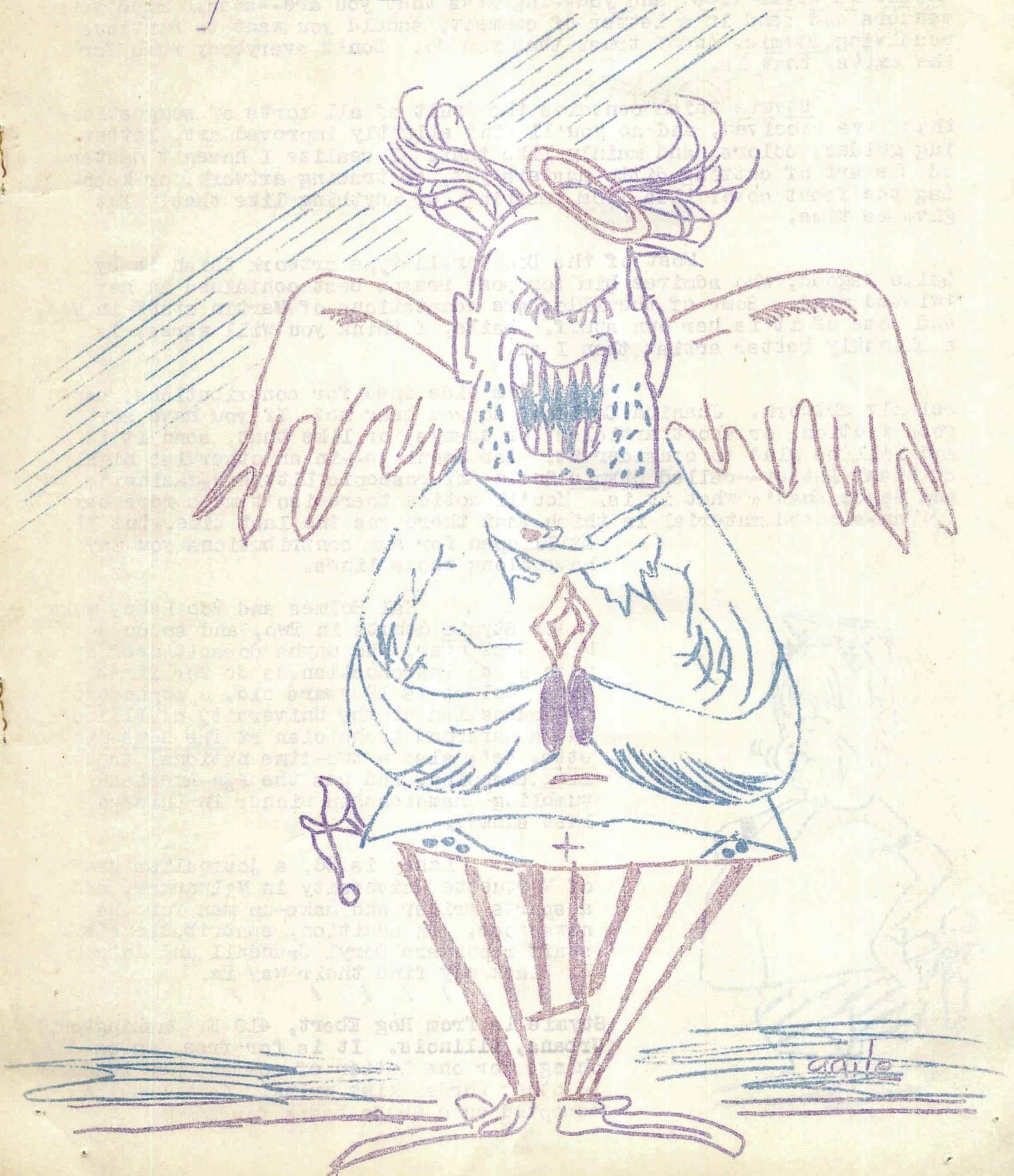


stymie two



Back-of-the-Page (A Dep't.)--This is Stymie Two, the second in a badly botched series of masterpieces from Rog Ebert, you should know better. Stymie is still free, and you--ingrates that you are--should mind your manners and send in a letter of comment, should you want to continue receiving Stymie. And I trust that you do. Don't everybody rush for the exits, that is.

Stymie thish contains the fruit of all sorts of suggestions that I've received, and so you'll find slightly improved art, lettering guides, colors, and mainly like that. I realize I haven't mastered the art of cutting ditto masters yet, or tracing artwork, or keeping the front cover illo from smearing, or anything like that. But give me time.

Most of the Don Martin-type artwork thish is by Gaile Osgood, who admires him for some reason best contained in her twisted mind. Some of the illos are adaptations of Martin stuff in Mad, and some of it is her own stuff. Gaile, I think you will agree, is a slightly better artist than I am.

I'm wide open for contributions, especially artwork. Juanita Coulson, do you hear me? If you have any good fiction, or short articles, or essays, or like that, send it in and I'll be glad to consider it. Bob Jennings--in an otherwise highly critical letter--called Stymie One a "microscopic Little Magazine," and maybe that's what it is. You'll notice there isn't much more stf or fan-slanted material in thish than there was the last time, but I'm still open for any contributions you may have along those lines.

Hal Holmes and Bob Lahey make their Stymie debuts in Two, and so does Mike Deckinger, who maybe doesn't need as much of an introduction as do the first two. Holmes is 19 years old, a sophomore in journalism at the University of Illinois, and a darkroom technician at The News-Gazette. He's also a two-time national tumbling champion, and was the Pan-American tumbling championship winner in Chicago last summer.

Lahey is 26, a journalism grad of Marquette University in Milwaukee, and a sports writer and make-up man for the newspaper. In addition, contributions by staff reporters Coryl Crandall and Joseph W. Black may find their way in.

Stymie is from Rog Ebert, 410 E. Washington, Urbana, Illinois. It is for free, in exchange for one letter of comment per issue. In other words, like write. Contributions accepted on a trade basis for Stymie.



The Sparkle at First

By Roy Ebert--

The tall magician drove a 1949 Ford when I saw him last, and it was an old car and dusty from the miles he had driven that day.

He stopped it in front of Leal School, and I stood with my friends and watched him as he walked around the car to open the door for his wife.

She was a--we had a word for it--beautiful woman. Perhaps not with the world-beauty of Paris or New York, but with an inside beauty that all children learn to recognize and then forget about again. She smiled at us, and her eyes crinkled up around the corners just like in the Saturday Evening Post covers, only eyes really crinkle up like that once in a while, and hers did.

She said, "It's only eleven, Harry; let's get something to eat first." He didn't say anything until he had lifted a black trunk from the trailer behind the Ford and carried it into the Leal School auditorium.

Then the magician and his wife drove off in their 1949 Ford, and we stood there looking after it and drawing circles in the dust with our bare feet and tingling inside because of the magic show that afternoon.

The magician was sponsored by the United Christian Federation, and had come to town last year and the year before and who knows how long before then. I suppose we thought his trips reached back in an unbroken time-line to the dawn of our town and that he always came in the summer and gave a show in the afternoon and another in the evening, and left, and



1915 was back there a piece...

Recently a small treasure came into my possession; a temporary treasure to be sure, for I must return it to its jealous owner in good time and good condition, but meanwhile it is mine--all mine. It's a book. But now, before you snort and pass on to the comics of the letters in the rear of this fanzine, pause a moment and be reassured that this is not just another book review or other airy filler designed to pad out the pages for a desperate editor. Why, fifteen rival editors bid for this work!

The Vaudeville Year Book: 1915 is a small volume, the kind of thing usually described in reviews as "a slim volume of verse." One hundred pages on slick paper, bound in hardcovers and sold for fifty cents, it was published in Chicago probably in the spring or summer of 1915 by the "Vaudeville Year Book Company," which was probably a front for the Western Vaudeville Manager's Association, a kind of octopus that maintained a stranglehold on vaudeville theaters in the Midwest for many years. You don't have to be a theater buff to enjoy this book, but it helps. On the other hand, if your interest in Vaudeville extends no further than Sullivan's Sunday night hour of charm on TV, pass along to the comics and the letters after all, because old-time vaudeville is quite the same thing.

In 1915, vaudeville was king and motion pictures were merely an added attraction which some theaters offered as a bonus. Large theaters in all kinds of cities were built--and profited--on "three a day": a show in the afternoon, and two more at night. Some theaters also offered movies, as noted above, but others rolled along merrily until the tidal wave struck. The tidal wave was talking pictures, beginning late in 1926 and never slowing as it came to full flower in 1930. Vaudeville never recovered from the twin punches of the 1929 market crash and the arrival of "the talkies." Well, my 1915 Year Book.

A vaudeville act, good, bad or indifferent, sought "time." "Time" was the expression used to denote the length of employment in any given season. A poor or unlucky act might find four or five weeks of time and then starve the balance of the year; a good act, or a lucky one pulling the right strings, could wind up with fifty-two or a hundred and four weeks of time over the major circuits. These major circuits were the kingpins of the vaudeville world because of the time they had to offer. An act which hit it off well or displayed real merit would get an offer to play the entire circuit--the actor might say that he had made "fifty-two weeks of Orpheum time."

Snagging fifty-two continuous weeks of work was quite a feat because it was the custom in those days to close the theaters during the summer; air conditioning was ~~a~~ unheard of, and the summertime was

by BOB TUCKER

1915 was back there a piece...

traditionally outdoor amusement time. Hundreds, perhaps thousands of baseball teams took to the road, and circuses, carnivals and fairs grabbed the public's attention. Those theaters which did remain open often switched to movies for the summer months, counting on the cheap novelty to make a few dollars; some of them mixed movies and vaudeville until cool weather returned and the regular crowds came back. Thirty-nine or forty weeks of time was considered a good season, in much the same way TV operates today. Anything over that was gravy. The Australian circuits used to lure American acts down there with guarantees of fifty-two and hundred-and-four weeks of time, plus steamer passage paid going and coming.

In addition to the traditional "three a day," vaudeville theaters had another time-honored fixture, the "split-week." Most programs were changed on Mondays and Thursdays, except those in a few cities which permitted Sunday shows. An act arrived in town Sunday night or Monday morning and opened its split-week at a given theater. After the closing show on Wednesday night it picked up bag and baggage and caught a train to the next town to open Thursday. (In large metropolitan areas like New York or Chicago it might do no more than move to another theater across town.) Actors cursed their fates and wrung their hands when they missed a train, for it often meant missing the opening show the next afternoon. And actors wanted to wring their agent's neck when that culprit failed to get a second date for them that week. The split-week was lost and they worked only half of it. The happiest arrangement, then, was that one where an act was hired for "the Orpheum time." Dates were so arranged that the act was hired for dates way down the string from one Orpheum theater to another until the circuit was exhausted; it then returned to Chicago, or, by pre-arrangement, jumped over to the Butterfield circuit and started the process anew. (The remains of the Butterfield circuit still exists today in Michigan--a string of picture houses.)

In Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, the Orpheum Theater there was new and a part of the Finn & Heiman Circuit. Today it belongs to RKO and it is in sad shape, stagewise. I ~~was~~ worked a roadshow there last winter and the ropes were so rotted that they broke, dropping the scenery to the floor of the stage. /This was a production of "Look Home-ward, Angel" starring Merriam Perkins and...ahem...Michael Ebert./ In Bloomington, it was the Majestic Theater, a unit of the Theilen Circuit. Alas, the Majestic is long gone and a bank occupies the spot. But I'm happy to say that I got in on the tail-end of vaudeville before talking pictures and the depression knocked it to hell and gone.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch...my 1915 Year Book was the actor's guide to all this; it listed each and every theater by name and town and circuit; it provided the manager's name and the hour of rehearsal; it gave the railroad fares from Chicago to almost every place in the United States the actor might wish to go; and finally, it offered a thumbnail description of the hundreds upon hundreds of acts playing midwestern time that season. Which is why I consider the book a treasure.

All of the following (except my ^{remarks} ~~notes~~ in parenthesis) are quotes from the Year Book. But first, a brief explanation of the geography of a stage and the esoteric terms applied thereto.

The first few feet of space immediately behind the footlights is called the Apron. An act which works "in Olio" is working on this apron, so near the orchestra that the actors can drool ~~in~~ on the drummer if they but open their mouths. If they need a slightly larger space they work "in One," which means that a curtain or backdrop is hanging on the first set of ropes away from the footlights. "In Two" is double this space. "In Three" is very large; and can mean the entire stage, with the scenery pasted on the back wall. Not all theaters could offer "in Four" because often old scenery and other junk was stored back there. Here, then, is vaudeville forty-five years ago, as quoted from the Year Book:

ALICE TEDDY--The original skating bear--a cinnamon bear that is a bear--the best trained animal of its species in captivity. She skates on rollers, wrestles, clowns. Twelve minutes, full stage.

LADY ALICE'S PETS--Full stage, red plush cyclorama drop. (Velvet curtain hung in a small semi-circle, covering sides and back of stage.) Cage full of all sorts of rats, about 20 or 25 of them. Three different tables with apparatus. Two cats and a dog. Rats climb poles, ladders, walk rope. Lady and gentleman. (This last was often included to tell managers the number of people in the act.)

MR. AND MRS. FREDERICK ALLEN--Comedy sketch, "She Had to Tell Him." Two people. Full stage. (I don't know, yet, if this was Fred Allen and Portland Hoffs. I'm trying to trace it.)

LUOLA BLAISDELL--"Visions La Flame." Full stage, ten minutes, two people. Dramatic soprano in vaudeville's HyTone Electric Feature. Company's drop in three, close in one. (The act carried its own backdrop for full stage work, and then moved up near the footlights to finish.)

CAPT. ADRIAN C. ANSON--Grand old man of baseball. Monologue referring to past events in baseball history. In one.

BATTLING NELSON--Ex-champion pugilist. Monologist. Works in one. Full dress. /?/

BENNY AND WOODS--Two men. "Ten minutes of syncopation." Violin and piano act. Classical and popular numbers. Work in one or olio. Twelve minutes. (This may have been Jack Benny--but I'd certainly like to see that piano working in olio!)



"The performing Kizos..."

more tucker...

BIXLEY & PINK--The Caruso and Melba of Vaudeville. In one. Two men. (Really? Melba's grave must be astir.)

DR. FREDERICK A. COOK--Discoverer of the North Pole, describing his trials and hardships and experiences, with views of different sections. (This fellow, in 1915, was fighting an uphill battle to prove he did discover the Pole.)

LELIA DAVIS & CO.--Two ladies, one man. Full stage. Travesty on love scene in 1953. (Hah! Science fiction!) One lady, very mannish make-up, suspenders holding up skirt, smoking corn cob pipe all thru act. Other lady wears very mannish suit. Man very effeminate make-up.

BELLE GORDON--Lady bag puncher. Full stage. /Hmmm/

HUGH HERBERT & CO.--"Sons of Solomon." Sketch. Four men and two women. Own scenery. (This was the same Herbert who later appeared in numerous movies, a "woo-woo" comedian.)

KENNEY, NOBODY & PLATT--Two men. Fifteen minutes, in one. The originators of Nobody. Character singing comedians in a sketch, "Nobody Paid You."

THE KEATONS--"The Fun Family." Two men, one woman. Own scenery. Full stage. (This is Buster plus his parents, in the days immediately prior to his movie debut. Vaudeville was the hatching ground of much talent.)

TOM LINTON & HIS JUNGLE GIRLS.--~~One~~ man, nine women. Own scenery. Full stage, sixteen minutes. A singing and dancing tropical oddity. (Cool, man, cool!)

THE FOUR MILOS--Original radium platinum posers. World's newest creation. Full stage, ten minutes. (I'll bet this one stops you!)

MENLO MOORE'S "THE PIPES OF PAN"--An elaborate pantomime dancing act in which spectacular effects are introduced. Two men, four women and a carpenter. (This last meant that a stage hand traveled with the show.) Two special sets. Opens in two and closes full stage. A pantomime story of mythology in which Aphrodite, the goddess of love, ~~and~~ and Apollo, the God Pan, and Naiads are introduced. Original descriptive music. Sixteen minutes. Spectacular finish showing terrific storm and lightning bolt crashing into the forest, demolishing huge trees and killing the dancers, revenging Pan's death.

BNOCH, THE COMEDY MAN FISH--One man and a tank.

WILL ROGERS--The Oklahoma Cowboy. Full stage, twelve minutes.

ZELAYA--Man. The eminent pianist. Son of the ex-president of Nicaragua in a series of recitals.

Tucker, concluded

MLLE. NADJE--"The Physical Culture Girl." Lady with a pedestal. Steps leading up to same and swiveled mouthpiece hanging under. Opens with dance in dress, changing to bathing sweater and tights. /My word!/ Does acrobatic, contortion and walking on hands up and down stairs. Does a September Morn pose on pedestal and finishes with a fast teeth revolve. /"Watch my teeth closely, ladies and gentlemen, as they spin around..."/ (Somehow, all this reminds me of Marrying Sam and his special \$3 wedding.)

CHICK SALE--Presents "A Country School Program." In one. (This is the same gentleman who dropped the 'k' from his name and wrote a book making the country outhouse a national pastime. He also turned up in pictures.)

SANTOS & HAYES--One girl weighing about 300, the other about 100. Comedy singing and talking act in one. Most of comedy is on their shapes. For last half of act they change to Buster Brown suits showing a marked difference in their limbs. (And if you don't know Buster Brown, or his suit, or his shoes for that matter, ask father.)

GRACE WILSON--"Personality, that's all." (Grace was and is a singer. She was a fixture on the WLS Saturday Night Barn Dance until that program folded this year.)

OLLIE YOUNG & APRIL--Novelty soap bubbles and diablo manipulators. Man and woman. Full state. (I'm waiting for some bright lad in the audience to pop up and ask me what is a "diablo manipulator.")

These are really only a few of the hundreds of acts listed. Vaudeville consisted of a number of things done over and over again: there was no end of "Arabian" tumblers, Japanese risley artists, roller skaters, bag punchers, high wire and slack wire performers, acrobats, trampoline tumblers, jugglers, clowns, tramps, wonder dogs, wonder horses and wonder cats, dancing bears, singing wolves, trained canaries, clay modelers, posers, physical culture nuts, people who imitated famous paintings, and thousands upon thousands of "singers" and "comedians." Frequently, a man or women would throw in a mixture so as to be sure of entertaining everybody. A juggler would juggle and then perhaps switch to jokes or playing a saxophone; a vocalist would warble and then tell "funny stories" and close by walking up stairs on his hands. Vaudeville was fascinating! I'm sorry the circuits are dead and that Orpheum time is no more.

All right, now turn the page and read the letters...

--Bob Tucker

/One of the biggest pieces of fannish news since FANCY II is the news that Tucker is redoing the Neo-Fan's Guide. Present plans, Bob said during a visit I made to the domicile of he and his charming wife Fern Delores (to whom "Time Bomb" is dedicated) are to print 1,000 copies in cooperation with the NBF for distribution, naturally enough, to neofen./

The Encyclopedia

SALESMAN

(A Tale of the Great Swamp)

Tony Bush was an encyclopedia salesman.

by Roy Tackett

"And a damn good one, too," he told himself as he parked his car in front of the small Carolina town's only hotel. He had to be good considering the dog he was peddling to these hicks here in the South. Tony worked out of New York and was filled with contempt for his customers. He had his pitch down to a fine art--the old malarky about how the prospect had been selected as an outstanding example of intelligence and leadership in his particular area and how the company wanted him to be a showcase for the books. The old oil worked almost every time with the prospect buying the books "at a special reduced rate for letting us use your name."

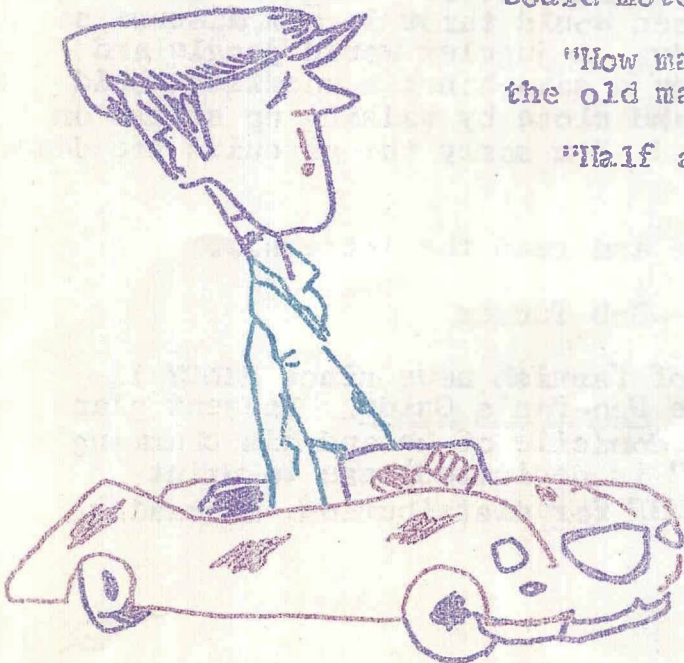
It was surprising how many of them fell for it.

