

SYNDROME

oh-oh, Dry Scalp!

Jay Kinney 72

ЭКОНОМИКА

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SYNDROME #1

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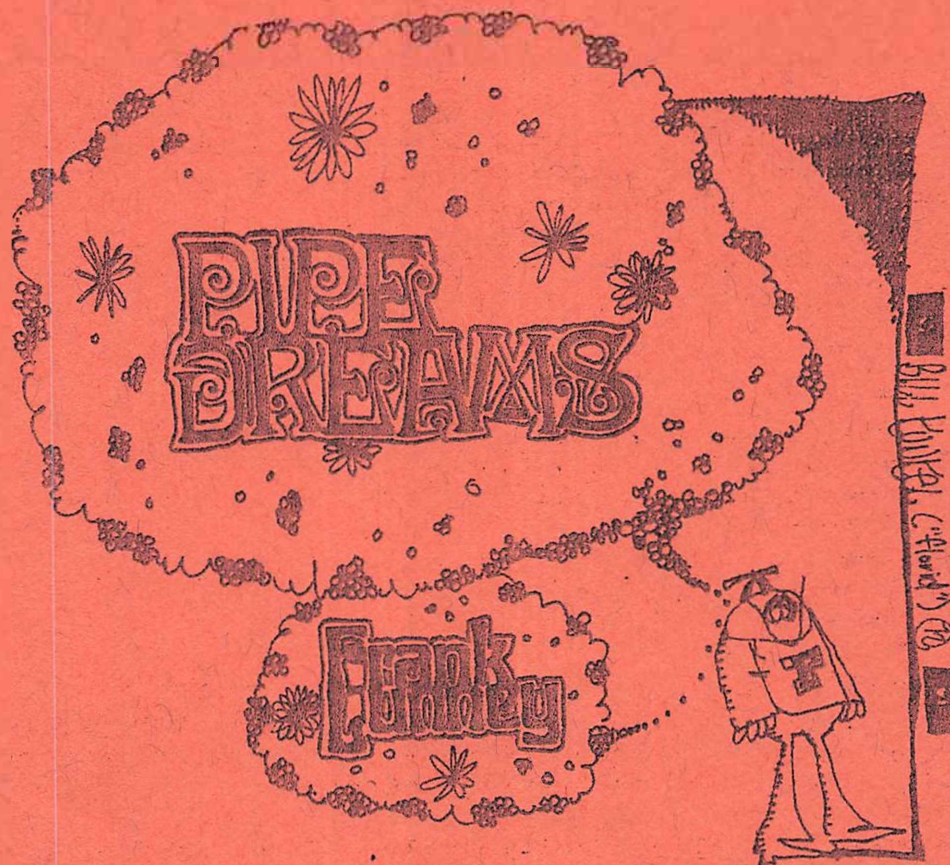
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SYNDROME is published bi-monthly. Today is December 27, and I did almost this entire issue today and yesterday, and I'm pretty tired by now. Last night after slaving over the mimeograph all day I passed out at 9:30, way before my bedtime.





BAYER OR ST. PHILIPS I don't know if it's gotten into the national headlines very much lately, since there's been a lot going on in the world to take up all available headline space, but it sure got a lot of coverage in the Quakertown Free Press. I was working at the Free Press during the summer when the newspaper came off the press and I was able to read the lead story telling about how the city council had just, the night before, declared that the sale of aspirin was in violation of a city statute from way back before the dawn of time, and that the city police would henceforth be commanded enforce the existing law. They also passed a couple of new ones, making anything to do with aspirin about on a par with marijuana.

I delivered papers to stores for the Free Press for three months, and I could see the way the law was being flagrantly disregarded by the very people I worked with. I usually stayed back in the production room, waiting for someone else to get my bundles ready so I could take off in the car they gave me and drive around the rest of the afternoon. But I could see that the staff artist, the girl who did all the advertising layout and artwork and stuff like that, was the person at the paper supplying all our co-workers with aspirin. She'd run through the press room every few minutes to the bathroom, where she'd leave a supply for someone else to pick up, usually downing two of the little pills right away. They did that a lot when there were deadlines to make.

All the kids in Quakertown know where to get aspirin, too. There are usually people circling through all the parties known to

always have a shitload of the stuff on their body at any time, and always willing to make a quick deal to get rid of those unexpected headaches.

It's even sold dord of out in the open down at the Q-Mart where I work. Across the aisle from the Pizza Stand is the Butcher Stand, where they don't sell butchers, but they do sell meat. And there's one guy there who also sells aspirin. The little kids all look very out of place to my trained Q-Mart eyes. So as soon as I see a kid walking through the aisles looking over his shoulders on all possible directions, approaching the Butcher Stand, and looking for all the people behind the counter, then I know this kid is out to score some aspirin. Then it's child's play to watch until the right butcher comes up, a brief conversation, and both their hands reach for a hidden spot on the meat counter, and both come away with the little goodies each would rather have in his possession at that moment.

The guy who used to work in the Q-Mart's record department, nostalgically part of a chain called Listening Booth, was one of the prime runners of aspirin in the area. He used to run in millions of pills a week, he said, and the record store job was just a front and besides, he got a discount on every album he bought. He's left the country, and he was only dealing aspirin for about six months, but he was able to build a mighty nice stash.

So that's what you've gotta do when you live in Quakertown and need something for your headache. You've got to suffer, or else you've got to drop down into the criminal world in order to ease the strain. I just wrote this in case some of you people on the mailing list decide to visit me, or maybe you're just passing through Q-town without stopping. Well, if you have a headache and you can't wait until you get outside the city limits, this has been an explanation for how you can get some of the illicit aspirin.

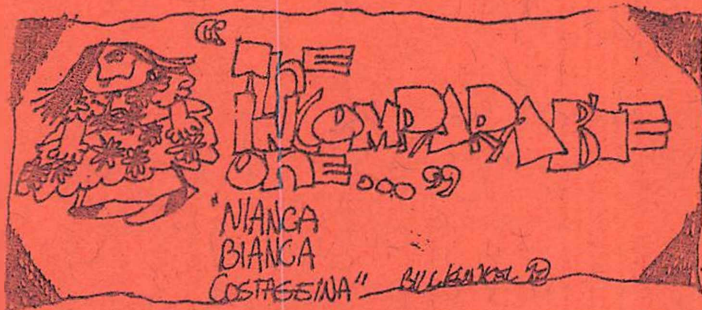
ON THE ROAD TO SAN JOSE By the time most of you are reading this, I should be down in Florida. I'm not going down to see an Apello flight: I wanted to do that a couple of times, but The Real Plans that worked out for people to see those always worked out too late for me to do anything about it. It's just that this is Christmas Vacation/semester break, and I told Frank At The Pizza Stand I wasn't going to be around for a while, and I'll probably be going down to Florida. Not to Miami Beach, either. Or Cocoa Beach. But to Disney World. Today while I was coming back from Allentown where I saw "Deliverance" and from Chigh University where I got a replacement electrostencil on the page I messed up, I saw a car in front of me at the light with a bumper sticker on the back saying, "Disney World, Entertainment Kingdom of the World." And that's the place for me, boys and girl, 'cause that's just what I need these days.

The last time I went South, which was between now and the time I lived in the South, meaning Charleston, S.C., was to get to a rock festival held in Byron, Georgia, even though it was called the Atlanta Pop Festival. The way we got down there was by bus. Greyhound and



Trailways should be ashamed of themselves. In record temperatures of over 100 degrees we rode a whole lot of buses without air conditioning which were also overcrowded so that people had to stand in the aisles and it was hot as hell and there was nothing to do about it. For a few hundred miles I was sitting on the seat at the very back of the bus, and ultimately to surround me on all sides was a family with lots of little kids with diapers, and the shit did flow. The mother changed the diapers on her lap, and she was sitting next to me. The back of the bus smelled like an overflowed toilet.

And speaking of overflowed toilets, we had one of those on the ride back. It happened at night, when I was asleep. The toilet just got filled with too much shit, I suppose, and it flowed over the seat and started slushing up and down the center aisle. At first I didn't know what happened. The smell woke me up, since it was a change, and I thought someone in one of the seats around me crapped in his pants, so I turned my head in the other direction and tried to forget about it and go back to sleep.



When we pulled into Richmond, Va., we all found out what happened. It was cleaned up, too. They stuck a giant hose through one of the windows in the back, stuck it into the mouth of the can, and sucked everything up the hose. Then they washed out the center aisle, and it was as if everything were back to normal.

Before heading down South, though, there'll be the party on New Year's Eve at the Katzes. I don't know what'll happen there, but I've been trying to get back to New York for a long time, and New Year's provided just the shock needed to get me out of the rut I've managed to fall into. And I hope I won't have to get back into that rut until school starts on Jan. 15th, anyway.

I've been rushing to get this issue of Syndrome out before the start of the New Year. I told myself that if I didn't put out a fanzine before the start of the year, partly to have it ready for the trip to New York, partly to have it ready at all, I probably wouldn't ever publish a fanzine again. And I decided I didn't want the latter to happen to me.

It almost happened, though. For long stretches on two days, I typed almost all the stencils for this issue, and I decided to run them all off on Christmas, in the afternoon and at night. Kevin and Dawn and Termot said they'd help me, so they came over and after some mental refreshment we went down to the basement where all The Equipment is. As sloppy as co-workers as they turned out to be, we did manage to get a few pages done faster than I would have been able to do normally, slip-shetting as I found myself having to do. After a while, though, they all started drifting off into various parts of the basement and ended up reading past publications of the Deatch Nudle Presses

Marks I and II. Eventually Dawn started reading the underground paper another kid and my brother almost tried to publish when they were both seniors in high school. The first four pages of THE PANT-LEG GAZETTE still sit piled-up in the drawers where I store pages as they get run off.

