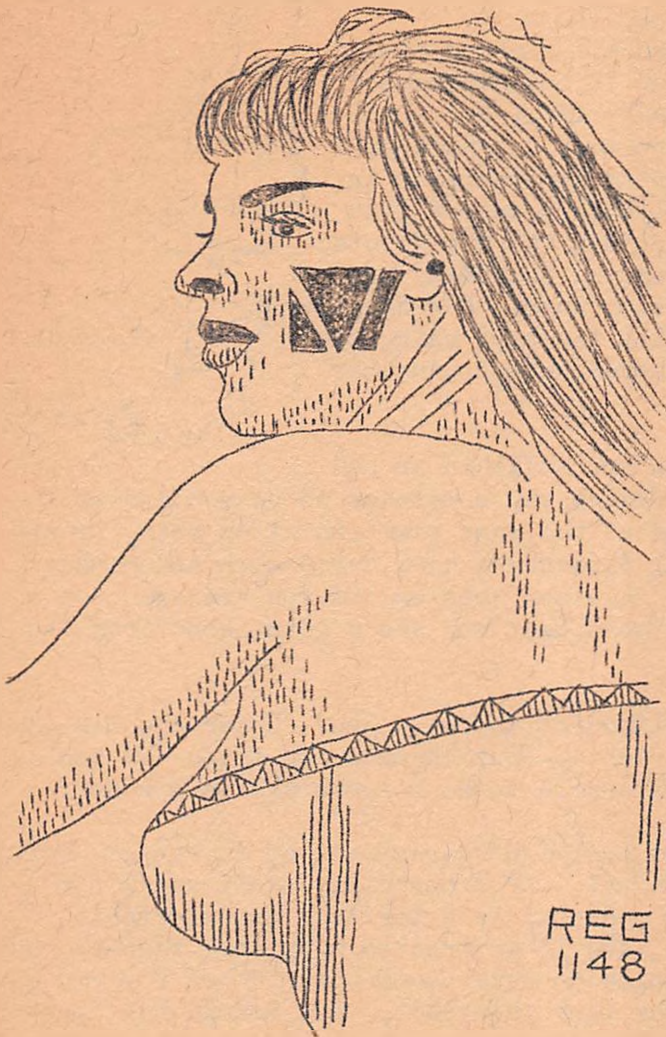
asked me to find them some good representational illoors. What they want is someone who has what most of the fans have. . . a sense of design, an individual approach, clarity, cleanliness and aptness of thought and all that BUT also someone who is sufficiently disciplined as a draughtsman that he can do a straight, communicative, representational (which is to say realistic) illo. And there's the rub. All my fan-artist friends are stylists FIRST and draughtsmen second.

I kinda got nuttsy stylistic once in a while because I've been trying to expand the vocabulary of both the SF reader and artist (the art vocabulary) and perhaps I've (or someone) succeeded to the extent that much FANart (from where the newer pros are likely to come) has gone all style. Those who are interested in drawing such a prosaic thing as a human figure (not all but most) are imitating the tricks (not the draughtsmanship) of Jones doing Frazetta.

In other words, where can I find a plain old illustrator? Even the art schools turn out style before content. Students learn drip-painting in art schools before they learn even the color-wheel and few learn the simple co-ordination between hand and eye called draughtsmanship.

Jerry Lapidus, 54 Clearview Drive, Pittsford, New York 14534

By now, you should know about the revived University of Chicago Science Fiction Society. This was mainly my doing. The main thing to remember (when starting a sf club,) is not to be discouraged by a lack of fans. Most colleges these days have many science fiction readers; it's but a short stop from this to fandom, and your formation of a group on campus is really all that's necessary. I started with five people you could really call fans and have at least ten people going to Baycon. Of course, my position was better than most. I worked on the student newspaper, and as such was able to get free ads in the paper and dittomd signs madeup. A couple of 'actifans should be able to whip up a couple programs to hold sf readers for two meetings, and after that they're hooked! If any pros live in your area, do not hesitate to contact them. For the final meeting of the Chicago Club this season, we had A. J. Budrys and Fred Saberhagen down for a writer's program. // There is an sf-readers group here in Columbia, at the University of Missouri campus. I've pushed and talked; but I see no indication that any of them will become a real fan. They are all good friends, though, and I certainly enjoy the club! Thus far this year, we have gotten the University to show a science fiction film marathon (we picked the films, with one exception) we talked the library into buying some books for us, and we are showing a film marathon of our own. Activo! HL //



Yeah, Femme Fans is an interesting subject. I always sort of wonder. . . "if the girl is really cool, why is she wasting her time sitting at a typewriter when she could be out with boys, etc. . ." But, then I look at Mushling Reed or some femme fans comparable and they shoot that thinking out the window! Being in fandom won't particularly net a girl a boyfriend unless she is in some local fandom or gets around to lots of cons. Otherwise, the boy-girl relationship (if that is what she seeks) might as well be a lonely-hearts pen pal thing. /* I don't know about most femme fans but when I'm sitting at a typer, I usually am with boys, or at least Hank. Besides, being a fan already gives you an in with male fans, you already have lots to talk about when you meet them for the first time in person. LMC */

Roy Tackett, 915 Green Valley Road NW, Albuquerque, N. Mex. 87107

Lesleigh mentions the Civil Rights Law of 1964 and attitudes towards women in both her article and the letter column. A few thoughts come to mind. . .