Tony had been working the state for several months, starting in the hill country above Greenville, coming down through the farming country of the Piedmont, and eventually making his way through the Low Country to this small community on the edge of the Great Swamp. A few more sales and he would be able to wrap it up and head back for New York. Tomorrow, he would try his luck in the Swamp itself. He had heard that a few families lived along the fringes, eking out a living by trapping and perhaps some less savory pursuits. They should be good for one or two sales, anyway.

Morning found Tony at the town landing completing negotiations for the rental of an outboard motor boat.

"How many families live in there?" he asked the old man who owned the boat.

"Half a dozen. Most live on the main stream so you'd best keep to it. Don't go wandering off down the smaller streams or you'll get lost and I'll never get my boat back. Ain't nobody lives back in there anyway except some crazy feller named Packett or Hackett--something like that--crazy as a hoot-owl." The old man spat a stream of tobacco into the water.



Gail

"What does he do in there?" Tony asked.

"Don't know for sure," the old man replied. "Some folks say he's working on some kind of experiment. Others say he's hiding out. The mailman says he gets a lot of crazy mail. Y'all stay away from him. Too far back in the swamps. Crazy as a hoot-owl."

Tony thanked the old man for the boat rental and the information. He assured him that he would stay on the main stream. He checked his display case to be sure he hadn't forgotten anything, then started the motor and headed into the gloom of the Great Swamp.

As soon as he entered the shadows a swarm of mosquitos made him regret he hadn't brought along a bottle of repellent. The great oaks and cypress trees hung heavily with Spanish moss cut off the sun and darkened the area ahead to a gray-green twilight. Mosquitos and flies buzzed around Tony's head and he was glad when he arrived at the first landing. He didn't make a sale.

He didn't make a sale at the second shack, either. "One more," he said to himself, "and I give it up. It isn't worth fighting these bugs."

A small side branch joined the main stream from the interior side of the swamp. A large mailbox on a post in the water bore a name faded almost to illegibility. The first letters had all but disappeared and Tony was able to make out clearly only the double 'T' at the end. Tony recalled the words of the old man and decided that here, indeed, was a prospect. A person who received lots of crazy mail and was alleged to be conducting some kind of an experiment. Yes, sir! Just the kind to fall for his pitch. One set of encyclopedia coming up.

Tony steered his boat into the side branch, mentally adding up his commission. It couldn't be far up this way. Not if the guy came out for his mail.

The stream twisted and turned and the grey-green gloom deepened. The watery areas became broader until the channel of the stream was almost lost, marked only as a clear strip in the midst of the skum-covered flatness. The wilderness and isolation of the area increased, the way being barred now by fallen trees and rotting logs. Tony had to make several turns to avoid these hazards and is suddenly occured to him that he was lost. The stream had disappeared, merging into the body of the swamp. No matter which way he looked, it all appeared the same; the great, closely-growing trees with their beards of moss gave no clue as to which direction he had come from. No--wait a minute! That log over there. Sure, he had lost the stream when he had detoured around the log and all he had to do was go back around the log again to regain the stream.

With a sigh of relief, Tony steered his boat back to the great black log floating half-submerged in the water.

The log opened a golden eye and looked at him. The great bull alligator moved with surprising swiftness; his heavy tail delivered a sledge-hammer blow that smashed the boat and spilled Tony into the water. The huge jaws gaped, revealing a picket fence of cruel yellow teeth.

With surprising speed on his own part, Tony floundered to a nearby tree and hoisted himself to safety just as the jaws snapped shut behind him. The big 'gator backed off a few feet and then floated motionless, eying Tony with hungry anticipation.

Recovering from his panic, Tony took stock of his situation. His boat was gone and he was lost. He didn't know how long the alligator would wait but he was determined that he was not going to be the A bead of sweat formed on Conan's brow... main course on a saurian menu. He edged around the tree and discovered what appeared to be an island a short distance away. Now...if he could make it to the island without attracting the 'gator's attention he should be in pretty good shape.

Tony slipped quietly from the tree into the black water. Not as bad as he had figured it might be. It wasn't too deep--about to the waist--but the footing was treacherous. Have to take it easy and not trip over a root or log. Just at the shore of the island his foot slipped and he fell forward, throwing his arms out to brace himself and break the fall. Too late, he saw the flash of white and was unable to avoid the strike as the lurking cottonmouth sank its fangs into his arm.

The snake withdrew and Tony struggled up the bank. As calmly as possible he tried to remember what he knew about the treatment of snakebites. His belt would do as a tourniquet, yes, and he'd slash the wound and try to suck the poison out. Sure, that was it. No need to panic. He was on solid ground, anyway. This island must be where that guy (what was his name?) lived. Sure, there would be help there. Anyone who lived in these swamps would know all about snakebites.

As Tony stumbled through the undergrowth a cloud of tiny, stinging gnats enveloped him, crawling in his ears, his nose, his eyes, almost blinding him. The stings were painful, raising large welts and puffing his eyes almost shut.

He was on the path before he realized it. Even while slapping at the gnats his spirits took an upswing. A path meant someone used ...nearly obscuring it. this island and he was sure to find help now. Almost exhausted, he staggered down the path. Finally, his blurred vision discerned a clearing in which sat a shack and in which he would surely find the help he needed. Almost there...right across this sandy stretch and up the steps and in the door. Yes, sir. Going to make it after all.

Tony broke into a run as he reached the cleared sandy area at the end of the path. He screamed as the solidity of the ground disappeared and he sank to his hips in the deceptive, semi-liquid pool. He continued to scream as he sank further and further into the clinging quicksand.

Then silence settled over the Great Swamp, broken only by the coughing bellow of the bull alligator, the echoing cry of a prowling panther, and a strange screaming laugh.

--Roy Tackett

/Roy reports from Laurel Bay, S.C., on the edge of the Fearsome Swamp, that he is suddenly enveloped with an urge to create fanac madly, and will soon spew forth another issue of Dynatron.../

a biased view

--By ROG EBERT--

Nelson Rockefeller's strategy is becoming more and more apparent as the Republican convention fades into history. It is clear that he expects Nixon to lose in November, thereby placing himself securely in position as the head man in the Republican party.

If Rockefeller, who has probably realized very ~~clearly~~ clearly since last Christmas that Nixon would get the nomination, thought that Nixon would be elected in November, he probably would have yielded to pressures to become the GOP vice presidential candidate. But Rocky, who is sensitive to pressures within his own state as well as on a nationwide level, seems content to wait it out and hope--altho he would be the last to admit it--that Nixon will fall victim to the Kennedy juggernaut in November.

Rockefeller would have a lot to gain. He would be at the head of a major party, if admittedly the minority one. He would be a shoe-in for the Republican nomination in 1964, when GOP conservatives will probably be even more scarce than they were this year. He has a good chance to defeating the then-president Kennedy, or at least a better chance than either he or Nixon would have had in 1960.

All this, of course, is assuming that Rockefeller's strategy pays off and Kennedy is elected in November.

In charting his course for the next four years, Rocky will first have to be reelected as governor of New York. This should be one of the least of his hurdles, since a strong Democratic candidate still has not emerged from the party still controlled by ex-governor Averil (spl...) Harriman and kingmaker Carmine DeSapio.

Secondly, he will have to strengthen his stature in foreign affairs. Look for him to pay several visits to Europe, and perhaps one to Russia. Look for more and more frequent speeches on foreign policy, such as the shockers that lashed out at the Eisenhower administration a few weeks ago. And look for articles in magazines all the way from the SatEvePost to the Foreign Policy Quarterly.

Rockefeller may have chosen the right course. He will, of course, have insurance in his popularity in New York should things go "wrong" and Nixon be elected. At any rate, with Nixon holding the GOP presidential nomination in a bag, Rockefeller's move seems the most intelligent one he could have made.

--Rog Ebert

Seclusion

A hiding place
in the woodland
is a secret place
to cry.

Everyone needs
such a hiding place,
everyone needs
to cry.

The hiding places
have been discovered
and no one dares
to cry.

They fear laughter
from the laughing
who fear
to cry.

A hiding place
in the woodland
is a secret place
to cry.

Where are the hiding places,
Where is the woodland,
Why can no one
Cry?

--ebert

Dustysong

There is this thing about dust,
If you lay on your stomach and
Look closely,
That is sort of wonderful.

Dust itself,
So silky-soft and smooth,
Is pretty wonderful
In its own way.

But there is this thing,
When you look closely
At dust,
That makes it different.

Dust in the hot sunlight
Is almost like diamonds,
Have you ever
Noticed?