The production further further degenerated when I found myself pumping the machine to get more ink onto the silk screen, but no ink came out. Snapping open the door to the ink pump I found the part of the pump which is supposed to force the top of the can down in order to force ink up to be covered in ink. The black paste was spurting out of one of the sides of the can rather than going up the tube, through the pump and onto the rollers where they could be transferred to each sheet of paper. Looking at the small puddle of black flop I knew the machine was really fucked.

I thought it might have been the cheap ink I was using, so I slammed in another can of ink. It still cozed out in the wrong places.

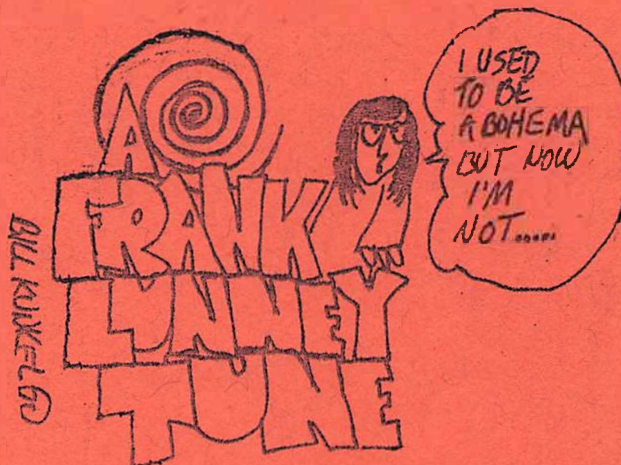
I knew it was the pump now, so I rammed a black Bic pen into its innards, hoping to clear out whatever was blocking the way, and rammed in another can of ink. It was still fucked. And I thought that was it for me publishing fanzines. I left the machine, now knowing what I was going to do with it, how I was supposed to resolve the trouble, and that night I hummed out.

Everything was rosy again when I came to my senses the next day, however. The pump was only suffering from an acute case of The Grunge, easily fixed with a bath in gasoline and a wire massage of the innards. And that's why this fanzine only took one more day than I thought it would to publish.

CURBSIDE FIGHTS: Fandom sure does make itself out to be a dead place these days. I don't think it's totally because of my extended period of blues, but all the fans seem to have slept through much of 1972, and not much exciting seems to have happened since the Noreascon.

On second thought, forget about it. Here, read some of these things by David Bowie:

Day after day,
 They tell me I can go
 They tell me I can blow
 To the far side of town
 Where it's pointless to be high
 'Cause it's such a long way down
 So I tell them that,
 I can fly, I will scream, I will break my arm
 I will do me harm
 Here I stand, foot in hand, talking to my wall
 I'm not quite right at all...am I?



--Frank Lunney

GARY HUBBARD'S

THE CRACKED EYE

Well, a few things have come up since our last session that are significant enough, I think, for us to go into.

For one thing, I still haven't gotten laid.

Wow, here I am, twenty-six years old now and still a you-know-what. I'm beginning to feel like an Old-Maid. Whenever I visit the Folks, they say:

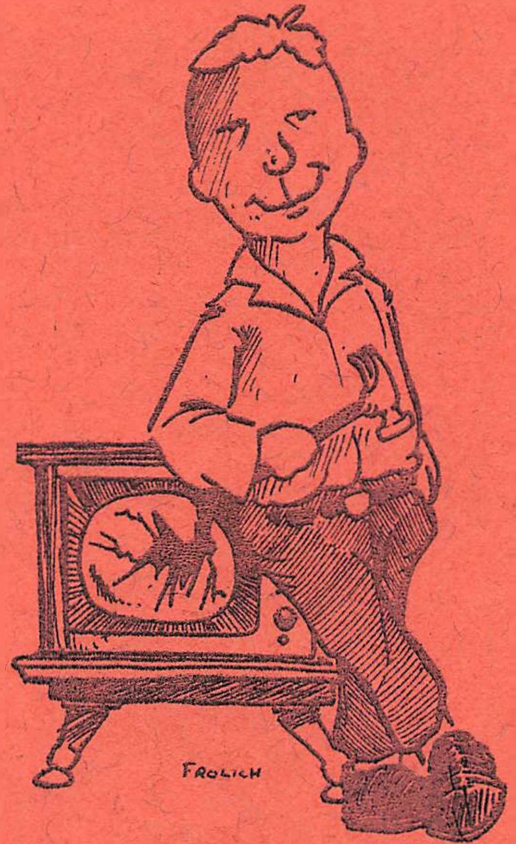
"Ain't you got a girl yet?"

"Well, you know (shrug)..."

They used to ask, "Ain't you married yet?" but they aren't that fussy any more. But they keep passing little hints my way. About a month ago, they put in a patio. In the wet concrete, they wrote down who was going with whom:

Gene + Lucille (my parents)
Ron + Jan (my brother and his paramour)
Pam + Donny (my sister is a Donny Osmond fan)
Gary + ?

? indeed. It isn't because I haven't tried, Lord knows. I've just had an unusually long dry spell.



I once knew this girl named Sharon. She was skinny and had acne. She wore that white stuff on her eyelids that made her look a little like Bozo the Clown. But that's all right; I'm not fussy. After all, looks aren't everything. Personality counts for a lot, too. And you know what they say about the ugly ones.

Sharon liked bowling. I didn't, but I followed her around to every bowling alley in town. I don't like bowling alleys. Once I went to work in a factory. I couldn't take the noise and dirt, so I quit. Bowling alleys are a lot like factories. They are dimly lit, dingy places where seedy-looking people perform pointless and repetitive tasks...and noisy. There's this constant RRRUUUUUMMMMMBBBBLLEE THUD CLACKETY-CLACK RRRUUUUUMMBBBLLEEEEE THUD CLACKETY CLACK going on all the time.

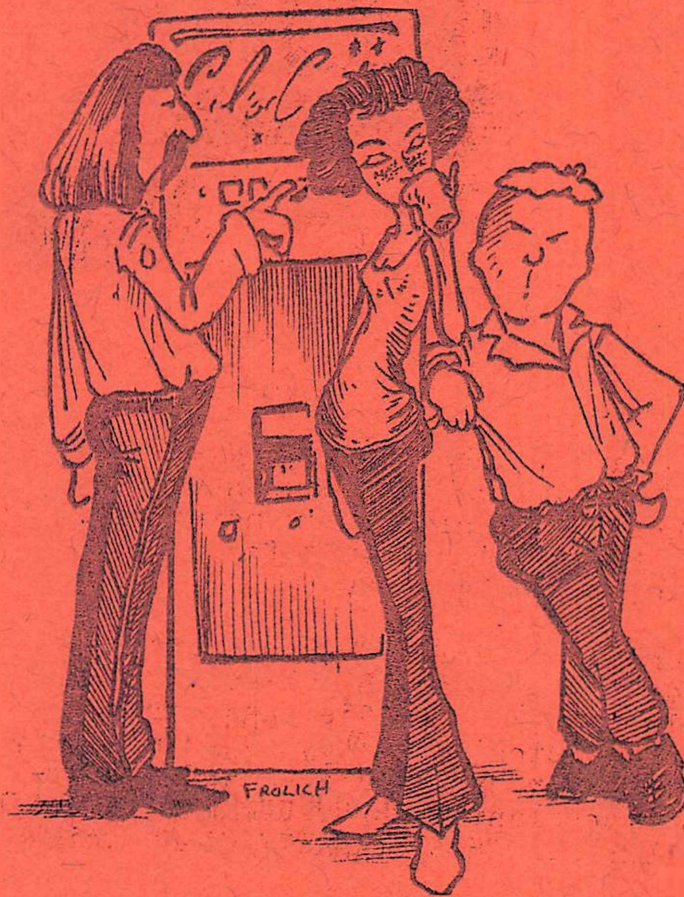
But I found myself on several occasions in places like these in hot pursuit of skinny Sharon. The first thing you see when you enter a bowling alley is a baldheaded old coot who looks you up and down and scowls. His job, I suppose, is to check out the people who come in the door and keep out the creeps (or else, to let only the creeps in. Have you ever seen the kind of people who hang around bowling alleys?).

If you get past him, there's a chance you might get knocked down by someone coming out of The Lounge. All bowling alleys have

Lounges, because the American people will use any excuse they can to drink alcohol. These Lounges are usually pitch dark chambers where grim-looking men sit around in groups or move about aimlessly. I guess Hell must be a lot like that.

When I finally caught up with Sharon, she was standing in front of a Coke machine drinking Pepsi from a paper cup. I started talking to her; trying to direct the conversation into significant channels of conversation. Wasn't easy; she was a veritable brick wall. She could say "yes" or "no" or "well, I don't know about that."

However, when I thought I was making some progress, the Hairy Postal Clerk would show up and carry her away from me. I could never see what she saw in a weirdo like that when there was a nice clean-cut kid like myself around.



Well, you can always console yourself by bowling a few frames. That is, if you get a charge out of watching bowling balls roll into the gutter. There must be some trick to bowling, but I was never able to figure it out. Whereas, everybody around me could make the ball roll smoothly down the alley (RRRRRUUUUUUMMMMMBBBBLLEEEE THUD CLACKETY CLACK), I couldn't get the crazy thing to stay on the road (RrrUmBB-llee boink).

Bowling is a stupid game.

Of course, I realize that my problems with sex might be my own fault. I'm no Paul Newman, but, then again, I'm not Quasimodo, either. I don't care for most social activities and avoid people if I can. When I go out, it's usually to the public library. That might be a handicap there.