Shortly after the law became law the opinion was expressed that it made illegal such things as the separation of sex in "Help Wanted" advertisement in the newspapers. The JOURNAL lumped them all together for a while and then went back to Help Wanted, Male, and Help Wanted, Female.

One of the more amusing incidents was related to me by a friend who is the leader of a Boy Scout troop. A woman showed up at one of his meetings with her daughter in tow and wanted her enrolled in the Boy Scouts. Paul tried to tell her about the Girl Scouts but the woman wasn't interested. . . she knew about the Girl Scouts she said and she wanted her daughter in the Boy Scouts! She quoted Paul the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to prove that her daughter was entitled to join the Boy Scouts! Paul agreed finally and walked over and removed the "Men" and "Women" signs off the doors of the toilets/showers. Her daughter would, he told the woman, join right in with the boys using the same toilet, showers, etc. The woman gathered up her daughter and left.



Lesleigh is correct, though, in that women are still in an odd position in relation to men. And a lot of what she complains about would seem to be because they say they want equality and at the same time insist on being treated as something special. Like you've just finished a hard day's work and manage to get a seat on the bus on the way home. A woman gets on and you are expected to give her your seat even though you are dead beat and she's going home from the beauty parlor or somesuch!

Or let's say you and a woman are both employed at the same job. Under the law she must be paid the same as you -- which is right -- but chances are there are some duties involved that she will claim she is unable to do because she is a woman.

Do women really want equality? What would Lesleigh's reaction be, to, on say being drafted and sent to combat duty in Indo-China? /* I certainly can't speak for all women, but I think that being up on a pedestal is a terribly uncomfortable position. I think women want to be equal, and to be treated with some respect, but not as something special. You know, it's nice to have people open doors for you and such, when there's no particular reason why they shouldn't. But nobody has ever

given me their seat on the bus. I can remember standing for 15 minutes while trying to hold half a dozen books with nary a man offering me his seat. Not that I expected anyone to, it just would have been nice. I don't really think that there are that many jobs at which women are employed which involves duties women can't do. I had a job at an accounting firm this summer and I was the one who got to put all the heavy files away. (That got pretty tiresome.) It was the office girls who did things like take the trash out every morning. As for drafting women, I'd love to have a draft dard to burn. LMC */

Bill Marsh, P.O. Box 785, Sparks, Nevada

Miss Couch's article struck me as rather pointless and insipid; as an example I quote the fourth paragraph on page 10:

But the real "problems" for a girl in fandom results 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.

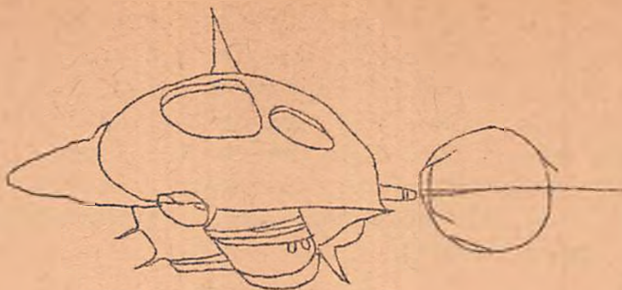
Really now! . . . Is the male side of fandom all that preoccupied with sex, or is it that Miss Couch is just naturally the greatest thing since Hershey bars and thus irresistibly provoking. I suggest that it is Miss Couch that has the sex hangup

(he sez thumbing through his old college psch text and his Robert Bloch collection. . .) and not eternally lusting male fandom. In any event, powder-room gossip material of this nature should be more properly directed to Ladies Home Journal or True Romances in the future. /*I can only assume from your comments that you, a) did not read my article thoroughly, or b) know nothing about fans personally, or c) for some reason have no interest in females. LMC Fact: Fandom tends to be male oriented. In the past, this was even more true than it is now, a number of girls have recently become active. A girl in fandom does have problems -- Lesleigh's article was about those problems, and if you don't think they exist, then I really doubt if you are in a position to be able to tell. . .but, perhaps I can expect nothing more from someone who finds Hershey bars sexually provoking. HL */