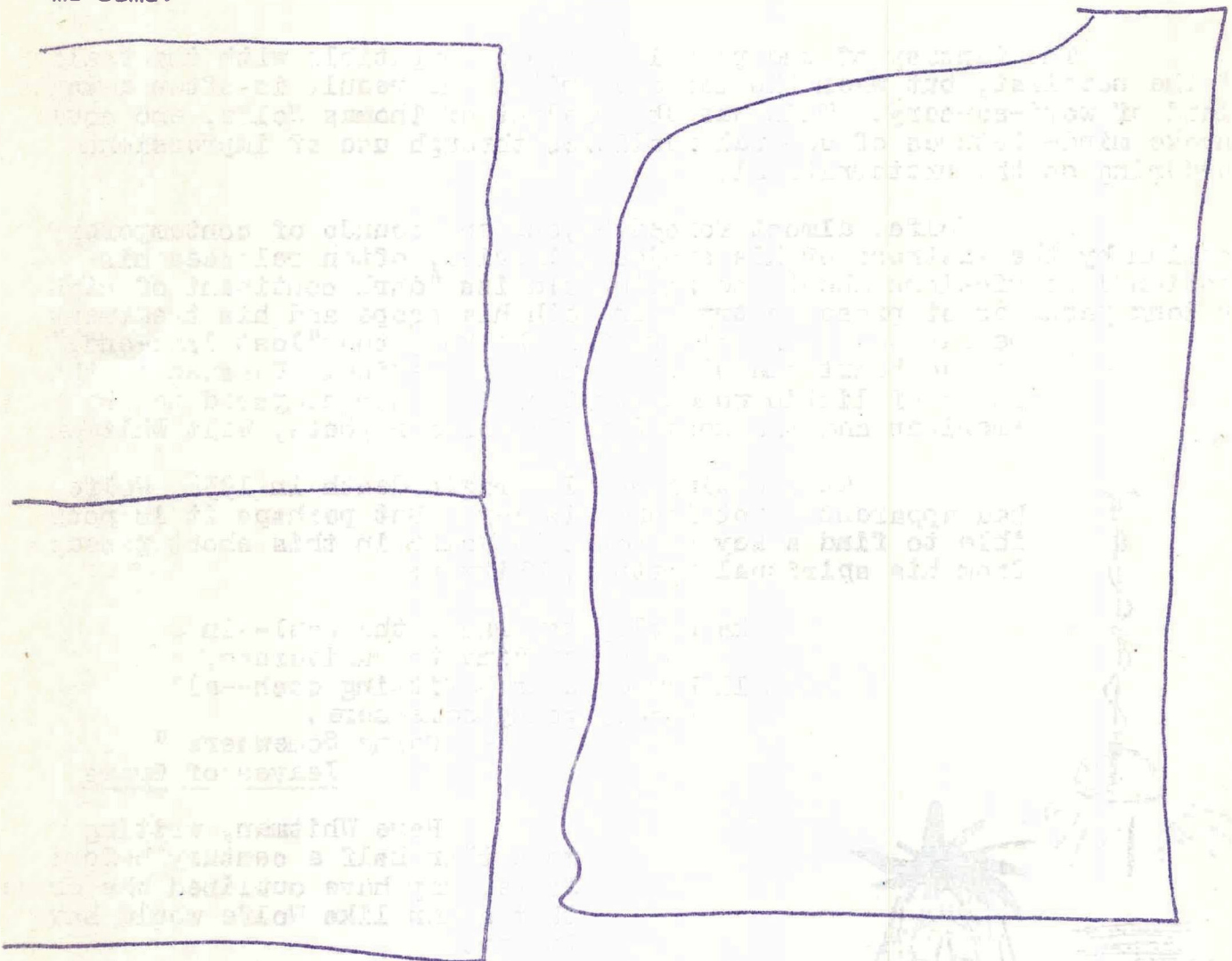
Each grain almost
Sparkles, each lump
Seems finely
Ground.

Is dust the
Treasure of the animals?
Do birds bathe
In diamonds?

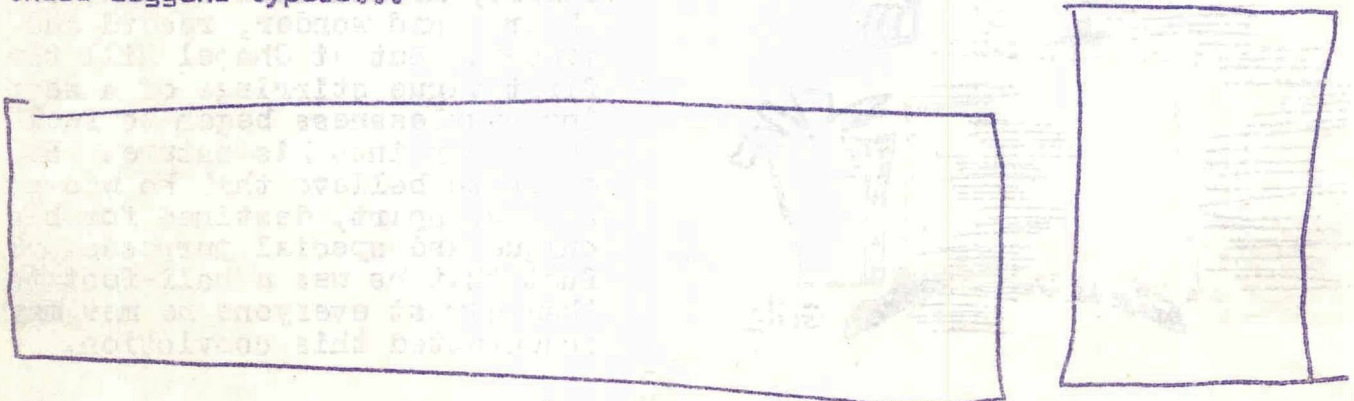
There is this thing about dust,
If you lay on your stomach and
Look closely,
That is sort of wonderful.

--ebert

Err...I realize this is an unorthodox way to do this and all, fellas,
but I've been having a heck of a time recruiting enough artwork for Stymie,
and I thot maybe if I put out the ten cents for the stencil and all ~~and~~
actually subdivided it into the sizes of artwork I need, then some of you
good ol' fanartists out there could sort-of catch the hint, eh, and send
me some?



Art credits this issue, by the way, go to Gail Osgood, Warnemr, Pearson,
and (heh) myself. Dittoing credit goes to Chuck McDaniel of Englehart-
Shay Typewriter Co., Champaign, the renown master of the repro, who guides
over these anemicly pounded-out masters and somehow makes them come out as
readable stuff. One of these days, I'm going to learn to push harder on
these doggone typers...



the magic blend

By Rog Ebert--

The fantasy of the poet is often incompatible with the reality of the novelist, but when the two are united the result is often a magic blend of word-sorcery. This was the product of Thomas Wolfe, who could invoke mind-pictures of sensual realities through use of impressions bordering on the preternatural.

Wolfe, almost forced beyond the bounds of contemporary realism by the vastness of his subject, America, often releases his emotional convictions about the nation and its "dark continent of night" in long passages of prose poetry. In both his scope and his treatment, he was searching always for the key, the "lost lane-end," to the heart and significance of America. Because of this, it is of little wonder that he is often compared to the most American and the most Olympian of our poets, Walt Whitman.

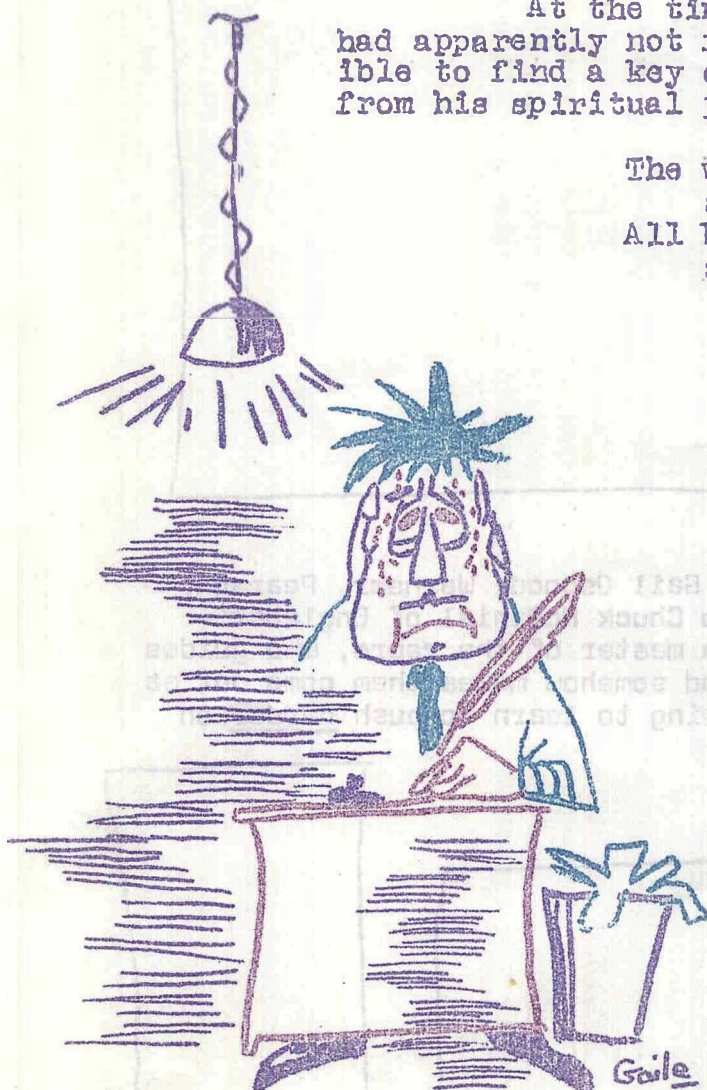
At the time of his tragic death in 1938, Wolfe had apparently not found his key. But perhaps it is possible to find a key of sorts to Wolfe in this short passage from his spiritual partner, Whitman:

The world, the race, the soul--in
space and time the universes,
All bound as is befitting each--all
surely going somewhere.

--"Going Somewhere,"
Leaves of Grass

Here Whitman, writing more than half a century before Wolfe, may have outlined the credo that a man like Wolfe would have to have.

For Wolfe was always searching. In his first stumbling exodus from the mountains of his birth to the University of North Carolina, he began his search. Before, he had been content to observe and wonder, record and remember. But at Chapel Hill the first vague stirrings of a searching restlessness began to feel their way into his nature. He began to believe that he was somehow set apart, destined for his own unique and special purposes. The fact that he was a half-foot taller than almost everyone he met may have accentuated this conviction.



the magic blend, can't.

Wolfe later became outgoing and garrulous, a Gargantuan eater, drinker and ravisher. But it was during the intensely introspective period of his life that he first began his search for the answer to his inditing question: "...which of us has known his brother? Which of us has looked into his father's heart? Which of us has not remained forever prison-pent? Which of us is not forever a stranger and alone?

The search for an answer to this question was to provide Wolfe's life work, and probably hastened his death. For Wolfe, in his four massive novels outlining the innermost "lights and waters of man's soul," was trying to provide the answer by completely analyzing the question. Of Time and the River, the title of his second book, provides the clue to his conception of "man's

.....

An old man
Walking across
The street
Is a hazard
To himself.
He knows it.

.....

whole life upon the earth." Wolfe looked upon life as a river in time, with the world acting as the banks. He saw man--himself--being inexorably drawn forward on this river, until it inevitably empties into the sea of the afterdeath. And yet this concept that man is powerless before the even flow of the time-river was not altogether acceptable to Wolfe.

It seemed to him a negation of man's worth, and although he opened You Can't Go Home Again with the admission that "he knew his life was little and would be extinguished, and that only darkness was immense and everlasting," he closed it with something closer to his true credo when he wrote to his friend "Foxall Edwards" (Maxwell Perkins): "Man was born to live, to suffer, and so die, and what befalls him is a tragic lot. There is no denying this in the final end. But we must, dear Fox, deny it all along the way." /Italics Wolfe's./

Wolfe insisted that man's life have a purpose--somehow, somewhere--and that "all man's grandeur, tragic dignity, and heroic glory" was not meaningless. He seemed positively compelled to believe with Whitman, whom he discovered in his undergraduate years, that the "world" (in Wolfe's books, probably America), the "race" (probably southerners), and the "soul" (individual man, especially youth), were "surely going somewhere."