Then again, I missed a lot of chances. Like that religious girl who works at McDonald's. But I wasn't ready to embrace her and Christ at the same time.

I have this silly notion of finding the Ideal Woman, and I've passed by a lot of girls because they didn't fit the image. The stupid thing is that I really don't know what I want in an Ideal Woman; I only know what it is about girls that I don't like that makes them not fit

the image. Really, if there were an Ideal Woman, she'd be so perfect that she wouldn't have anything to do with a creep like me.

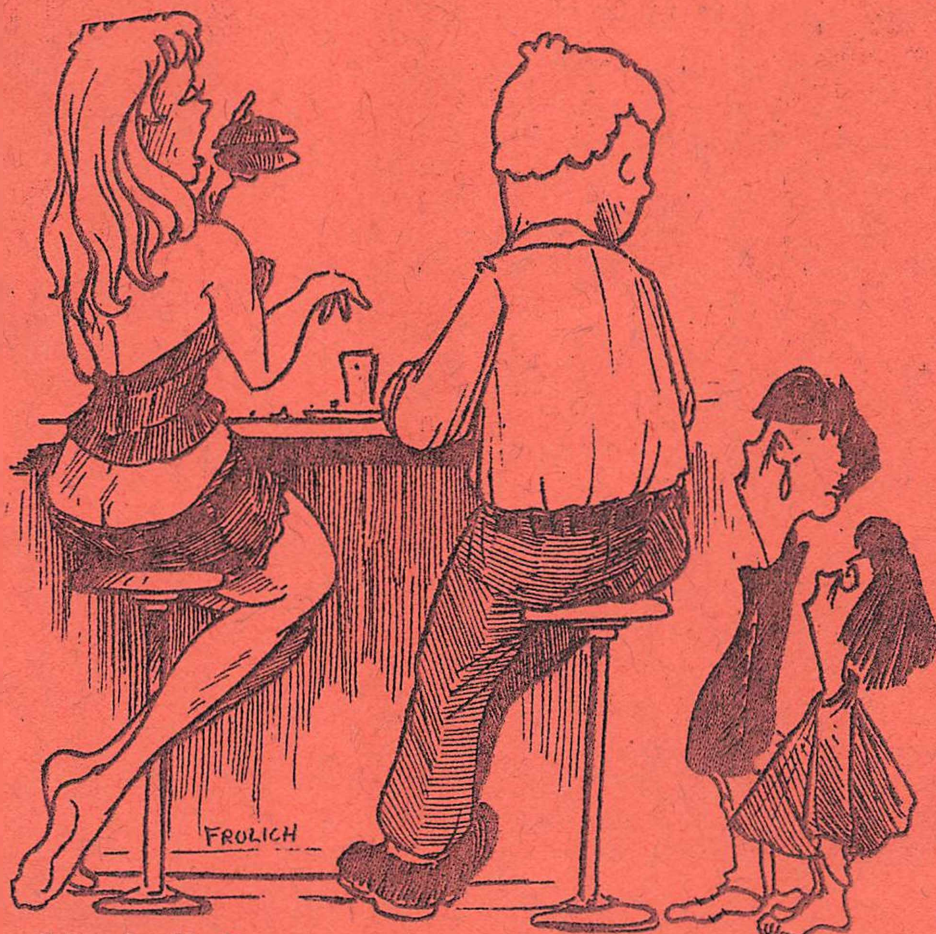
And she'd be rich. She'd have to be, because I wouldn't spend any of my money on her if I could get away with it.

Spending money; that's the thing I really hate about this boy/girl business. Most of the girls I know make more money than I do, anyway, so why should I be crippling my bank account for their sakes. Every time I buy a girl something, say a hamburger, a little voice in my head says:

"People are starving in Europe, and you're buying that ninny with the big boobs a hamburger? What if you got sick and went to the hospital? You might need the money you're throwing away here. You could save your money and go to school, you know. Or, you could go Downtown and see a dirty movie for what you're spending here...and get more out of it than you're going to get out of her to boot."

Why can't I get recompensed for the money I've spent on broads. I mean, if Standard Oil can get a tax break for spilling oil, why can't I get a tax break for trying to spill a little oil of my own?

The closest thing I ever got to the real thing, I think, was from this black girl, Pat. She was amply endowed (well...let's call an ace an ace and a spade a spade; she was fat). What it is that



makes chubby black girls so aggressive and strangely attractive at the same time. is more than I can figure out. If you remember the corpulent groupie, Mavis Montreal, from Richard Lupoff's book, Sacred Locomotive Flies, you will have some idea of what Pat was like.



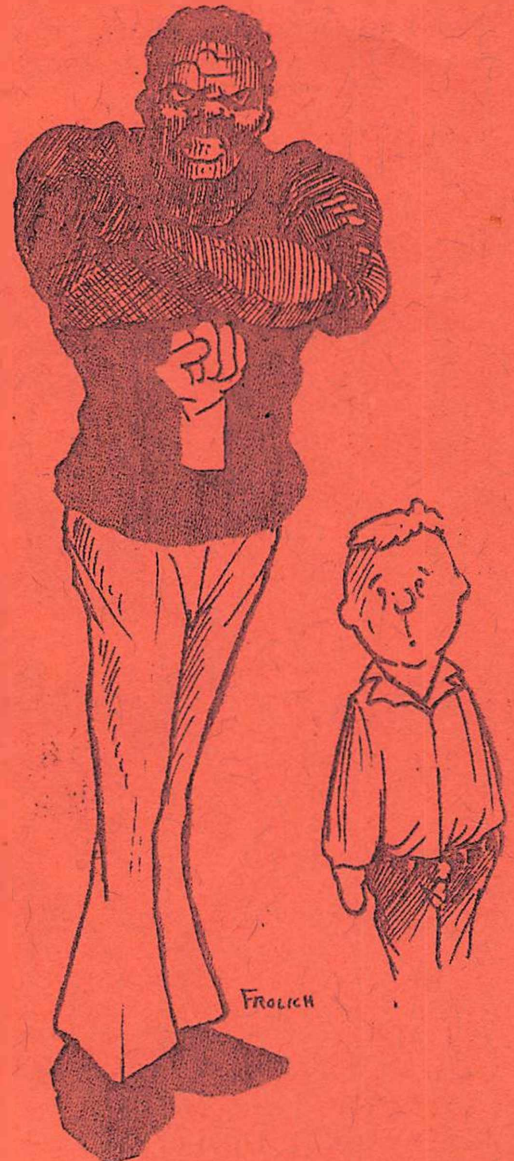
What exactly it was she saw in me is beyond my comprehension. I think, though, that her attitude was the one that is usually reserved for dogs and small children. She used to pat me on the head and told me to stand up straighter when I walked. At other times, her interest seemed distinctly unmaternal. She used to stand very close to me when she talked to me. In fact, she brushed right up against me. I

used to fidget with my hands, because I didn't know what to do with them. She had this trick where, if I were bent over doing something, she would sneak up on me and, when I got up, I would find myself rising into soft curvy stuff.

No telling where all of this might have led; no telling how I might have eventually reacted to her, but nothing ever came of it. For a lot of reasons, but mainly because she already had a boyfriend. A Nubian giant who wore a black T-shirt with a red fist, clenched, emblazoned on the front.

Just as well, I suppose. For, to tell the truth, I'm scared to shit of black folks. After all, I've led a pretty white life. I grew up in an all-white suburb, went to an all-white school, even my unit in the Army was all white. Oh, there were a few black guys assigned to our unit, but they would be mysteriously reassigned to another unit soon after they arrived.

So, naturally, from living such an all-white life, I've picked up all the prejudices, superstitions, and fears that white people have. I like black people, but I'm afraid of them, too.



You know, I have heard that there are whites who respect and even admire the blacks, but I've never met any. All the people I know, or have ever known, no matter how liberal and broadminded they might seem, always had something nasty to say about the "coons" when they were sure that what they had to say wouldn't go beyond closed doors.

And the attitude of my younger friends isn't any better than that of the older people I know. The prejudice of the older people can be excused. Intolerance was a part of the world in which they grew up. They, at least, have the good manners to look around to make sure there are no blacks around before they lower their voices to say something about the "coloured." The younger ones just say "nigger" out loud.

They should know better. I grew up with both sides of the story and had a choice between love and hate. And so did they.

However, that's their problem.

My problem is that I'm twenty-six years old, and I can't get laid.

Christ! At this rate, it's going to shrivel up and disappear. Won't I ever be able to establish a normal relationship with a woman? I'll settle for an abnormal relationship with a woman.

Well, who knows what the future holds? Maybe someday it'll happen. Maybe someday I'll get laid. If I had any kind of smarts at all, I'd forget about it and become a monk or something, but a little voice in my head keeps saying, "Screw!"

So I'll keep trying.

Linda X has big jugs and works in the Shoe Department. Just the other day, she was taking some shoes out of their boxes and putting them up on display. I was passing by and she called to me,

"Hi Gary, want a box?"

Well.....

--Gary Hubbard
(CONT. FROM P. 16)
Or there'll be another idea. There was a real good song we did last week, called "Hurricane." But there was this one idea, and nothing was done with it. Jimmy called it "Rock and Roll School," I had been fooling around with this Chuck Berry variation, and it fit, so it was my first major song. Writing music is a lot like publishing fanzines, only different. --Bill Kunkel



THE SUFIS

alexey panshin

For about six months, I have been reading a number of books signed by Idries Shah, who is Grand Sheikh of the Naqshbandi Order of the Sufis. These books are, for the most part, anthologies of active Sufic material drawn from the past thousand years. The Sufis have the reputation of being Moslem mystics, but they are clearly something much more than that. One of the things they have been is the most important literary figures of the Middle East, so there is no lack of material for Shah to draw on--though, at the same time, many of the stories and anecdotes he prints have been passed on through oral tradition, rather than formal publication.