Steve Johnson, 1018 North 31st Street, Corvallis, Oregon 97330

We drove out to Wausau, Wisconsin over the Ozark-on weekend, and as we travelled, I could imagine the revelries you were probably indulged in, especially Saturday -- since we couldn't find a motel room and had to sleep in the car, and because I'm not one to actually sleep in those circumstances, I pretended that I was at the con. It was a strange convention, the way I imagined it. I kept getting the image of smoke filled rooms (the order of incense and other strange and diverse chemical agents was very prominent) and rock music was playing loudly on many stereo sets. (I remember hearing "Toad" 6





or 11 times.) I wonder if I tuned in on the wrong con? /* Imagining a con is pretty weird, but you did tune in the right con. LMC */

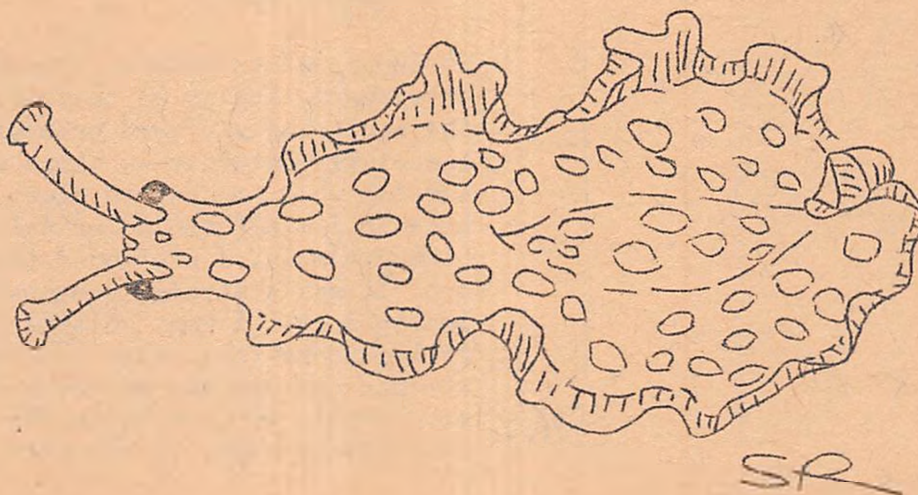
WE ALSO HEARD FROM:

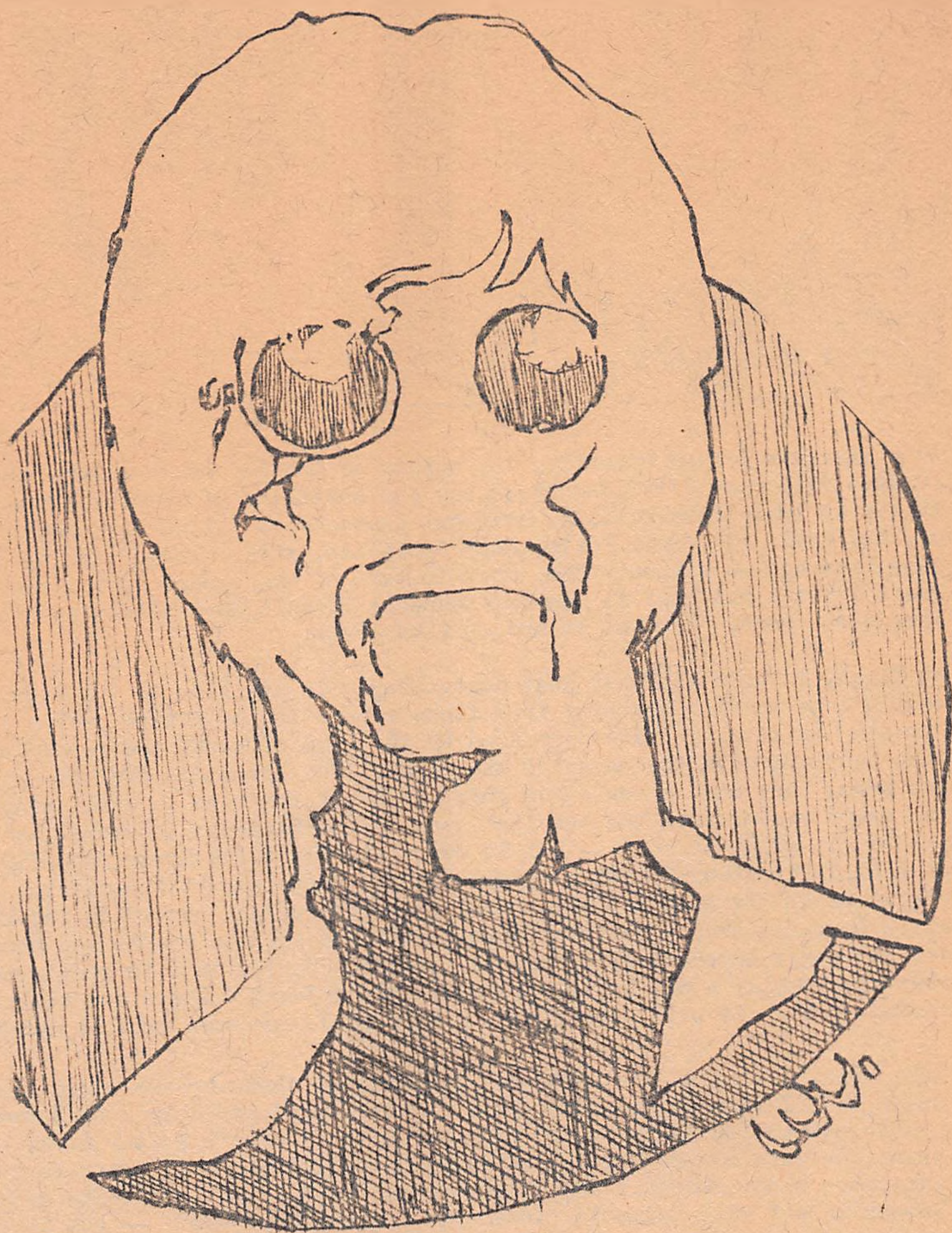
Mark somebody -- he didn't put his last name on the letter, and I don't have any idea at this point who it is -- he said, "Please don't print this -- just read it." Okay ## Gary N. Hubbard wrote me. Gary is one of those few people now around who saw the first few Starlings -- thank goodness. Part of his letter starts, "I remember when. . ." So do I, but you needn't have reminded me! He also says, in reaction to Lesleigh's article last time, "The last time I was in fandom (back in 64) there were femiefans to be sure but they were mostly fat old ladies, and fat old ladies are everywhere. Throw a rock in a crowd and you'll hit a fat old lady." ## Dick Flinchbaugh wrote, and promised me some artwork -- "biggies too." I thought I might take this opportunity to remind him. . . ## Ken Rudolph wrote, and had one important factor to add to Lesleigh's observations: ". . . the run-of-the-mundane girl has one built-in disadvantage (other than tendencies to vapidness) for the trufan. How can one explain and justify the absorption in fandom?" ## Keith Fieldhammer says that I write just the way that I talk, and so does Chris Couch. Oh, sure. ##