Wolfe tried to reconcile man's nature with the nature of the earth into a whole that included all of physical creation. Some say his greatest weakness was that he failed to encompass a supernatural universe within his conception of "the destiny that is man." Yet he wrote at the end of You Can't Go Home Again: "Something has spoken to me in the night...saying: "To lose the earth you know, for

the magic blend, con't.

greater knowing; to lose the life you have, for greater life; to leave the friends you love, for greater loving; to find a land more kind than home, more large than earth--whereon the pillars of this earth are founded, toward which the conscience of the world is tending--a wind is rising, and the rivers flow."

Was this, then, Wolfe's final statement of his and man's destiny? And did it include the recognition of the supernatural that he had avoided since his squirming attendance at the Asheville Presbyterian Church? Then Whitman's lines are uniquely fitting, because they explain as simply as can be explained the enigma that was Thomas Wolfe.

We may never fully understand this man who lived and wrote so much more vastly than any other American. But perhaps Whitman has furnished the clue to Wolfe's soul; perhaps Wolfe saw his beloved South and his America bound in diverse and confusing directions--but still "surely going somewhere."

And perhaps his purpose was to explain where, and to try to discover his and man's role in reaching the destination.

--Rog Ebert

/In Stymie Three, if all goes well, Bill Lyon will review Elizabeth Nowell's new and important biography, Thomas Wolfe. The book is a Book-of-the-Month Club selection, I understand, and will be available in bookstores near the middle of August./

!!

Impressions

A cane
leaning against a building
is a funny sight.
Makes you wonder
who left it there.
And why.

Old filing cases
stand around stupidly,
their drawers agape
like loose teeth.

!!

"I come from a class and section of American life which regarded writing--the profession of a writer--as something very mysterious and romantic and very remote from its own life and the world of its own knowledge and experience. For this reason, as I have said, it was twenty-six years or more before I even dared to admit concretely that I might become a writer and I was almost thirty before my own admission was confirmed by publication."

--Thomas Wolfe, "Something of My Life"
(in The Enigma of Thomas Wolfe)

"Will you please have Mr. Darrow send me a statement of whatever money is due me? I shall not write any more books, and since I must begin to make other plans for the future, I should like to know how much money I have."

--Thomas Wolfe, after publication of Look Homeward Angel in 1929, in a letter to Maxwell Perkins. (in Editor to Author: The Letters of Maxwell E. Perkins.)

versus

Being the first installment of
a regular little anthology of
true observations of the world,
as seen by

JOSEPH W. (joe) BLACK

Lovethoughts at Death

Now walking through a haze of
country flowers
You, returning fresh, high-breasted,
call and come
But I, no longer hearing-answering,
plod on--
"O angenbit of inwit."

There are woodsyplaces still
remembering
What I have longsince
stopped
Seeing even darkly
and atall
Because to me these pleasant scenes
are youplaces
With your own special
smell and sound and touch.

You touched me then
and there
But now that touch,
like others,
Is cold, unfeeling,
very much
Like that other cooling hand
which
Nearer and nearer comes
and which
I gladly now welcome.

For Nancy

More than myself sometimes I love
A girlchild, tearbespattered
Alone and lonely,
Memorizing herself,
Recalling where she's never been,
Hoping only that
Some summer day
The rain will kiss her face and
In that lovelywet--
O futuredreaming child
A world will open, summerwet
And, oh so
More than even yourself
You'll love.

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

She, Leaving

The forms of music
Dance within your
Form
As gladly from the room
You
go
forever
Gay dancer, you,
Formfleeting the only
Love
I ever gave.

!!

Gallahad, Joycewise

Riding shadowlandward armor glittering
Questbefallen seeker of the Grail
For you I weep.
You, touched only by thought
of heavenlight, have not, never will
Know pleasurepains of other love

But thinking there's some
greater good
Ride on and seeksearch down some
Shriven path to glorygold
To God
To neverfinding nothing.

!!

For Vachel Lindsey: "...and evil comes up softly like a flower."

In these, the deadull days of all my longings, sometimes there comes,
Softly as a whisper through the corn or roses rising from the clay,
A silent voice which calls to me: "Romance, romance is here."
Yet silent, calming as the cry may be the sinsoaked city streets are
with me still.

--Joe Black

view from the IVORY tower

a column by BILL LYON, fandom's self-appointed conscience...

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

The editor had what is termed in slick magazines an "eager, upturned face."

"Well," he asked with obvious hope, "in the clear light of dawn have you revised your opinion of fanzines?"

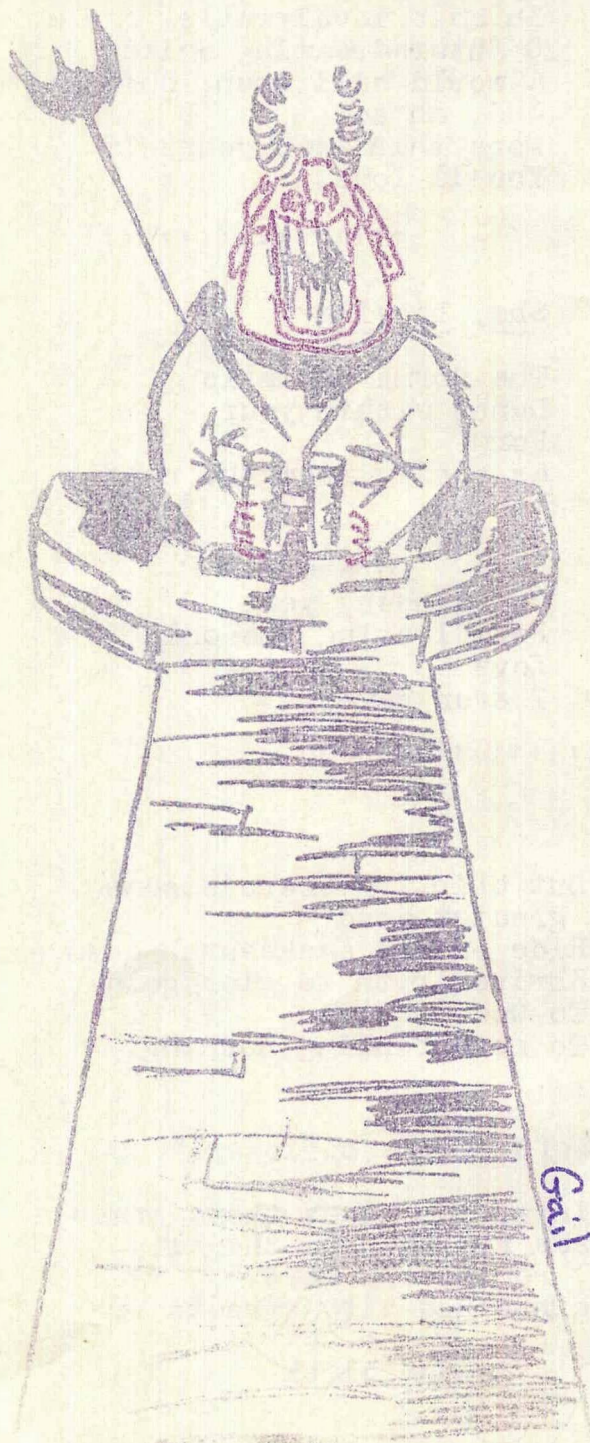
It is always with a confused mixture of sadistic enjoyment and sincere sympathy that one shatters the yearnings of a fellow creature. So, too, was Roger Ebert squashed.

No, I had not revised my opinions of fanzines, nor of science fiction.

If anything, it had been strengthened.

And much of it had been strengthened by fanzine pubbers themselves, in their letters of comment on the first issue of Stymie. Their defense against my admittedly overdrawn criticism was sparse and scanty. The majority just brushed it off with the observation that I really didn't know anything about what I was criticizing. This is exactly true.

But there are a lot of things I don't know about communists. And I don't agree with them, either. I can say the same thing about Ex-Lex. And Democrats. And labor unions. It is easy to say that someone doesn't know anything about what he is criticizing. But this seems to me a very superficial defense. So, too, is that one witty fellow who just scratched me off as a



the continued view

"Fugghead." Now this was not damaging to my ego, nor did I mind being called a fugghead. For this merely reveals that perhaps there isn't really a defense for fanzines. Or if there is, then these people are either too lazy or too stupid to find one.

And as for being a fugghead, I can always console myself with that pompous but nevertheless comforting axiom that what Peter says about Paul actually says more about Peter.

I did, however, find my moments of glory in the mail. I swelled with pride when one writer referred to me as "polysyllabic and verbose." One even agreed with some of my points. One hopefully suggested it was the atrocious lay-out and spelling and not the content that aroused my ire. Wishful thinking. The contents are atrocious, too.

But undoubtedly the most distressing thing about the first issue of Stymie to Roger was the fact that many writers seemed more concerned with me than with the magazine. This, however, is a dubious distinction, since more of the comments were tinged with what might pass for hatred.

I debated for awhile whether or not to start a supplement which could be mailed out in Stymie. In it, I would spell out in even more dastardly detail my criticisms of fanzines. But the thought of all the time and money it would require, plus the growing collection of enemies, persuaded me not too. But if any of you ever wish to launch such a project, here's my title: "Anti-Anti." All you have to do is be against everything, including those people who are also against everything. To do this, of course, requires the ultimate in pessimism and isolationism. You've got to adopt a policy of being negatively positive.

The only reason this column is so confused is that I am, too. And one of the reasons, besides the fact that I was born that way (no dissenters, please) is that one of those warped wits who write Ebert suggested that I was his pseudonym. This fellow hinted that perhaps I didn't really exist and that Roger had written the thing himself. I can endure being called a fugghead, but... On second thought, I guess I could have been called something else. Like a right triangle, or a logrhythm.

Anyway, the Ivory Tower herewith ends its campaign to stamp out fanzines. /A campaign already doomed to failure because it had to be carried out in fnz./ It's not that I feel defeated. Conversely, I feel victorious. For I have yet to read one solid defense of fanzines. For that matter, I have yet to read one defense of fanzines, period. This column in the future will devote itself to the less enjoyable (it's egoboo to tear things down when they're not your own) work of writing about things other than fanzines. Like Communists, or Ex-lax, or Democrats, or labor unions, or why George Washington couldn't be elected president this year...