It is not easy for me to speak of the Sufis for a variety of reasons. I've been studying these books for six months, as intensively as I have ever read anything in my life, and I've dug into libraries for verification of some of the external aspects of what I have been reading. That can't be summarized in a phrase, a paragraph, or a page. That is one reason. Another is that I am not a Sufi, and the Sufis are subtle. I am an ignorant child dealing with masters and much of what they say is beyond my present ability to appreciate. Yet another reason is that the Sufis deal in sophisticated forms of knowledge that cannot necessarily be expressed in simple explicit terms. Since I'm limited in what I can say about the Sufis, let me try to say instead why encountering them has made such an impression upon me.

During the last several years, Cory and I have been working on a book called The World Beyond the Hill, a history and theory of science fiction. This is the most recent in a long series of attempts to understand this strange literature and why it should have been so important to me for more than twenty years. I have been reading it that long. I have been writing it, or attempting to, since I graduated from high school more than fifteen years ago. I have been writing criticism of science fiction for the last nine years.

What is science fiction? Why write it? Why read it? What is the source of its intense fascination for me and for so many others? There hasn't been much help in the sf criticism that has been written. Sf criticism is a young art, and most of those who have been interested enough to write about it have been sf writers. These, for the most part, have accepted the Gernsback theory of sf, that science fiction is an extension of science, and have not probed deeply into the questions of sf's nature and origin. They have also, in most cases, preferred to think of themselves as natural artists, practical men writing practical fiction for other practical men.

I could quote chapter and verse. There hasn't been much help here for anyone who, like me, has not been satisfied with conventional wisdom.

In my own groping for understanding, I've had to go beyond sf in search of perspective. I've read as widely as I could in the academic criticism of literature. I've read the theorizing of writers of mimetic fiction. But again, the questions that haunt me have not been answered. At a fundamental level, I've run hard against the iron wall of assumption.

For instance, we all tend to accept fiction as a given of life. It exists all around us. We tell stories to children as early as they can hear them. We all love fiction. What is more, all mankind tells stories--all mankind. Why? Why should fiction exist at all? Why should it be universal? What need does it serve? Even a child can tell when stories are constructed rightly, and when they are falsely made. How? What is the essential nature of fiction? Why write it? Why read it? What is the source of its intense fascination for me, for you, and for everyone?

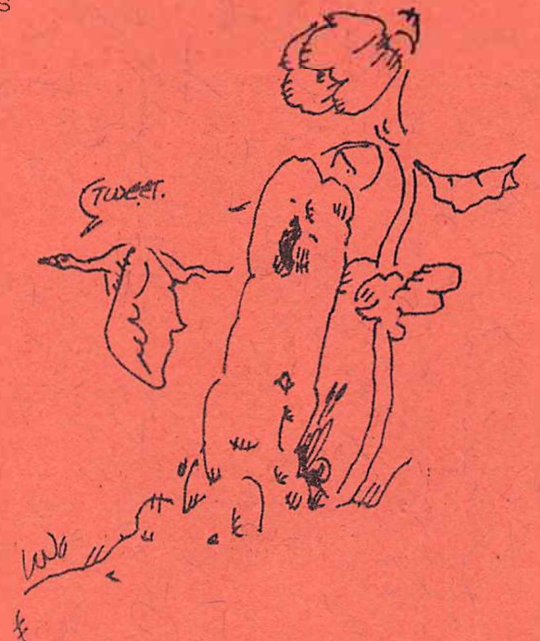
Cory and I, reinforcing each other, have probed into these questions. What is more, we have found answers to them, answers that work, answers that do explain. We have been in country unknown to us--and, as far as we know when we entered it, hardly suspected by anyone.

We have discovered that fiction is a highly sophisticated analogical device. It exists to present what cannot be presented meaningfully in any other way. Fiction demonstrates over and over that it is possible to solve seemingly insurmountable problems, problems that cannot be solved by any pattern of conduct within a person's previous range. These problems are solved not by direct attack, but by change within the person that makes his problems no longer a problem.

Anyone who has owned a cat must know that when it is a kitten it can learn a variety of responses to the world, but that when it grows up, it is, to a great extent, condemned to the behaviors it learned as a kitten. Mammals in general become frozen in their responses as adults. And we humans have a tendency to do the same. Few of us are as flexible as adults as we were as children.

But fiction teaches us that if we are able to surrender attachment to the behaviors to which we have grown accustomed, if we surmount fear and desire, we can continue to grow and to learn all our lives. Fiction is the symbolic equivalent of actual human behavior. Fiction demonstrates a kind of growth peculiar to humanity. This kind of growth is what separates man from the rest of creation.

And, we suspect, all human beings respond to fiction because those who have not been able to did



not solve their seemingly insurmountable problems, and died. That is, the response to fiction has been bred into the human race.

This may seem a strange set of assertions--no stranger to you than to us, I may say. But, given the space we are taking in our book, these assertions can be very clearly demonstrated. What is more upsetting--because we, like you, are captives of the givens and the assumptions that have been handed to us as we have proceeded through our society's educational system--is that the consequences of what we have discovered about fiction have led us to even stranger places and unlikelier ideas.

This is enough to make us alternately stand tall in pride and clutch each other in desperation. It is enough to make us ask ourselves if we are geniuses or if we are whacked out of our gourds.

Encountering these Sufi books has made it clear to us that we are neither that good nor that crazy. We are children who have stumbled on the fringes of the knowledge of real adults, full human beings, those who are not bound by the assumptions of their culture. This is the knowledge that the Sufis are masters of. I am absolutely confident of this, but I say it with the proviso that there are Sufis and there are those who claim to be Sufis, and you must be able to tell the difference.

One other thing I can say is that true Sufis will consistently run contrary to your expectations. One of the ways that may do this is to appear thoroughly ordinary. To see them and to see them as they are, it is necessary to surrender the assumptions that blind you--the most blinding of which are the assumptions you do not realize you have. To see them, you must see through yourself.

Here are some of the things that Sufis have said about themselves:

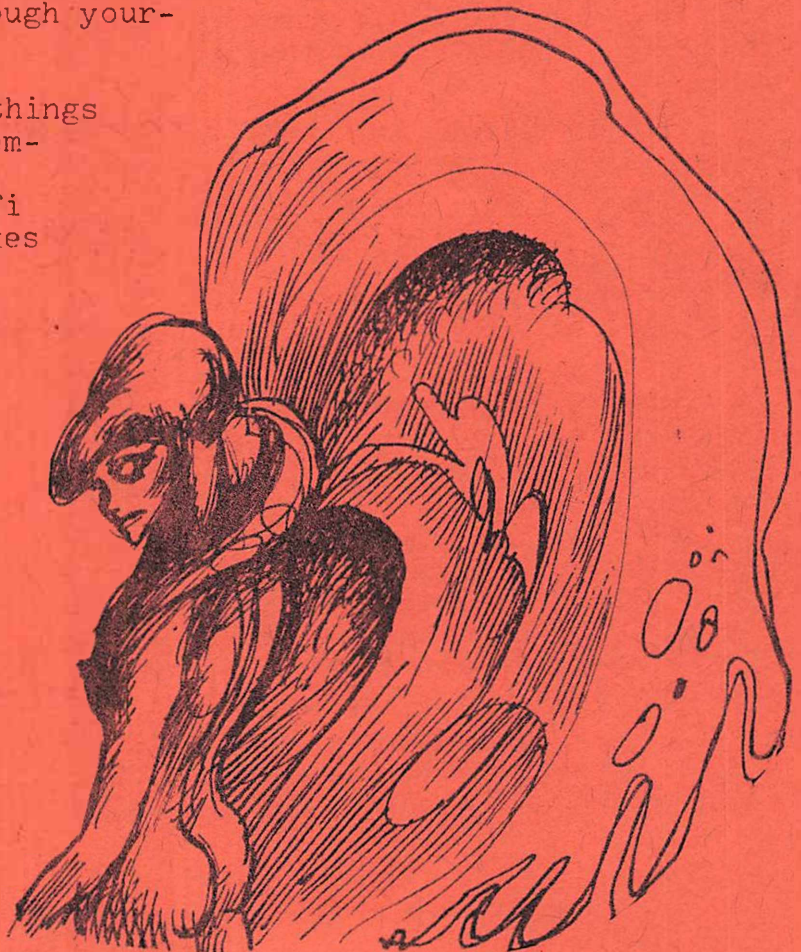
What is a Sufi? A Sufi is a Sufi." In Persian it makes a neat little rhyme.

"Sufism is truth without form."

"If you encounter two institutions calling themselves Sufic, exactly the same, at least one of them must be a fake."

"Being a Sufi is to put away what is in your head--imagined truth, preconceptions, conditioning--and to face what may happen to you."

"The question is not 'What is Sufism?', but 'What can be said and taught about Sufism?'"





"The reason for putting it in this way is that it is more important to know the state of the questioner and tell him what will be more useful to him than anything else. Hence the Prophet (Peace and Blessing upon him!) has said: 'Speak to each in accordance with his understanding.'

"You can harm an inquirer by giving him even factual information about Sufism, if his capacity of understanding is faulty or wrongly trained.

"This is an example. The question just recorded is asked. You reply: 'Sufism is self-improvement.' The questioner will assume that self-improvement means what he takes it to mean.

"If you said, again truly: 'Sufism is untold wealth,' the greedy or ignorant would covet it because of the meaning which they put upon wealth.