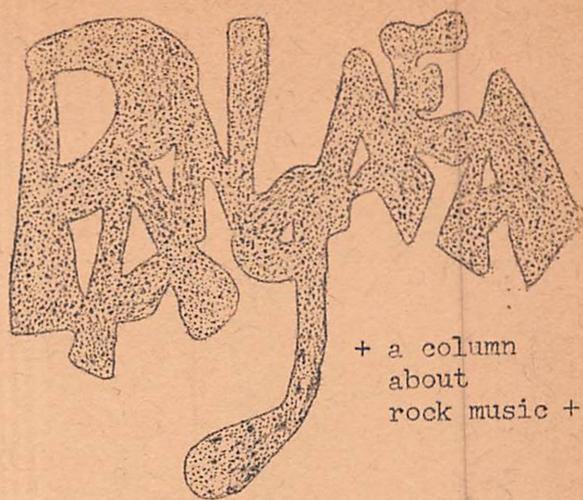
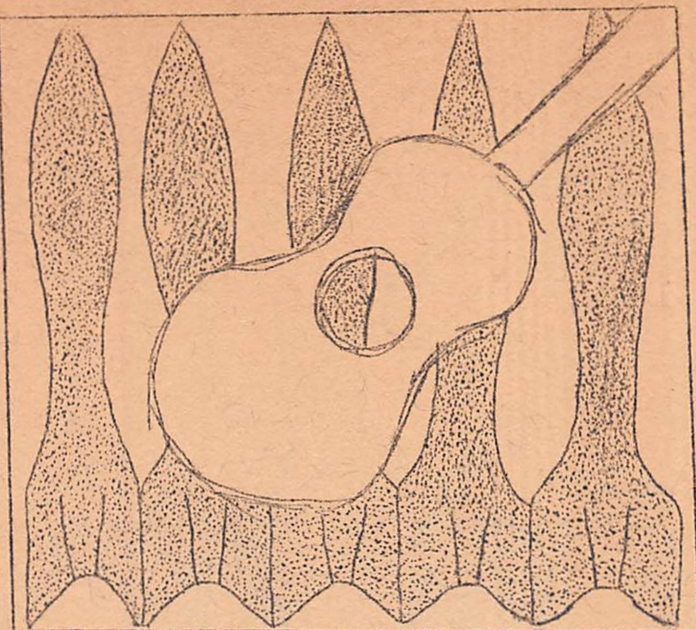
Then, finally, all I have left on my desk are letters from Dennis Cloud, Darrell Schweitzer, Mike Raub, Jim Ashe, Edward R. Smith, Seth Johnson, James Dorr, Gene Klein, W. G. Bliss, Paul Powlesland, Leif Andersson and Pat Barnwell.