--Bill Lyon

ARPS GRATIA EGOBOO

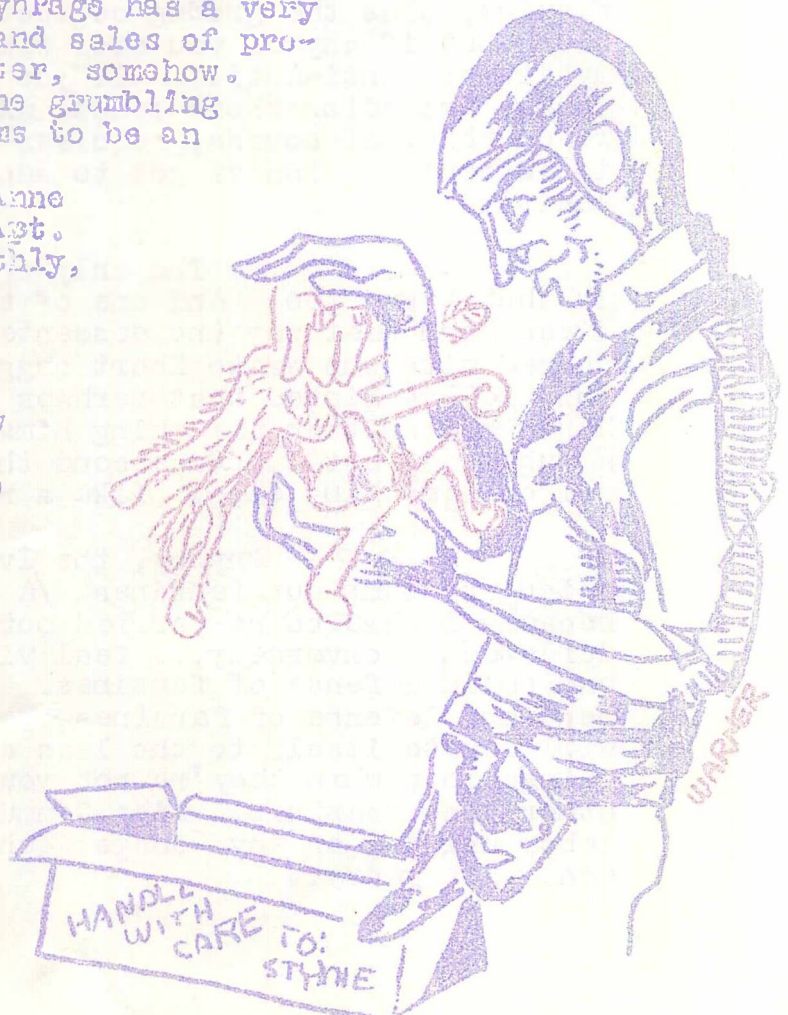
The fanzine reviews with the messily hand-drawn title, by...
--yo ol' editor, ROG EBERT
!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

PARSECTION (George C. Willick, 306 Broadway, Madison, Ind. Bi-monthly, 8/\$1, trades; published by Hickman)--Ah, for the life of the neosed who has Lynn Hickman for his published! This is apparently a first ish, but has a rather impressive list of contributors: Bob (Wilson, yet!) Tucker, Joe Hensley, Dean McLaughlin, Gordon Dickson, H. L. Gold, Kate Wilhelm, Hickman, and cover by Adkins. For some reason, fnz with a lot of empty (i.e., white) space bother me...must be that Scotch background. This is superbly reproed, well put together, and features a symposium of stf's woes with some pretty good but too short analysis of them. Could easily turn into a BNFmz, but sort of lacks personality right now. I suggest a lettercol and editorial to begin with, George...your rating is ...ah...8, I guess. (That's out of a possible 10.)

YANDRO #91 (Buck and Juanita Coulson, Route Threes, Wabash, Ind. Monthly, 15¢, 12/\$1.50)--This is a sort of skimpy issue, apparently because the Coulsons are going to try to produce the September ish before the Pitcon. Chatty news about the 2nd annual Wabash Fan Picnic (which I didn't attend, foop!) fills up four pages of editorial ramblings, rumblings. Marion Zimmer Bradley violates the no-stf taboo in her column and comes up with some pretty meaningful comments on the quality of "mainstream" stf (first factual fiction and now mainstream stf...), John Pesta has an energetic but slightly over-written piece of fiction that shows more talent than word-sense (example: "...she balanced it etiquettily over her tiny cup..."), and Jerry Page has a very informative article about newsstand sales of pro-mags that reads oddly like a letter, somehow. A handful of letters tossed to the grumbling multitudes finishes off what seems to be an interimish (?). Rating...6

SPACE CAGE #6 (Lee Anne Tremper, 3858 Forest Grove Dr., Apt. A-3, Indianapolis 5, Indiana. Monthly, 10¢, etc.)--Bruce Pelz and his little game of creating mental pictures of fan's homes by their addresses would have fun with Lee's, I'd say. This is somehow lacking in personality, altho that's sort of a low blow because it's so hard to defend. Art-work and repro is good, J. T. Crackel (?) has a rather dry discourse on types of fantasy, Mike Deckinger has what seems to me a self-egobooing story, Les Gerber has a funny ballad, and everything else is pretty much too short or insignificant, it seems to me...rating, 4.
!!!!!!!!!!!!

Note--trades encouraged for Stymie; and thanks for all you kind-hearted beasts who already have. More reviews coming up...so, turn, eh?



WARHOON #8 (Dick Bergeron, 110 Bank St., New York 14, New York; Free, I guess, if he likes you. I guess he likes me)--This is a SAPSazine made up in great part with material of general interest. Apparently it's available if you're a real nice guy or something, but the main reason I'm reviewing it is that Dick apparently goes along with some of my admittedly slanted political views. Several pages of withering quotes toward the back effectively chop down Richard Nixon... 'tis a pity WARHOON doesn't get national distribution. (No, not that kind.) No artwork, unless you count a Merchants trading stamp done in green ink and pink paper, but this fmz impressed me as being unusually intelligently (i.e., Democratically) edited. Lots of discussion of this and that SAPS by-law that didn't particularly interest me, but reminded me that I'll have to get into my reasons for opposition to apas one of these ishes. Highly recommended, if you can get hands on a copy. Rating, around 9.

PSI-PHI #6 (Bob Lichtman, 6137 S. Croft Ave., Los Angeles 56, Calif. co-ed, Arv Underman. Quarterly (it says here...), 25¢ apiece.)--Bob's new ditto--which you, eager reader, read about in Stymie One, yes you did--reproduces rather faintly, unless I got the last copy. For six bucks, tho, I guess he can't complain. Tho the readers can, of course. If you squinch up real close under a strong light, you may be able to discern several articles in this that are pretty much worth the time. Underman contributes an autobiographical, humorous piece that I liked, Ted Johnstone, who seems bent on occupying the entire priceless page area of Psi-Phi, has a 10-page second installment on his Detriotecon report and another chapter of the Greatest Movie Ever Made, both good; I contribute a humble little three-pager about the admittedly passe subject of the future of stf as literature, Ben Singer has a fascinating article about his recollections of fandom and his reasons for not killing Bob Tucker, which are both good, Jack Speer pitches in with an impressive piece of criticism, Harry Warner has a blithely written chapter of his autobiography, and if you think I took overlong to review this, remember that I have had to go years, sometimes, between the quarterly issues. Rating, 8.

AMRA #11 (G. H. Seithers, Box 52, Eatontown, N.J.)--I'm not too interested in Conan, but I like to have this magazine around so that when my friends say, "Ah, what a messy collection of aighing crunkles you have there!" I can pull this out and rejoinder: "Yes, but look what a good fmz can look like!" At which they often pass up the crunkles and go home. Amra is suberly produced by litho, I think, and is a never-ceasing source of wonder to me. Like, you really have to like Conan do do all this, eh? John Berry has a dryly humorous piece, Coulson explains why he, too, doesn't go hog-wild over Conan (my reason is more simple: I plead ignorance), and L. Sprague de Camp and several others contribute to a true ~~man~~ labor of love. Special interest, but it's the top Conanazine, I'd say.

SOMEWHATLY #2 (Joe Sanders, Route One, Roachdale, Ind. Yearly, free)--This is a horrible example of what can happen if you don't make perfectly clear to the man that you want it mimmed on both sides, please. The content is rather desultorily scattered about, and as a whole the fmz sort of puzzled me. Sanders says it's to keep his name before fandom in the annual summertime college break, and he does it entertainingly if rather aimlessly. Rating, 5.

THE MONDAY EVENING GHOST #6 (Bob Jennings, 3819 Chambers Dr., Nashville, Tenn. Six-weekly, 15¢, 12/\$1.50)--I could get even with Bob's scathing review of Stymie One and call this a crudzine, but I guess it isn't. The spelling is the worse thing about it, but only because it's distracting. A rather rambling editorial, still another contribution from the omnipresent Deckinger (foop!) which sort of dully repeats, on an issue-by-issue basis, the lamented history of VENTURE, Some fun-type stf quizzes by Jerry Page, an entertaining column by Rich Brown, and a well done analysis of stfandom poetry by Peggy Cook fill up a readable but not out-

more reviews...

standing issue (of Saturday Evening Ghost, this is, if you turned two pages at once inadvertently). Rating...3 or 4, somewhere in there.

CRY OF THE NAMELESS (The Nameless Ones, Box 92, 920 3rd. Avenue, Seattle 4, Washington, 25¢, monthly, and, ah, this is issue number 142...believe that?)--I got this for sending a copy of Stymie, which they reviewed rather nicely, I thot, and so the least I can do is review them, too, eh? They could use the boost, I think. This is probably fandom's crutch-type fmz, in that if Cry falls, fandom gets dragged down with it, more or likely. Redd Boggs has a carefully researched and well-written article on the ~~am~~ Oz books (which reminds me...The Wizard of Oz is now available in a Crest reprint, I see), John Berry has a quietly, humorously and entirely entertainingly history of the entrance of Gregory Perkins, neofan, into this great social movement, FMBusby puts together a column of I don't know whatall that reads pretty well, J. Les Piper (this is getting ridiculous...) has a funny, funny, comic sequence ala whatever the name of that guy is who draws for the Village Voice, Elinor Busby ~~am~~ analyzes the fannishness of certain names, Weber contributed minutes, George Locke has a very funny piece about...well, I won't spoil the ending for you...and Weber conducts the pages upon pages of letters and (pany, pant) I would say this is worth a quarter. Rating...10...heck, fellas, something, y'know, has to set your standard of perfectness...