"But do not be deceived into thinking that if you put it in a religious or philosophical form, the religious or philosophical man will not make a similar covetous mistake in taking, as he thinks, your meaning."

The books by Idries Shah that I have mentioned are, it is clear, a manifestation of Sufism tailored to our culture and our capacity. I would hesitate to speculate why they are being published now, except inasmuch as it seems clear that the troubles we are suffering today in our culture are the result of the assumptions of our culture as to what the universe is like, what is true, and what is important. If we are to survive it will be necessary to us to transcend our previous limits, to solve the seemingly insurmountable by surrendering our attachments and changing ourselves.

Among the relevant books that have been recently published are Reflections (Penguin, 1972, \$1.25), The Magic Monastery (Dutton, 1972, \$1.95), The Way of the Sufi (Dutton, 1970, \$1.95), and The Pleasantries of the Incredible Mulla Nasrudin (Dutton, 1971, \$1.75), all by Idries Shah, and The Diffusion of Sufi Ideas in the West, ed. by Leonard Lewin (Keysign Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1972, \$2.85).

Reflections and The Magic Monastery are more accesible than many of Shah's books because they contain his own original material and they are thus phrased in terms that are more immediately recognizable to us than some of the older material from other cultures. The Magic Monastery in particular has stories in it that sf readers may easily be able to respond to. Reflections is a book with a cutting edge. If you stare into it long enough and hard enough you may begin to see yourself.

The Way of the Sufi is the broadest in range of all Shah's books. It has an introductory essay by Shah, relevant materials from classic Sufi authors such as El-Ghazali, Omar Khayyam and Jalaludin Rumi, typical materials from the four major Sufic Orders, accounts of the masters of the Sufi Way, teaching stories, and much more.

The Pleasantries of the Incredible Mulla Nasrudin has been, for me, the most subtle and difficult Sufi book that I have encountered. It is, on the surface, a collection of traditional Middle Eastern jokes centering around the figure of Mulla Nasrudin, who is both an idiot and a master. Many of the jokes, read as jokes, fall flat. Beyond that, however, I have penetrated them enough to have grounds for the suspicion of how very much more there remains in them to be revealed. Here is one, for your puzzlement or for your enlightenment:

"'Congratulate me!' shouted Nasrudin to a neighbor. 'I am a father.'

"'Congratulations! Is it a boy or a girl?'

"'Yes! But how did you know?'"

The Diffusion of Sufi Ideas in the West is an anthology of material on contemporary Sufi activity in both the Middle East and the Western world. It is more explicit and informational than other Sufi books. As such it is a useful adjunct to the other books mentioned here which reveal less than they stimulate.

Expect these books to be different from anything that my description of them leads you to expect.

Bear in mind that everything that I have said here, first word to last, is partial and inadequate to the actual facts of the matter. Bear in mind also that anything that I could say would also be partial and inadequate.

And take with you this last quotation:

"'How shal I know a real Sufi?' yiu say.

"I say: 'Become honest, for like calls to like.' If you really were honest, you would not need to ask the question. Since you are dishonest, you do not deserve much more than you get."

(CONT. FROM P. 19)

--Alexei Panshin

is we get together somewhere and we plug in and we start drinking Southern Comfort mixed with whatever kind of soda is around. I prefer it with cream, but root beer will suffice. Then, you know, Jimmy says something like, "I just thought up a song called 'Electric Negro' and it's about..." or some such shit and somebody starts fooling around and sooner or later a riff turns up.

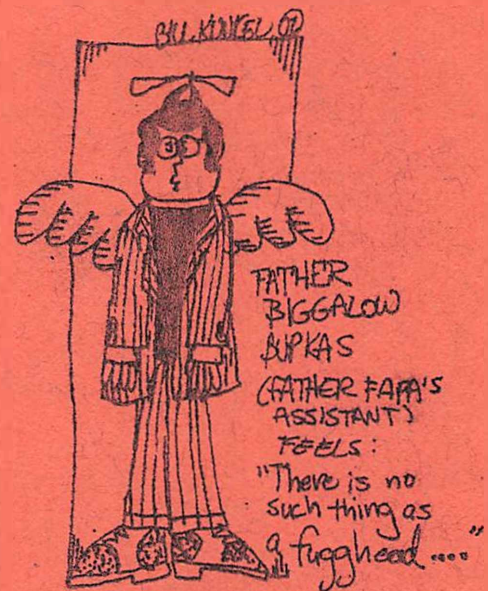
"It doesn't fit."

"Fuck you."

(Cont. on p. 11)

THAWTS
THAT
JEST
WORLD
OUT

BILL KUNKEL'S COLUMN



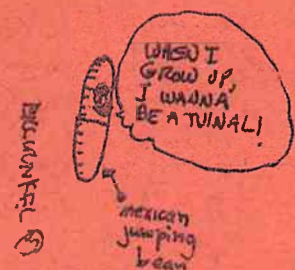
Frame One: Back in January I was spending a couple days a week sitting in Darren's cellar laying down rhythm tracks for the eleven or so original tunes that the band had decided were workable. Recording is really wearying business. Two years ago, in fact, we were doing session work in this cat's private studio in Jersey. It's fascinating in a way, but I don't know, it just kills you after a while.

We got there early in the morning, and if you can imagine just sitting in this hot fucking little room lighting cigarette after cigarette and eating acid and drinking scotch and tuning a twelve string. Plus this cat, whose name I forget (we called him Red Schwantz I think) was no great shakes as a writer and he was into this super pop/commercial stuff, like "well now boys I'd like you to do this sort of like with a little bit of Credence Clearwater and some, umm, Who, but I want it so that, if he wanted to, maybe Andy Williams could sing it, you know..." and I would say, "oh yup...yeah, I'll play it on the 12-string..." And he would say oh, that's great. Because he was pretty certain that if I played it on the 12-string it wouldn't sound like rock and roll.

It got pretty freaky by the end of the day, though, and our drummer collapsed and fell through the wall and I had nodded out somewhere in the corner while Red would be sitting at the control panel talking to our singer who had just done this shitty song for the twelve-thousandth time and he was obviously thinking--far out, it's a take, and Schwantzy would say, "Okay, fine. I think I've got the sound level adjusted now, we can begin recording..."

But when you're doing your own stuff and you're being produced by someone with talent it isn't nearly so horrible. But then, near the end of January, Darren, who is our lead guitarist, came down with hepatitis.

So just recently we have been getting back together again. It's hard, after not playing together for so long, but when you play with a good



rock band, there's just this incredible urge to get back to it and to go on stage again. Especially when, like me, you're the sort of person who wants to more than anything else be doing whatever you're not doing at the moment.

Two weeks on the road and I'd want to publish a fanzine.

Frame Two: I thought: Some people are just not destined to work at jobs they don't enjoy. And, on the other hand, some people are. Immigrants are. Except for the ones who become gangsters. But the other ones marry slow, as opposed to fast, women, and settle down in a nice comfy tenement and have kids who they can not feed just so they can nag them throughout their formative years concerning the importance of getting an education in this miserable world.

"Do you want to have to break your back like me?" they are fond of asking them (their children).

The children don't believe their parents, naturally, because they know them for the ignorant and uneducated louts they are. And so they play hookie and run around with fast, as opposed to slow, crowds, and inject heroin and go cold turkey and get jobs with construction companies and marry the girl across the alleyway and have kids who they can not feed because they have all this dialogue in their heads from their parents and are not anxious to have it go to waste.

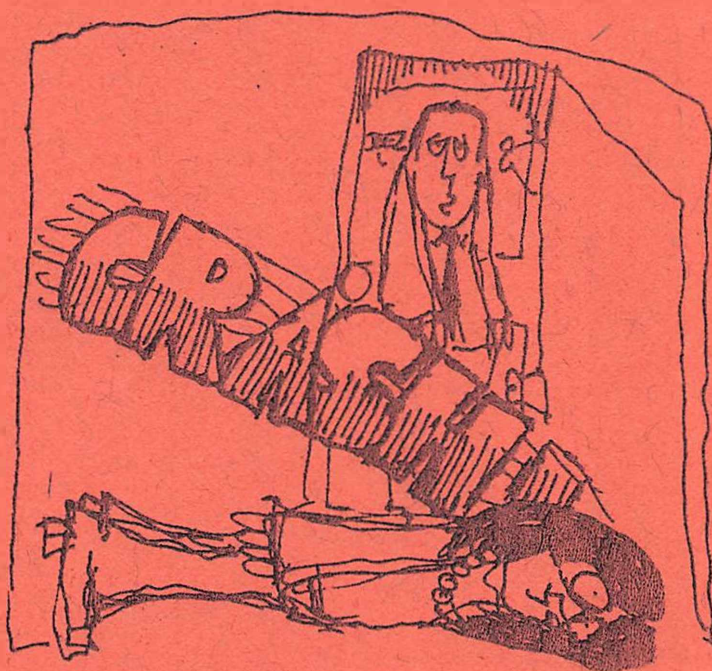
This is known as History.

Frame Three: When I open up my mailbox there is one thing, no, two things that I don't want to find there. One thing I don't want to find is a notice telling me that one of my checks bounced, and the other is a crudzine.

There you have it. And yet--do you think this stops them? Oh shit no. No fucking consideration at all. I often become so frustrated upon finding a crudzine in the mail that I have to sit down and watch two soap operas and draw 22 cartoons before I am steady enough to roll the day's first.

STANLEY is an offset crudzine, and I mean it is ALWAYS waiting for me, and it has upset me so much that I have punished it by sending the editors all the cartoons they have forced me to draw. But dig this: they mail this under the auspices of their Texas Univers-





ity for ONE CENT PER
COPY!! (or maybe two).