In case you didn't notice, there isn't anything in this letter column about 2001 or rock music. I'm trying something a little different -- those comments will be included in other parts of the fanzine, in columns centered around those two themes.

Lesleigh and I are terribly eager to get your letters on this issue!







+ a column
about
rock music +

In a magazine I read recently, the author of the pop music column spent just about a full page detailing break-ups and shuffling of members among rock bands. It was an impressive listing, somewhat depressing. Things like the Cream breaking up, the Lovin' Spoonful losing John Sebastian, after already losing Zal Yanovsky some time ago -- without them, what is left of the group? Just a name. -- Blood, Sweat & Tears had lost Al Kooper, founder; Buffalo Springfield and the Electric Flag were gone. It went on and on like that.

At first, I found all that just depressing. In addition to the fact that I wouldn't be hearing anything from these groups in the future, which I found depressing in itself, I was depressed by the kind of stuff the recording companies were pulling with the names of the bands. The Lovin' Spoonful is still around, you know, they have a new album out. At least the name is still around, I think the only member from the original group is Joe Butler. I haven't heard the new record, it might be good -- but it certainly isn't The Lovin' Spoonful, and I sort of find it irritating that a completely new group should inherit the commercial status of an old one. The commercial logistics of the recording industry make it silly to throw away a profitable name just because the people who made it profitable are no longer interested, I suppose.. Buffalo Springfield is still around, too; they are to play a St. Louis gig soon. Blood Sweat & Tears are still very much around, too -- it will probably be a very good band even without Kooper.

But, then, I started to think what each one of these breaks would mean to the music that I listen to, eventually. . . There will probably 2 or 3 new groups, lead by the members of Cream -- and any band with Clapton's guitar work, or with Baker's drums, or with Bruce's lyrics, singing, harp, guitar -- is going to be a pretty exciting band, indeed. And while a good Blood, Sweat and Tears still remains, Kooper is off with Columbia records doing god-knows-what -- but it will all be on records eventually, and we'll be able to hear it. We already have the wild Super Session thing; Kooper, along with Steve Stills (from the old Springfield) and Mike Bloomfield (from the Electric Flag.) In fact, it seems like every time a major band breaks up, the talented members sort of explode all over the landscape like seeds out of a pod, each growing a new band, doing new, individual things.

Really, I don't think bands should be the static arrangements that they have been in the past. "Bands," in the past, or at least the names of bands, have been just sort of a brand-name thing, anyway, important mostly because they were familiar to purchasers of records. There is no reason the professional musicians associated with progressive rock music should be bound by purely commercial considerations which have developed around mass-appeal popular music.

* * * * *

I've been to a whole bunch of concerts since the last Starling: Canned Heat, Jefferson Airplane, Big Brother & the Holding Company, The Jimi Hendrix Experience, The Doors -- and I think I should mention the sets by Food, Dancing & Entertainment, Mad River and Notes from the Underground at the Baycon.

I don't remember much about the Canned Heat concert; I remember I enjoyed it, and was very impressed with the band, but the concert took place in a roller rink, it was uncomfortable, smokey and hot, and the acoustics were terrible, with an even worse than normal public address system.

The Jefferson Airplane has an extremely polished concert. Their sound is very well balanced, with no instrument too loud or not loud enough, the lyrics clearly audible. I thought it was one of the most professionally staged concerts which I had ever attended. But, at the same time, I found it slightly disappointing. The things which make live concerts worthwhile are the spontaneous jams, the extended elaborations of musical themes given only minimal exploration on records, the stage presence of the performers. The Airplane just played their hits, and while they played them very well indeed, and while Grace Slick is gorgeous, I found the concert on the whole much less exciting than many other rock concerts I've seen. Like for instance . . .

Big Brother and the Holding Company. There have been rumors/indications for some time that Janis Joplin, lead singer with Big Brother, was going to quit the band to find some other backers. I haven't heard anything definite on this, though. Joplin is fabulous, and at least as long as Joplin is with them, the Big Brother is a band well worth seeing. Joplin sings a raunchy, wild, frenzied rock/blues, some of the most exciting singing I have ever heard, while the band provides a usually competent backing, though I can't help but think that it is a shame they can't provide the wild, frenzied, raunchy backing she deserves. When the Big Brother played in St. Louis, there were three other groups from out of town booked with them, plus a whole bunch of St. Louis groups. I only recall two of the other out of town groups, Ford Theatre (terrible) and Iron Butterfly (quite good -- they only did a very short set, if there had been time, I certainly wouldn't have minded hearing much more of them). The third group, the one I don't remember, was also pretty bad. By the time Big Brother got on the stage, the officials of the auditorium where all of this was taking place wanted to close the place up for the night -- house rules, you know. Everyone was terribly disappointed at not hearing more of the act they had come to see -- it took the ushers a long time to clear the building of grumbling fans. The next day, Big Brother did a two hour free concert in the park to make up for the previous night's disaster. It was neat.