QUELQUECHOSE #1 (Jerry Knight, 6220 Dmask Ave, IA56, free, I guess, and all that)--There is supposed (I keep reminding myself) to be a pun in that title somewhere. But I can't, can't, can't find it. And neither can Bob Tucker. So the first lucky reader who writes in with an explanation of the pun wins a free trip to Pittsburgh, courtesy P. S. Miller, benevolent sweet daddy behind this publication. You'll have to be pretty sharp to catch the pun, tho, because I think I spelled the title wrong. But I can't tell for sure, because I keep locing my place around the third...or is it the second... 'q.' Foop. Foop, you know, is Bob Lichtman's favorite word, I guess. He dittoed this thing for Knight, is what I am trying to get around to saying. It's sort of faint. Probably that same ol' \$6 ditto. What fandom needs is a good six-dollar ditto. QUEandallthat is composed of extra-entertaining stuff including Jerry's unusually good editorial tidbits, a strangely moving piece of fiction by Raymond Everett, whoever he is (if he's a neofan show him this, eh, Jerry, and make him feel good...it was a well-written piece), An ~~easy~~ easy-reading column by the Great Lichtman, and a modern version of the Gettysburg address. I hope to see another one of these, because it looks as if it might develop into something pretty good and pretty regular. Rating, 7.

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

(Name) _____

This is my book.

Ex Libris.

Foop.

Deck the halls with Boston Charlie.

You can tell a happy motorcyclist by the bugs in his teeth.

Foop.

--There! Now how's that for free verse, eh, Jennings! Guess that'll show you.

litter...

A letter of comment in time keeps Stymie coming. Not that we want to be rude, but the mailing list is small, and...

HARRY WARNER, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland--
I enjoyed Stymie more than nine out of ten first issues, partly because it is literate, a small convenience that you don't often find in first issues, and partly because it is so strikingly like my favorite type of fanzines, FAPA publications.

I admired Wolfe as much as you do when I read his novels, possibly a dozen years ago. I've not read them since, partly because there is always an immense quantity of other things that I want to read, and more recently in part because I fear that I'll ruin the complete enjoyment that the memory of the books still provokes. I encountered them at a time in my life when I was exactly ripe for this kind of neo-romanticism, and today I'm not the same person and I suspect that I'd keep the critical facilities wider awake during a re-reading. However, many other widely heralded novels which I read about the same time have disappeared almost completely from my memory. So there must be something special about Wolfe's writing.

Bill Lyon typifies an attitude that newcomers to fandom rarely escape altogether: so much astonishment at poor reproduction and dubious spelling in fmz that the real merits of the publications escape attention at first.

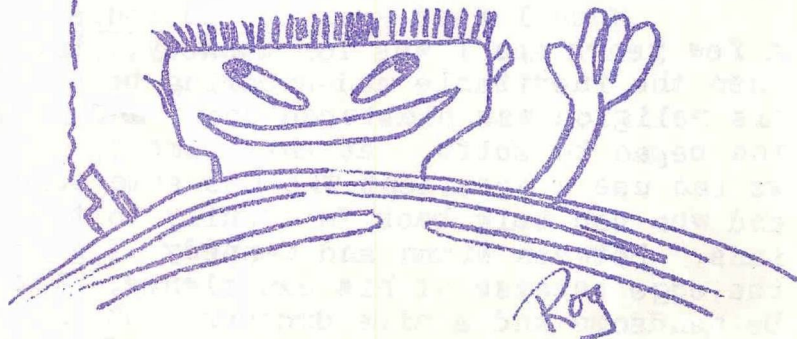
I've never tackled Joyce's two big works. No matter how important and excellent they may be, I don't feel that life is long enough to devote so much time to one specialized corner of the literary field.

Your shorter poetry is good. I don't care too much for the long one /Rainscape/, which sounds a bit like an anthology of lots of poetic conceits. The short items sound as if they were written by one person who had an idea and expressed it well.

/Thanks. I think you hold the generally accepted opinion on Wolfe; that is, that he is the young man's writer and his charm fades with maturity. I'm still young enough to enjoy him, tho, and I imagine most fan are. Seems to me any book you pick up is likely to be from "one specialized corner of the literary field," perhaps Joyce is worth the time, eh?/

VIC RYAN, 2160 Sylvan Road, Springfield, Ill.--I was greatly impressed by the efficient political machine with which Kennedy surrounded himself. I, too, believe he will be the "Man to Beat," as Dick Nixon seems to be taking an attitude that the Presidency is owed to him after eight years of sub-service.

/Vic also sent a drawing by



litter. com't.

Bob Warner, which is used in this issue. Any other artwork--now you mention it--will be fervently welcomed. He pointed out the minor little detail that I'm using ditto masters, not stencils./

LYNN HICKMAN, 224 Demint Ave., Dixon, Ill.--You're rather naive politically. Nixon has no team? Why, he had his nomination sewed up long ago, and it took Kennedy until the last month. Both men are brilliant politicians with smooth working organizations behind them. Kennedy has money, yes, but Nixon has experience and is running on a platform that is reasonable, not on a bunch of sky-high giveaway promises that everyone who stops and thinks knows cannot and will not be kept.

Stevenson as secretary of state would be the downfall of this country. He is the least able of any of the candidates for this post, unless you really

wanted the rest of Germany and perhaps the rest of Europe handed over to Russia. Nixon and Lodge will get my vote.

/Comment overheard yesterday: "As far as I'm concerned, the two vice presidential candidates get my vote." You're right that Nixon's organization had the nomination sewed up a year beforehand. Of course, Nixon had no opposition.../

MIKE DECKINGER, 85 Locust Avenue, Millburn, N.J.--I have one gripe about the overall quality of Stymie, which I feel is best inserted here. The written quality was kept at a consistently high level yet it was nearly completely offset by the juvenile "art" decorating the pages. Nothing can more effectively ruin a good written piece than poorly scribbled art. (Yeah.) The hand drawn headings were a bit messy, and it would have been far better had you used lettering guides or even typed headings.

"Ben with the Long-Handled Shovel" was one of those plotless, Hemingway-type stories, which is supported by the power of its writing alone. I rather liked it myself.

When I read Profiles in Courage a few years ago I was for Kennedy...but then the inevitable mud-smearing began, and his religion was plastered about and my opinion began to shift. At this moment, I think we can use a president who has some strength, and who can talk back forcefully to the Russians. Between Nixon and Kennedy, I give Nixon the edge because of his experience. Jack may be handsome and a nice dresser, but how much actual experience had he had with foreign countries in dealing with their problems?

The small child
Stirs in
Wonderment about
The field, asking
Where the spaceship
Went, and
If
It will be back
Once again
Next year...

Address letters to
Rog Ebert, 410 E. Wash-
ington, Urbana, Ill.

litter, con't.

/I hope the artwork thish meets more with your standards, altho the tracing might mayhap leave something to be desired. It seems to be that, for a fellow of stout heart, the fact that Kennedy's religion was brought in, and the "mud-smearing" began should make little difference. Surely the basic value of the man would not be altered by these extemporaneous factors. Eh?/

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

→ BUCK COULSON, Route Three, Wabash, Indiana--For an English major urging a return to normalcy, Bill Lyon writes some strange and wonderful sentences. (Not just the one you pointed out, but practically all of them.) And don't let him defend himself by saying it was a first draft; I haven't second-drafted anything in four years and while I'm no literary giant I think my average writing is more "normal" in content than Lyon's. (Surely an English major knows better than to change from singular to plural in the same sentence.) /A quick check with the original copy shows that I committed the botch on retyping; it wasn't Lyon's. They say honesty is the best policy./

In short, I think it takes more than a love of words to make a writer.

Oh, the subject matter of his column? Why, the kid has a right to his opinion; I'd be the last to deny him the joy of self-expression (especially if its in someone else's fanzine). I might, though, ask him why he feels that a column of book reviews

on masterpieces which everyone in the audience has already read can be compared to a column in which the purpose is specifically to give information on books which everyone in the audience hasn't already read.

Surely he can see that the two are entirely different in intent, and the fact that he likes one better than the other has no bearing whatsoever on whether or not one is actually better than the other.

/I sort of agree with you that the two types of book columns have little in common. But I think both are necessary. Stymie, however, will feature only book-comment articles about Wolfe, at least for the near future. I don't want to get tied down in a lot of regular book review, fmz review, conreport or general comment columns that would become outdated if I didn't pub an issue right away, like. Lyon and Ishey can be counted upon to produce a column on what amounts to a moment's notice, more or less. Ahem--pretty good job of ad-libbing even margins there for about five lines...not that I mention it./

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

"I'm afraid I wouldn't vote for Kennedy, for reasons of my own--mostly because I lost all respect for Lyndon Johnson when he went against his wishes and accepted the number two spot. Also, I couldn't stomach the thought of the United States being represented by Adlai Stevenson in a foreign country."--Ryan

Beatnik Poem II*

i love you philadendrum
you don't eat no one
you just sit there sucking up the sun
sometimes i think i am a plant
but i'm green
just from last night's booze
and too much pickled herring.

--Coryl Crandall

*Beatnik Poem I is obscene.

still other litter

→ BOB JENNINGS, 3819 Chambers Drive, Nashville 11, Tenn.--I was pleased to be mentioned two times in Stymie (I'm a rank egobocist), but displeased because you called the Ghost the Saturday Evening Ghost, and tho I've spent untold hours and paper since the first issue stamping that idea out, people still don't seem to realize that it's the Monday Evening Ghost. The SaturdayEveGho is a SAPSzine. /Sorry/

Check over your United States history and you'll find that there is a "two-term" tradition that has extended since the days of Washington. This tradition was at first applied only to men, not to parties, but, checking over more history, you'll see that when the man goes, so does the party in power. /Except for the Truman election in 1948, you mean./ Then too, the present administration has not done such a good job in office. /True/ I think you covered some good reasons why Kennedy should ~~win~~ win the next election.

As for this thing, "Ben With the Long-Handled Shovel," I suppose it's all right. As a descriptive segment it is fair, as anything else it is worthless. I don't really like that sort of thing, but it was fair enough. /Eh?/ I personally prefer my chopped, unrelated segments to be more Hemingway-like. /Oh./ At least they inspire some sort of definite mood, or at least the contemporary segments establish a sort of extensive descriptive beauty that is more than mere description for the sound and sake of description.