Think about this.
How, you ask? Is this
fair?

I brought this
subject up at a recent
Insurgents meeting, and
we kicked the subject
around a bit (which didn't
last too long--STANLEY
is only a few pages
thick and thus crumbles
easily), winding up, as
per usual, on another
track.

"It's an old
idea," Joyce Katz said,
"but it really is too
bad that fandom isn't
a religion."

"Yes," Arnie Katz
(who is her husband) agreed. "And publishing could be a part of this
religions tenets!"

Steve Stiles then stood up, taking on the cast of a mad evangelist. "And the Lord said," he intoned piously, "'Go ye forth and
Duplicate!'"

Frame Four: Recording has slowed down. We are all working, though I'm
still off on Wednesdays and Fridays (as well as the
weekend) but Darren and Jimmy aren't. I am becoming depressed. Just
yesterday I learned that Darren is moving to Germany in a few months.
Hmmm. That leaves us about a month to get the fucking songs on tape
and sold to some company or other so we can (oh I pray) get an album
or something out before Darren splits, because if we get that shit
settled he can just fly back here to the States whenever necessary.

But I will admit there were a few moments of sheer panic.
He's crossing the sea with his old lady and her people, who are Going
Home. Once over there they'll have an apartment of their own, gratis,
in a building the family owns. Of course, I can imagine writing songs
with someone who is living in another country can be pretty fucking
weird. I suppose that if the band proves viable in spite of this
latest and most tremendous obstacle, I will have to start writing
more of the music, which is basically what Darrem has always done.
Jimmy, our singer, writes most of the lyrics, and he works in one of
two ways. Either he comes up with a concept, knocks out the lyrics
with a musical idea somewhere in his head that he communicates to
either Darren or myself, and we refine it and restate it in terms of
guitar; or somebody writes a melody, lays it out on tape, and Jim
writes a song to fit it.

We'll see, you know.

I wrote my first major number just last week. The way we write

(cont. on p 16)

jerry lapidus

"Where are we now?"

The sad fact is that today, with SFR's death, there is not really one good BNF-quality fanzine published in this country. A number--Energumen, Granfalloon, Outworlds, and your zine--publish occasional pieces of quality, but these are balanced in most issues by pieces of very little quality. We don't find Willis, Tucker, Boggs, Burbee or present-day writers of their quality (if indeed there are any) appearing side by side in the pages of any fanzine.

That's Ted White speaking on a letter to me which I'll probably use in my next issue--he's put into specific words something that's been around the fringes of my mind for quite a while.

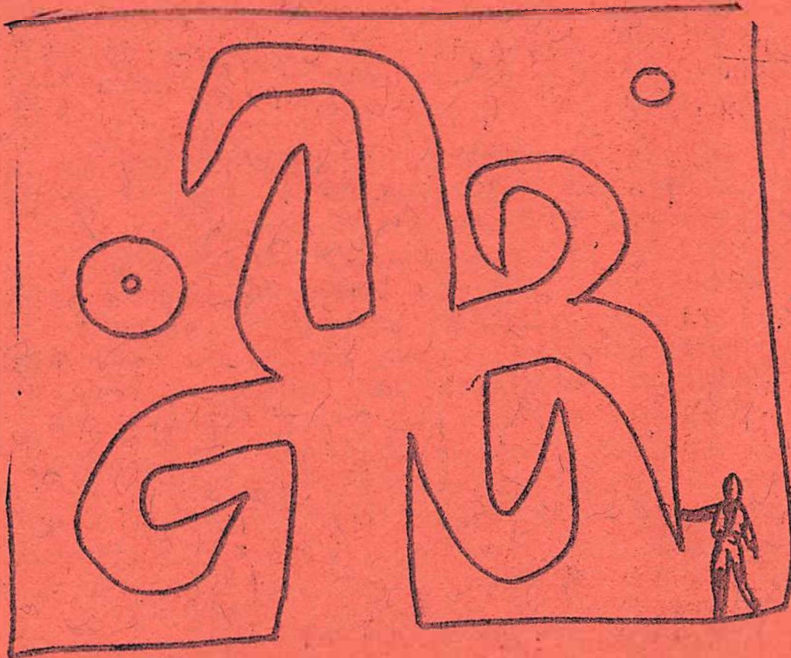
Today is January 26 and I expect to take a week until I've worked this to my satisfaction. I've been playing around with these fanzine columns for a while now, and as I'm about to leave for a semester of graduate work in the Netherlands and be cut off from most of this, I'd like to give you my current thinking, for better or worse. This is probably the last thing I'll write before I leave, and I'm going to try to go over what I've seen from my little corner the past year or so.

Right now, then, I do agree with Ted, although I have doubts that the lack of a really great fanzine is necessarily a bad thing. But I don't think there's a single really outstanding fanzine around--some are always competent but never better than that, others are incredibly erratic, issue to issue and piece to piece within each issue. And for the life of me, I can't see why this is so; a lot of possibilities present themselves, but none seem to supply more than a small

part of the answer.

For one thing, we have the simple decline in writing people have been noticing for a couple of years now. This current fannish era hasn't produced anybody equal to the greats, anybody capable of producing outstanding writing, time after time. A lot of the good writing that does come is coming from the better writers of past generations--Ted, Terry Carr, Greg Shaw; worse, some of our better writers, those who could turn out ~~that~~ top quality material if they had the time, are spreading themselves very thin, increasing their output but reducing the quality. It sounds really dumb, but if really good stuff ain't being written in the first place, it ain't gonna be printed, either.

We also have a profusion of titles; there are a lot of fanzines of every classification around, each grabbing up the best material available. A half dozen big genzines, a half dozen "major" fannish fanzines, three or four art-conscious fanzines--and so nobody seems to be able to get more than a taste of what limited quality material is being written. For a while early last year and late in 1970, it seemed as if arty and art-conscious magazines were going to become a major force in the field, but this period has passed now. Leaders in the fancy offset game have turned to mimeo and simpler formats (Outworlds, The Essence), and a number of the art-conscious magazines have gone dormant or died entirely (ICC, Embelv two of the fanciest (Shaggy and Perihelion) died even earlier.



I can't find any answers, if they in fact exist. The fact remains that the great writing simply hasn't been there. What has happened, then?

OK. The biggest happening over the year has been the change and metamorphosis within the whole fannish fanzine movement everyone has noticed and talked about. A slight digression, now, if you'll permit me; I've mentioned in a couple of places that

I FELL INTO
AN AVALANCHE

most fannish writing can be divided into two groups, and I want to go into that for a moment. On one side, we have the informal, personal essay sort of thing; on the other, we have the classical fannish humor style, the style someone (Terry Carr?) called "myth-making." Charlie Brown put it very well in a recent Locus: "First is the personal essay in which the writer talks about himself, how events affect him, and how he views other things. This type of writing has always been interesting because it helps us get to know and understand the writer. The other type of fannish writing is fannish humor in which minor events or ideas are exaggerated in order to produce a hilarious essay." Don Fitch, writing in the Cult, also talked about the personal type of writing: "I think many of the great fanwriters of the past were somewhat of it; Willis, Shaw, Berry, Burbee (their imitators too often emulated the minus attributes of it--the too witty, too clever, too cute, too ingroupish, too snotty aspects.)"

Will you all buy that, at least for the sake of argument? OK. The original fannish resurgence seemed to me focussed more on that classically fannish style, and this came to be the dominant form first in Focal Point, later in Potlatch, Rats, Afan, and Fangle; the Brooklyn Insurgents became the bastion for fannishness with this form of writing. At the same time, this personal style was always present--in small amounts in these same fanzine, in larger amounts in Greg Shaw's Metanoia, John D. Berry's Egoboo (with Ted White), Locke and Hulan's Pelf. The fannish humor was the dominant style--as exemplified by most of Arnie Katz's own writing, for the fannish and non-fannish fanzines of the past year or so. But recently, the NY influence has seemed to dissipate a bit; it's been some time since one of the major fannish fanzines has come out of New York, and the latest issues of those that have come out have been different from the beginnings.

The point is that NY is no longer needed; what has happened is that in sponsoring fannishness around the country, Arnie and his merry men have been leading people into both forms of fannish writing. By presenting an enjoyable alternative to the big genzines dominating fandom a couple of years ago, they opened the way for both types, types which had always existed but hadn't been popular in general fandom. A whole host of small, fannish fanzines have sprung up in the wake of the NY spurt, and even better, most of them have been oriented toward the personal type of writing. Though I personally enjoy the best of both types, I agree completely with Charlie--the personal writing can always be interesting, for everyone thinks differently and has a different outlook on life. Fannish humor, particularly mediocre fannish humor, can grow very tiresome after a long stretch. Look around today, and you'll see an incredible number of these personally-oriented little fanzines, most of them unpretentious and enjoyable. Certainly few have anything particularly memorable, but almost all are fun to read--look to be fun to put out--and abound in good feelings. There've even been small, frequent personalzines from people who also publish the big genzines (I've fallen victim to this myself). You want examples? Nothing could be easier. Besides, of course, all those magazines I've already mentioned, and besides the obvious personal influence on such things as this very magazine of Frank's, I can name: Terry Hughes' Mota, Lane Lambert's Nexus, Jim Turner's Godfrey Daniel, Jim Sanders' Nothing to say, Chris Couch's Cipher, Earl and Jan Evers' zEEen, John Ingham's Twas Ever Thus....in fact, I have to think a few minutes to



come up with a decent new fanzine which isn't part of this highly unofficial "movement." For myself, I've really enjoyed getting most of these magazines, sometimes considerably more than the larger, more serious, more "important" magazines (of the type I put out myself). Perhaps it's just wishful thinking, but it is too unreasonable to hope that a few of those great fanwriters we're all looking for will come from here? I for one wouldn't be especially surprised at this.