The two most recent concerts attended were the Jimi Hendrix Experience and The Doors. Both were impressive. I liked the Hendrix concert best. Hendrix's drummer, Mitch Mitchell, is extraordinary, as is the bassist, Noel Redding. And Hendrix, of course, is one of the most original and exciting guitarists in rock today -- I devoted this column to him last issue. One of the reasons Hendrix, and the other major rock guitarists, are sounding so good with their instruments is that they are playing them like electric guitars, instead of playing them like amplified acoustic guitars. It is possible to do an incredible amount of things with an electric guitar and



a powerful amplifier system that is beyond the scope of acoustic guitars, and it takes a performer who is really familiar with the techniques of electric guitar to begin to fully use the instrument. Jimi Hendrix is certainly one of the leaders in electric guitar technique. And he combines this with some fine writing and a spectacular stage act. Playing a guitar with your feet or your teeth may not be too artistic, but it really knocks me out to see someone put a guitar in front of his face and play a complicated lead, like the one to "Purple Haze."

Hendrix did one real neat thing at his concert. In St. Louis, Kiel Auditorium is our local Rock Palace, our Midwestern Fillmore -- or something -- which certainly says something about the state of affairs in St. Louis. Kiel is where Big Brother had all the trouble. The Kiel management won't let the audience stand or walk around during the performances, so they were quite upset when everyone got up while Hendrix was playing, and crowded around the stage. Somebody went up and told Hendrix that he would have to tell us to sit down, but instead, he told the audience that for the next number he wanted everyone to stand -- the next number was going to be the National Anthem. And, sure enough, he started ripping into the familiar cords beginning our National Anthem. He worked this gradually into the sounds of battle -- machine guns, planes flying over, bombs dropping and exploding -- and then back into the anthem. He alternated these two themes for a while, and then finally worked into another of his own songs, the final number for the set. I think he was trying to make some point, perhaps. It was pretty impressive.

Robbie Krieger really plays an electric guitar, too. Krieger is lead with the Doors. Lately, I've begun to think of the Doors in two units: one, Jim Morrison, lead singer and underground sex symbol, and two, the other members of the band, some of the most original and talented musicians in the field. Morrison has a great deal of talent. He is an excellent singer with a fabulous sense of drama: the way he delivered his most famous line, "We want the world and we want it now!" in St. Louis was completely unexpected (completely different from his records) and -- well -- positively evil. And his lyrics have at times been incredibly good, some of the finest poetry to emerge from the whole field. But. . . I've thought some of his recent songs pretty insipid, and I'm completely turned off by the personality he sees fit to broadcast. he must have something, though, there were girls running all over the stage after him, risking life and limb to pet Morrison a bit, and hoping, I imagine, that they'd be able to do much more than to just pet him. And these aren't 12 or 13 year old Monkee fans, either, most of these girls look like they are closer to 20 than to 10. I sort of thought progressive rock fans were too smart to create an Elvis Presley-type sex symbol, but I guess I'm quite wrong. Despite all this, though, the Doors are a great band, the drummer, the lead guitar, the organist, are all fine performers.



I enjoyed the Doors' concert best while the band was jamming and doing their extended instrumentals. Morrison did a greatly expanded version of Willie Dixon's "Back Door Man," which I thought was extremely -- well -- logical, or something. It reflected perfectly the type of image he sees fit to place before the world. I thought it was well done, but at the same time it irritated me, because, as I've already mentioned, I don't like Morrison's stage personality. (Probably, I'm not supposed to. . .)

* * * * *

Just for the record here. . . I want to comment on Baycon's rock shows. I've run across a few things in fanzines about the "bad rock bands" at the Worldcon. For what my opinion is worth, I can't agree completely. I thought the first band, Food, Dancing and Entertainment was a very enjoyable, talented, and promising group. They were a very new group,

you know, but even so, they sounded very good, if slightly inexperienced. They showed some weaknesses, but nothing that couldn't be improved by practice and by being together for a while. Their whole set was one number, called "Slow Motion Ocean" -- it was quite original, quite nice. The second band, Mad River, was a mediocre blues/rock band. They were best while they were doing standard electric blues things, and worst when they performed their own material, which was rather bad. They were terrible while trying to do humorous stuff. They seemed in a hurry to get done and leave, perhaps they had a bad night, maybe they are a better band than it seemed to me with that brief exposure -- and even then, I wouldn't call them a bad band; just mediocre, they are a thousand times better than most bands I listen to here in the midwest. Mad River has a record out, I haven't listened to it. I really shouldn't comment on the third band, Notes from the Underground. I didn't really get to listen to them. By that time we were in the next room running a St. Louis in 69 party -- I could listen only through the wall. But they sounded good -- they were doing long things, jamming; it sounded nice. Reliable Sources tell me that they were good, their jams were inspired, they grooved with the weird audience.