The article on Wolfe was underdeveloped; you left too much unsaid but merely hinted at. This is the main impression I've gained from it. I tried Wolfe once, but never made it thru. You've aroused my interest, so it's off to the library to dig him up. /Good!/

I disliked your segment story to the point of actual disgust. /Nobody liked it very much, I'm afraid./ No mood, no point, no emotion, it is a void of events having no real connective meaning of conclusion. /Yes, I see it now...I left out the connective meaning of conclusion./

A fast summary. Stymie has miserable artwork, and the material follows closely. The view about Kennedy and your parting editorial were about the only passable things in the whole mess. The story segments were underdeveloped and uninteresting. The column by Lyon is best ignored. Poems I class as not very good either. So, I conclude that you have not a good zine, but I would like to see another copy anyway.

/I'm glad you'd at least like to give me another chance, with this. Sorry the lettercol space was limited and I had to chop your letters so much; hope you take me up on that offer to write an article for Stymie about the advantages of rhymed verse over free verse. Come to think of it, this issue does have a lot of free verse in it.../

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

→ IEN MOFFATT, 10202 Belcher, Downey, Calif.--Many thanks for Stymie, a most enjoyable first issue despite the overuse of your by-line. /Yes, yes, but where is a contribution from you?/ Am up to my ears in unacknowledged fanzines and unanswered letters, and Stymie is a recent arrival, but having been considered as a part of a very small circulation and finding the mag ~~a~~ so much to my taste, I decided to give it a prompt reply. ~~A~~ /I suppose egoboo like that shouldn't go in the lettercol, but I was feeling sort of blue after typing Jennings' letter, ~~and~~ and I needed it./

We seem to share similar political views. Kennedy should have a terrific cabinet and set of ~~advisors~~ advisors, assuming his willingness to accept their advice, aid and support. /At this point, I'm going to switch to another ditto master and hope to heaven I do a better job of typing it than I did this messed-up, crossed-out ~~page~~ page./

litter and then some

(Moffatt speaking) I have no reason to believe that Kennedy won't use the talent at hand, and on this basis will vote for him. Am not happy with Johnson as a vice presidential candidate, but then, one can't have everything, especially in politics.

"Ben..." is a nice descriptive piece, showing off the writer's ability more so than does "Oh, How They Watched." The latter, perhaps because of its brevity, was less effective; much like reading a newspaper account of an accident, although not written in standard newspaper style. /The accident really occurred, last summer, when I was working for The News-Gazette. I was there./

Your poetry is above average, too. I guess that means I "dig" your verse. It doesn't accelerate the beating of my heart, or bring tears to my eyes, but I least I understand it. /Now try Corky Crandall's stuff./

Haven't read Wolfe for years, but did read and enjoy his novels some time ago. I never joined the Wolfe "cult," as I don't believe any one man is God in literature, but without doubt he is one of the greatest writers of our time.

/Len accused Bill Lyon of being a pseudonym for me, which is outrageously false./

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

→ ANDY OFFUTT, 233 Savoy Road, Lexington, Ky.--I wish to heck Mr. Lodge were on our side. If Nixon and Kennedy are equal, Lodge will tip the balance. He's probably the most respected man in this country today, and because of this I hate to see him leave the UN. /So do me and Jack./

I'm inclined to agree with the polysyllabic and verbose Mr. Lyon. If he's kidding. I'm beyond 21 but sufficiently mature to realize I'm not sufficiently mature to refer to anyone as "painfully young." /Well said!/ I'd have given him a fat lip--an immature reaction.

Did the business in a Louisville High School here make the AP? /Yes, and it's that story that Boggs and I were talking about in the last issue's litter./ A high school teacher--an immature exhibitionist, evidentially, with pretty heavy feelings of inadequacy--attempted to use Salinger's Catcher in the Rye in class. He was told on, ordered to quit, howled, the Courier-Journal printed the story, and he was fired. While I much enjoyed the novel, I was entirely too young for it in high school. I think "most" high school students are. Salinger isn't textbook material; I think the teacher was a bit of a nut.

/In Tuscola, a town about 30 miles south of Champaign-Urbana, some parents raised a ruckus because "Brave New World," "1984" and "10 North Frederick" were available in the high school library. They're not any more, but the superintendent of schools nearly resigned in the resulting mess, and all the newspapers around here came up with indignant editorials (you know...when the teenagers can buy "Peyton Place" in a drugstore, etc.). No mention was made of any literary or sociological qualities the books just might have happened to have. Meanwhile, "Harrison High," the book Walter Winchell said makes "Peyton Place" read like a book of nursery rhymes, is still available in the Urbana High School library. And so it goes.../

litter draws to its close.

ROY TACKETT, 412 Elderberry Drive, Laurel Bay, S.C.--I pray forgiveness for the lateness of these comments., I have, however, just returned from two months in the Caribbean (all expenses paid by the Great White Father in Washington).

"Ben With the Long-Handled Shovel" gets my vote as the best thing in your first issue. I liked it. Wolfe? I dunno. I'm what you might call a compulsive reader. If I see something with print on it I've got to read it, to find out what it says. I read, on the average, 100 hardcover books a year. In addition, I read countless magazines, newspapers, pocketbooks, and what have you. And yet I have never read anything by Wolfe. I wonder why? I do too, with that kind of a reading record. I'm familiar with the titles and have glanced at them many times in various and sundry libraries across the country but have never gotten around to reading them.

Impression

I love you
i always have
i doubt
if i always will,
but,
that's neither
here nor there.

Your work is neat and legible which earns you a credit to begin with. That isn't what everyone said about Stymie One... My biggest complaint about Stymie is the extreme lack of anything sciencefictional. Sure, fanzines are great for sounding off our opinions and trying our hand at all sorts of things but don't forget that science-fantasy is the common tie between us. We cuss it, discuss it, and try our hands at writing it and without it fandom falls apart. This is true.

Bill Lyon's column. Tsk. The meanderings of the non-fan. Come starroving, Earthlubber, and then write your criticism.

Point well taken about the lack of stf or fannish content. And contributions along that line are very welcome, Roy.../

Short Essay on Mort Sahl, more to fill up space than anything:

Mort Sahl is a funny man. He is not a funnyman. And this is perhaps the best argument that could be made in behalf of his rather twisted maturity in a time when almost everyone--regardless of age--likes to think of himself as younger, younger, even onto a child.

Sahl has now been cursed with the cover of Time magazine, and it is not too much to assume that soon he will grope his way out of the dimly-lit smokiness of the hungry i, mister kelly's and other stops on the "youandig that?" circuit and been seen on nationwide television, maybe, or at least in huge auditorium gatherings of professionally hip college students.

And in a way, this is tragedy. It is tragedy because it is a manifestation of the seemingly universal drive for "success" that pulls everyone with any talent up, up until he bumps his head on the ceiling, crashes through it and finds himself permanently entombed among the lathes and mortar board of the upper strata.

A funny thing is, perhaps, that another Sahl could poke endless fun at this one. Despite the fact that Sahl finds honestly ludicrous things in the whole spectrum of our civilization, it is perhaps possible that he is himself the most ludicrous thing. Mort, who looks with acid eye on all, the pretends to be so cynical that he can eat through the childishness of our culture, is himself the child.

It is not adult eyes with which he regards us.
But the truthful, all-seeing eyes of the child.

He is a very lucid child.
He expresses himself well.

Will we be led?

the armless goose

By CORYL (Corky) CRANDALL

/Thus begins Stymie's first regular poetry column, devoted to the free verse meanderings of Corky Crandall, bearded News-Gazette staff writer, fiddler of some means, and an axel-sopper on the side./

Essay On Love

i was goosed
accidentally by an armless Aphrodite
(or a facimile thereof)
in a museum in Chicago.
naturally i turned, and with a small bow and a light, one-finger
touch salute, i pardoned myself--
the polite thing to do; and,
i went home and tried to be content with someone that cared.
i thought of returning to the sterile hall of replicas
just to keep the friendship going, but chance, i thought,
would not have it that

a second time
i should blunder back to the crude greeting
(but a greeting, at least)
offered by the motionless form that might well have been
one of my mother's upholstered dining room chairs or her
500-dollar dining room table, the shine of which is shown
only on weekends
(if visitors come).

the difference was, of course, that she, Aphie (as I refer to
her now, since we have met),
and i were alone in the marble-floored, high ceilinged hall,
except for one blue-uniformed guard at the far end;
and he was looking the other way.

as i used to smooth my hand over the newly shined green club coupe
i owned when i was sixteen, i wished to touch the Aphrodite, that
same Aphrodite with which i was involved in that unforgettable prod.
but, Mary Lou,
dear six cylinder machine, used to sit outside through the summer sun
and winter white, and never seem to mind;
she did not care if dust rested on her frame or mud caked her
bottom;
she did not care if i sat or lay or bounced on her seats.
Mary Lou would always respond if i pushed her gearshift or turned
her wheels, but always first,
i would have to turn her engine on.
Aphrodite did not even have an engine. besides, it would not seem
the same
to touch her in any room other than that high, echo-looking hall.
it was the novelty of the thing,
and twice would wear it out.

--Coryl Crandall

Back-of-the-book (another dep't.)--

Thus ends Stymie Two, a momentous fmz which introduced for once and all to fandom Coryl (Corky) Grandall and Bob (no nickname) Lahey. Although Hal Holmes and Mike Deckinger were also mentioned in that other dep't 'way up in front, they were not present in this issue (as became increasingly obvious, I assume). Hal could not find the piece he was intending to contribute, and Gail (I've been misspelling her name, I find, no 'e') still has Deckinger's story while she puts the finishing touches on an illo for it. It will be in the next Stymie.

→ It seems that maybe I had better get frank with you people who didn't write a letter of comment on the last issue you got. Altho Stymie circulation has pushed to an all-time high of 60 (from 35), I still don't mail enough to provide free copies for every knave that's on my mailing list. Either you comment, or I find someone else to send your copy to. That clear? (And thanks to those who did; you're secure.)

Despite my scorn of the box method of checking messages to readers, I find I have been reduced to it. So:

- ___ Status secure.
- ___ Contribution _____ ?
- ___ Artwork badly needed
- ☒ Write, please.
- ___ Write, or else!
- ☒ Trade for your fmz?
- ___ Review this, eh?
- ___ Thanks for being a buddy after Stymie One.

stymie

"The prison walls of self had closed entirely round him; he was walled completely now by the esymplastic power of his imagination...his rapt, dreaming intensity set the face usually in an expression of almost sullen contemplation; he smiled, oftener than he laughed, inwardly, at some extravagant invention, or some recollection of the absurd, now fully appreciated for the first time." --Wolfe, Look Homeward, Angel.

This is:
Stymie Two

From:

Rog Ebert
410 E. Washington
Urbana, Illinois

Stymie's world-famous dotted line is still pre-folded free.



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