Meanwhile, a couple other good things have been happening-- artists, and even more important, Australia! The best single fanzine currently being published in any field that I've seen is most likely Bruce Gillespie's SF Commentary: Bruce concentrates primarily on one section only of possible fanzine material (critical writing, as opposed to fannish writing, personal writing, artwork, etc.) but he does it well. Since the beginning of 1971, Bruce has produced an amazing eight issues, including the 130-page Foyster Special (reprinting the entire run of John Foyster's limited-circulation magazines of criticism and comment) and seven "small" 50-pagers. Each one has been filled to the overflow level with an amazing diversity of critical writing, spiced with a touch of personal comment. Besides the wealth of material in the Foyster issue and his own writing (Bruce has very quickly become one of the top fan critics in the English-speaking world), Bruce has been presenting major writing of the field from: Stanislaw Lem, Barry Gillam (including the best film column I've ever seen in fandom), Franz Rottensteiner, George Turner, and Philip Jose Farmer, among other--not to mention the best collection of letters I've ever seen, with an array of superb comments from almost everyone around. SFC hasn't been alone in this; over the same period we've been graced with Bangsund's revived Scythrop, Ron Clarke's The Mentor and Wombat, David Grigg's The Fanarchist, John Alderson's Chao, and even more titles. Perhaps the worldcon bid (Australia in '75!) has inspired some of this, but whatever the cause, it's welcome indeed!

We've also seen, in just this past year, the emergence and/or re-emergence of at least six very promising new artists. Rarely have I been more excited than when Dan Steffan first showed me some of his work as we drove with Jay Kay Klein to some forgotten convention;

with all due modesty, I've been very, very proud of the work he's done for the past two issues of TA, as well as his own Lizard Inn and a few other magazines--keep watching him for sure. Then we have the incredible case of Bill Kunkel, NY fan and fanzine editor, who one day in August picked up a pen, decided to become an artist--and began almost immediately producing his own unique and enjoyable brand of fannish cartoons and illustrations for dozens of fanzines. The fannish resurgence also brought Jay Kinney back from the brink of underground comics; Jay's always been the master of a devastating brand of fannish cartooning, and his satiric view of fans and fandom over the past year have been nothing short of magnificent. And we can't forget Ross Chamberlain, the man behind all those wonderful multi-page Quip covers. Also caught up in the resurgence, Ross began doing equally good covers for the new Focal Points, as well as fine work in his own Fangle. You might also keep an eye on David Birdsong, associate editor of Nexus and already an enjoyable fannish artist, and Wayne Pond, a refugee from comics fandom who did those wild back covers for the latest issues of TA and Lizard Inn.

And a lot of things have happened in regard to individual magazines, or maybe things which impressed me but didn't impress anyone else. Looking over my scribbled notes, I see such diverse topics as ...

LA fandom--do you realize that there isn't a single decent fanzine coming out of Los Angeles? The entire publishing interest seems to have gone into Apa-L; you can't really criticize such a move, but it does mean that a lot of intelligent and creative people are all but cut off from the mainstream of fandom. // I saw my first issues of Pelf and Egoboo, and discovered two highly enjoyable magazines I hadn't known before. // Michael and Susan Glicksohn made Energumen into the accepted "leading genzine" of the year. Energumen started out being known as an "art conscious" fanzine (the comparison magazine was Outworlds), but last year the dynamic Canadian duo produced six beautiful "quarterly" issues; the simultaneous 6th and 7th issues contained some of the best material both serious and fannish to appear anywhere all year. At the same time, Linda (and Ron?) Bushyager produced a valid competitor in Granfalloon; Linda's been editing a very "promising" genzine almost as long as she and I have been in fandom, and in four issues this year she really began presenting some nice work, improving each issue. Both magazines have evolved new talents, too--Rosemary Ullyot, springing full-grown from Energumen 1, and "Jeff Glencannon," becoming one of the best current fanzine reviewers (not that the competition is especially tight) with his first column in Granfalloon. // Perhaps, just perhaps, the beginning of another apa resurgence, as the interest in personal writing seems to have resulted in an increased interest in "friendly" apas--TAPS, RAPS, Slanapa, frank's apa, APA-45 (would you believe 600- $\frac{1}{2}$ page mailings--and not much crud there, either).

That's enough for now--see you in July.

--Jerry Lapidus
January 26, 1972

Jerry Kaufman
417 W. 118th St.
Apt. 63
New York, N.Y.
10027

There is an interesting, if apocryphal, story surrounding Joe Staton's cover for Syndrome.

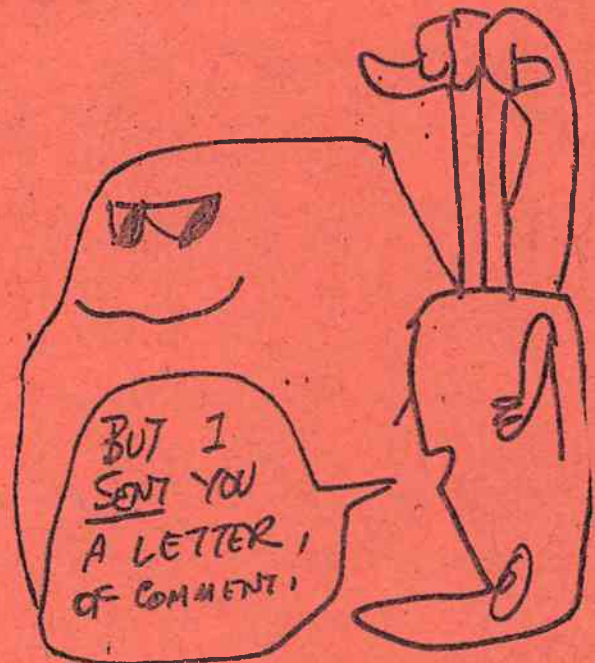
The little girl is rich brown's daughter Chrissie, and the dragon represents JJ Pierce. As you might know, rich doesn't often make it to conventions and even less often brings his lovely red-headed Irish wife, Colleen, or their daughter Chrissie or son Biff with him. Well, Lunacon was one of those rare times, and Joe's cover represents the meeting between little girl and gaunt crusading reporter. JJ wasn't really intending to eat Chrissie. He was only trying to convince her of the dangers of reading fiction in which the nice boy from Marsport doesn't save the solar system. The reason the story is apocryphal is that not one word of it is true, including all those names of rich brown offspring. I was just trying to see if I could write as weird as you sometimes do, Lunney.

Well, your editorial this time wasn't so weird. Oh, I just looked at that Ben Bova story, and yes it was so weird.

Gary Hubbard's friend Popeye was bizarre. Is Popeye in fandom by any chance? There was somebody at the Midwescon, I understand, who...but I digress. From Gary Hubbard. He writes entertainingly, sustains interest, picks a subject I would have forcibly removed from my mind rather than written about. Which is why I have little to write about. I know enough wretched, perverse, twisted, freaked-out people in Columbus, Ohio to fill a fanzine several times over with disjointed fragments of entertaining peculiarity. And at the moment I'm living in the Avocado Pit (David and Eli will probably dump mimeo ink on my head for that crack; worse, they might write about me in Breet and Kratophony).

PROPINQUITY

THE LETTERCOLUMN



Now that I've put a can of Pepsi on my left, a radio playing some piano music on my right, and a cat in heat in the hallway, I can write about Calvin Demmon. I wrote a long letter to Egoboo about a year ago, with high praise for him, but I think that Ted White might have lost the letter. So Calvin has never read the praise. Calvin Demmon, your column in Egoboo almost changed me into a writer once, and nine of ten things I have read with your name attached to them have gotten reactions, occasionally Reactions, from me. I like your writing, Calvin, and I think I might even like you. It's hard to tell, but I think I do. You keep on writing and I will keep on Reacting.

The last column Justin did was mostly stupid, missing a point or two about fandom. This one, being about Justin himself and his own circle of friends, acquaintances, etc. (I mean by etc. that bookstore owner)... Chatty, casual and informative. With good Dan Steffan illoes, by the by. Justin, where can I see this movie? Will they have it at LACon? Or should I talk to Don Hutschison about getting it for Torcon?

Richard Meltzer is either a bad dream Jan and Dean had in 1967 after seeing Frank Zappa for the first time, or a good dream Frank Zappa had in 1963 after seeing Jan and Dean for the first time.

Bill Kunkel
84-45 121st St.
Apt. 1-D
Kew Gardens, N.Y. 11415

Umm, I LOVED MELTZER'S PIECE (print that).

Paul Anderson The Meltzer article was amusing for a while but needed
21 Mulga Rd. editing as it continued for a page too long after its
Hawthorndene points were made. I am not sure about the efficiency
SA 5051 of the proposed method of contraception, but I am
Australia doubtful as to whether any female would be a willing
participant as I certainly would not trust the staying
power of modern tape. Of course if it was able to be stuck on so that
it would not leave your partner in an invidious position just think
of the fun in trying to unravel the tape after the event, especially
with an urgent call of nature causing a pressing need.

Harry Warner, Jr. You can't know how much better you've made me feel
423 Summit Ave. by publishing fanzines again. Here I'd been think-
Hagerstown, Md. ing that I'd missed writing locs on three or four
21740 consecutive issues of B and you'd cut me off your
mailing list. It proves how confused I am by being
so far behind in loc duties and how egocentric I am to imagine that
my delinquency has changed the real world in which you apparently didn't
continue to publish and maybe I didn't even skip comments on so many
issues in a row. ((Actually, Harry, I don't think you've missed com-
menting on any issues...not even in a row.))