* * * * *

Last issue I asked for comments on concerts in other areas -- I don't see everybody. Jay Kinney sent along some interesting notes: "The Byrds gave a competent but uninspiring concert of their hits. They appeared with four other groups and the group that was just before them, The Bangor Flying Circus was so tremendous (they played non-stop, had sirens and machine-gun fire recorded and played at top volume, plus the 3 of them are tremendous instrumentalists) that they stole the show from the Byrds. ## Cream and Mothers of Invention appeared together. The Cream were great -- but I was impressed with Jack and Ginger more than with Eric. The Mothers hammed around well. . . though they had a 20 minute pure instrumental thing which was alright but not socko. Zappa is unbelievable though -- you should see them. ## Skip the Blue Cheer. Their lp is decent if you turn it way up. . . but on stage you can't hear the words at all. . . and otherwise they are largely just a loud, basic rhythm unit." /* I commented on a St. Louis Cream concert last time. . . I thought The Mother's instrumental things were great when I saw them in New York -- it made me wish that Zappa would try something like that on his next record, rather than more of his put-ons, parodies and satires. Enough of The Mother's amazing skill shows on all their records, including their recent Rubin and the Jets, to make me continue to hope that. -HL*/

And some general comments on last issue's column:

Doug Lovenstein, 425 Coolville Ridge, Athens, Ohio 45701

I don't think Hendrix plays electric blues. Clapton, yes, but not Hendrix. I tend to think of Hendrix's stuff as "acid rock" or *psy-kee-dilik* music, but the closest to blues he's ever gotten is probably his version of "Hey Joe."

Clapton does beautiful electric blues -- but it sort of shocked me when I read that Clapton is considered possibly the best in the world. I can almost play anything Clapton can, and god knows I'm nothing. I'd say the average blues lead player who has played for, say, four years could do anything Clapton can. I think he is great, but not because of his ability, but because I dig blues, and the blues he plays. I dare say I'll be every bit as good as Clapton is now in, say, a year. No boast -- really! -- it's true.

Hendrix, on the other hand, is fabulous. His leads are infinitely more



complicated and difficult than Clapton's, and Hendrix, baby, is the originator. There's the difference. You're right -- the bit about who's better being ridiculous, but even if Hendrix was not not the better player -- he is doing revolutionary things and that's what counts. His leads and music and ideas came completely from him, with very little influences, while Clapton's are standard blues leads, played with more skill than usual and Clapton's own touch (of course). The thing is, Clapton isn't doing anything fantastically different, while Hendrix is.

/* I think Hendrix's primary influences are old blues men, electric blues men like B. B. King -- King has been playing funky electric blues for ages. Bloomfield, even, was playing freaky blues guitar leads before Hendrix. That isn't to detract from Hendrix's originality -- I talked about that last issue -- but he has had influences, everyone has. Freaky guitar leads didn't spring full born from his brow. --HL */

Redd Boggs, PO Box 1111, Berkeley, California 94701

"Pangaea" is mildly interesting, and I read it despite such puzzling remarks as ". . . people currently making sounds with which I communicate" (you mean "connect" maybe?) and such improbable claims as that one Jimi Hendrix plays his guitar with his feet. (If that's the case, it seems to show that he isn't really playing the guitar at all, in the sense that one plays a conventional, non-electric guitar, but only making some noise that his fans respond to.) I was fascinated to learn that Hendrix "has all the precise control over the English language that I'd expect from a gifted, educated poet" after you quote one of his lyrics: "Pffffffttt!!! Pop!! Bang!! Etc!!!!" I wonder how you can tell from a concert whether a particular rock group is "really great" or not. All the rock music I've heard was so over-amplified that any subtle effects couldn't be heard over the reverberations, echoes, feedback, and other extraneous noises. Besides, after a while one's ears are deafened. Possibly rock records are better because you don't have to play them too damn loud, and some musical effects come through. But how do you know, then, whether the effects originate from the performers credited on the label or whether they are due to a skillful sound engineer who erases flubs and dubs in better effects, etc.? My eyes tell me that most rock musicians are clumsy, untrained, unskilled -- no musicians at all, in any real sense. They are mere noise makers. One can see that they know nothing about their instruments except in the most rudimentary way. They would flunk High School Orchestra Class. The drummer in a local Berkeley group called The Loading Zone plays his drum with the wrong end of the sticks. No doubt he'd claim he gets wild new effects that way, but I suspect he does it through mere ignorance.

/* There are more bad musicians in rock music than in any other field, I'm sure. Rock musicians play to less sophisticated audiences. Probably, the worst Nashville country & western side man, or the most mediocre professional in any large city easy-listening dance band knows more about music, and plays his instrument better, than the vast majority of rock musicians. And most rock bands, even good ones, tend to play their stuff too loud. Their unsophisticated audiences, unfortunately, demand it. But, at the same time, rock music should be loud -- not too loud, but -- it is supposed to be a basic music, an exciting music, a loud music. Striking a balance between loud-enough and-too loud is difficult, especially when too-loud is very commercial. There are a number of fine musicians in rock music -- Al Kooper, Mike Bloomfield, Eric Clapton, Ginger Baker, Jack Bruce, Frank Zappa, George Martin, Robbie Krieger -- those names are some of the best. There are many others, though perhaps not enough, and perhaps, also, they tend to be buried beneath the garbage pile of less-skilled people, unless one is really willing to listen. I listen, so do a lot of other people. Don't knock the rock. HL*/



Hank Davis, Box 154, Loyal, Ky. 40854

Fascinating about Pangaea. . . it was interesting, though I didn't know what

you were talking about half the time. Like, Eric Clapton who? But when you said "historic figures like. . . Elvis Presley" -- oof! That made me feel old. After all, Elvis got rolling when I was in sixth grade and was still going strong while I was in high school.

Pop music has improved, though -- from 100% (well, maybe 99.9%) crud to 95% crud or so; which isn't bad, considering that it can't get better than 90% crud according to Sturgeon's Revelation (not Law). Still, I'm insulated from it fairly well. In the case of records, I know from experience that pop is a poor investment, so I'm leery of shelling out cash for a disk on which there will be, maybe, only one number that I like. And in the case of radio, I hate having to listen to twenty stinkers (not to mention commercials) to hear one tune that I like. /*When I included that short list of "historic figures. . ." last issue, I sort of wondered how many people would find it slightly shocking -- those people are actually very contemporary, and historic only when compared to what happened in rock last week or so. And, you really needn't sneer so at the average pop album today -- the Young Rascals or the Kingsmen or Paul Revere and the Raiders may not be good enough to produce an entire album worth listening to, but most progressive rock groups worth the name are. . . For instance: Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band, The Beatles (Beatles), Disraeli Gears, Wheels of Fire (Cream), The Doors, Strange Days (Doors), Axis: Bold as Love, Electric Lady Land (Hendrix Experience), -- but this is silly, I could go on though all my favorite groups. -- HL */

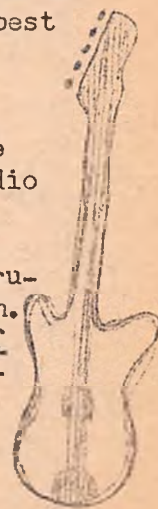
Richard Gordon, 236 Ladykirk Road, Benwell, Newcastle-on-Tyne NE 4 8AL, England

There's a whole new crop of fantastic groups that have sprung up /*in Britain*/, of a type and nature not hitherto seen before in pop music. One of the best, but untypical of the move towards intellectualism, have done what is perhaps the track containing the fastest and most technically incredible piece of guitar music ever put on a blues record -- "I'm Going Home" by The Years After. This comes from the album Undead which as a matter of fact was first released in the U.S. to coincide with a tour the group's been making in your country. So perhaps you've already seen them. If not then you've missed something. I'm still kicking myself for missing them when they played here last March.

Alvin Lee, once characterised as "The fastest guitarist on Earth" is the miracle worker responsible in the main for this live album, although the other three musicians are extremely competent. His style, generally unfuzzed, is perhaps reminiscent of Mike Bloomfield's, but with all due respect to the latter, he hasn't got Lee's talent or speed. This isn't to put down Bloomfield -- it's to put Lee up on the same level as Clapton and perhaps potentially above it. This album's the best live blues-jazz to emerge out of the last year, most likely.

The British avant-garde in pop music is going in a slightly different direction to the U.S. avant-garde. While you've got, or have had, groups like Electric Flag, and the Mothers, and so on, specialising in complicated studio productions which are neo-political in content and jazz-blues in essential influence; some British groups are going through what can only be called a neo-classical phase. The Nice, who recently produced a controversial instrumental version of Bernstein's "America," turn out unlimited adaptations of Bach. The Pink Floyd recently made a truly incredible album called A Saucerful of Secrets; science fiction music, the title track reminiscent only in weirdness and style of the electronic emanations of 2001 or perhaps the last movement of Holst's Planets. The Moody Blues have an album, In Search of the Last Chord, which is selling better in the U.S. than here, which is full of politely anglicised Hinduisms which just succeed in not being phoney because of the evident care and feeling that went into the production --

(Continued on page 17)



Some thoughts
on Moses

+ cartoons by Jack Gaughan +



Moses, if I've
told you
once I've
told you
ten times



Sunnuvagun!
there's one I never
even thought of!