Why can't Gary Hubbard write articles like this a dozen times
a month instead of just one such masterpiece every three or six months?
I confess that I got a little nervous toward the end, thinking he was
about to draw a solemn moral about the need for keeping the landscape
beautiful. Then my total bliss was restored when he turned out to be
too much a gentleman to ruin a perfect piece of narrative in such a way.



No! I'VE TOLD THEM ONCE
AND I'VE TOLD THEM TWICE
NO LETTER FROM HARRY WARNER
NO FANZINE —

Instant nostalgia might be the best description for *Biff*'s article. I'd completely forgotten about Don Durward and Arv Underman until they became characters in this autobiography. Even if I never get around to writing a book about fandom in the 1960's, someone will be bound to benefit by finding this material handily collected in one place, most of it true, and he will rejoice at the time and effort he will save because he won't have to piece together the facts about Mr. Demmon from a dozen or more fanzines.

I have no complaints at all about Justin St. John's prose this time. It's highly entertaining, it undoubtedly has sociological significance, and it's written so convincingly that I'm inclined to think that some of these things really happened just as described.

Isn't it probably that Ben Bova is trying to restore all the copies of Analog which the postal system failed to deliver down through the years, having chosen this procedure as the most dramatic way to launch his editorship? He probably isn't a real mailman because all mailmen seem to be using those little vehicles that cause them to become official mounted carriers, a designation that always struck me as a trifle vulgar. There are no more ordinary pedestrian mailmen remaining in Hagerstown at all and something about the new system causes every package of records arriving at my home to have a stupendous dent just northwest of the center. I'm saving the records, not trying to play any of them until I can find an old cylinder phonograph concerted for an lp stylus and $33 \frac{1}{3}$ revolutions per minute.

Fandom is a change from the portion of the real world that surrounds me. But I don't think that having fandom as a hobby represents the unwillingness to accept the real world that Rick Stoker diagnoses for me. I don't go to many conventions for two principal reasons: I don't like big crowds of people and as a teetotaler I'm not altogether happy around a lot of drinking. But I've worked most of my life at a newspaper job that brings me into as much contact with the real world as any other kind of work that I can think of. If I had this reluctance to be face to face with people, it would have been easy enough to earn a living at free-lancing or at some other kind of work that doesn't require much contact with others. I think I've messed around with enough local matters outside my job to avoid any fiawol labeling. I've never joined lodges or service clubs, from that dislike for mobs. But I've tried to do things for the real world in other ways: for instance, I've been a director of the Community Action Council, the local agency which administers Appalachia funds for the Office of Economic Opportunity; a director of the Civic Music Association and Community Concert Association, two groups that have brought outside art-

ists and organizations to Hagerstown; belonged to the county Committee for the Poor, which administered tax funds for non-welfare cases; served on committees for the United Fund; I'm an advisory committee member for the school system's adult basic education program, which is trying to get older people who quit school early to attend night classes; and I'm on the county's Safety Committee, which puts buoys in rivers and does many equally exciting things. Fandom rarely takes more than an hour out of a day for me, except when I go to a con or am cutting stencils for FAPA or can't stop re-reading a particularly delectable piece of egoboo in a newly arrived fanzine.

Rick Stoker St. John I found rather boring, except for his description of the effects of niacin. Like any typical idiot I went to the drug store the next day. I felt very furtive. When the druggist asked me if I wanted anything, I said, "No, thanks, I'm just looking."

1109 Pacquin St.
Columbia, Mo.
65201

Funny, I don't look like a drug-crazed hippie.

I finally found it, out in the open, even. One hundred tabs for only 60¢.

To make a long story move faster, it didn't have much effect on me at all. It took twenty tabs, 50 mg. a tab, to give me a few heat rushes in my arms and legs. How much do you take, Justin?

Jay Kinney And that's how it stood til Brenda tripped down the stairways, a glass of vodka and rum on the rocks in her dainty hand. Edgar, firmly ensconced in the plush leather-covered chair in the study, recognized her step, but made not a move.

3576 20th St.
San Francisco, Ca.
94110

"Just who the hell do you think you are, anyway?" she shouted at the top of her voice as she came to the doorway, leaning tipsily against the darkly-stained wood. "You married me for my money, my body, and my social status, and what do I have to show for it? An empty bankbook, a sour cunt, and a closetful of stained furs, made useless by spilled drinks on Jet-set outings, that's what!"

Edgar slowly turned his head until the steely gaze of his pale blue eyes met her stare straight on. If it was to be a battle of wills, a battle it would be. Their orbs locked in tense fury, neither willing to give in. Then the phone rang.

"Son of a bitch!" Edgar muttered, as his concentration broke. He jumped for the phone, beating off Wilson, the ancient butler who was about to answer it. "Hullo?" he yelled.

Suddenly quiet filled the room, Wilson and Brenda exchanging meaningful glances. Edgar, his ear still to the shiny black receiver, looked as if 10 years older, and slowly he slumped down on the floor. An hour later, Edgar Gaines was dead.

Jack West 84274 Greetings from the pen!
Lebanon Correctional Institution
Box 56, Lebanon, Ohio 45036 Once again I find myself incarcerated by the fascist government of Amerikkka. I will spare you the long and sad tale behind my confinement. Suffice to say that I am a victim of twisted drug laws which are nothing but weapons of cultural oppression and political bigotry.

I came to prison unprepared, that is without any of the addresses of my many friends in fandom. It was just recently that I was able to obtain your address, if it is correct.

If you would inform fandom through the newszines and your own of my situation, I would appreciate it greatly.

I would like to hear from my friends, receive some zines and do some contribs, LOCs, book reviews, poetry, etc.

Mike Glicksohn From its superb front cover to its enjoyable
32 Maynard Ave. #205 lettercol, SYN #1 is a damn fine fanzine. Maybe
Toronto 150, Ont. some of it may even make a lasting impression
Canada on the mind of someone... But if it doesn't,
 what the hell, that the lot of most fanzines,
wouldn't you say? Seriously, though, I naturally don't agree with
you that we've published nothing that made a lasting impression. Obviously we didn't make a lasting impression on you, but I think several items we printed might be recalled vividly by different people in the future, Arnie's fanhistory, Ted's discussion of "sercon," Sandra's article's, George's limericks, etc., might all be remembered by fans who were interested in such things. But if not, it really isn't important; fanzines aren't exactly produced for the ages, are they?

Gary Hubbard writes an interesting column and combined with the Frolich illos "The Cracked Eye" has to be the best regular column appearing in any American fanzine. It's a shame that this sort of writing is so hard to comment on, since Gary doesn't really get the egoboo he deserves.

Demmon's article is the best in the issue and makes me regret keenly that his output is so limited. The writing is brilliant and some of the lines simply priceless (in fact, this is a piece that will definitely make a lasting impression and is almost certain to be reprinted as a fannish classic someday). Cal exercises admirable restraint and refuses to pad out the idea; the result is a short but incisive column that is truly funny. Hot shit, Mr. Demmon, sir.

Justin St. John's column was both enjoyable and interesting this time. When not trying to impress us with how with it he is, Justin's a good fannish writer. But as he says, "all is vanity" and "TANSTAAFL" so I guess we have to accept the whole fan: columns like this one make it much more worthwhile though.

As for Meltzer, I guess every faned's entitled to waste a few pages each issue, in the eyes of every reader. Bleecccchh!

((Hey Mike, then I'm sure you'll want to get Meltzer's book, Gulcher, that those Rolling Stone book company guys published a few months ago. It's really top-notch stuff by Meltzer, too. I finally found it when I went into New York on a trip to the Metropolitan Museum. After parking the car in a high-priced garage, we were walking over to where we had to get a bus to go uptown and I found Gulcher in the front of a bookstore we went by, so I ran inside and bought it immediately. I even read it riding on the bus to the Met. And on the way back, too. Then we went into the Artists' and Writers' Restaurant and while we were waiting I whipped the book out in there, too. Great stuff.))

Don't you believe Hank Davis; "sercon to the core" Hah! He had

a truly inspired fannish loc in Placebo that would have been printed in any zine going. His main point, though, is very well taken. I know that if I write a fairly lengthy loc only to have it WAHFed, I find it mildly annoying. On the other hand, I can sympathize with the ed in question since I have problems editing my own lettercol. Squeezing sixty-odd letters, many of them three or four or five pages long, into about 15 or 20 pages is an impossible task and there are always those who get relegated to the WAHFs simply because someone else said the same things they did just a little bit better. I can assure you, however, that in my case it is not a question of publishing only "name" letters; the last Energumen contained two locs from people who had never written to fanzines before. A well-written, interesting letter will generally get printed no matter who its author is. (Which is not to imply that all the letters in the WAHF section are badly written or dull...Sigh, it's not a simple matter by any means.)

Sp/4 Bruce D. Arthurs
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Gary Hubbard is right about everyone in the service telling about their experiences. I thought about doing such, but decided against it. Nope, I'm not even going to tell you about the Great Child-Stomping Incident.

Hubbard is also right about people who say they love everybody. Why, if I didn't have any enemies, I wouldn't know what to do. I love my enemies, because they give me something to hate.

Dan Steffan It's funny (haha), but your editorial had a type of Woodfield Rd. first issue style to it. (Of course, I imagine this Cazenovia, N.Y. is partially because of your statement of purpose, et al)...but it also seemed a little scared, a little 13035 unsure and uncomfortable. Could it be that you had become too accustomed to the simple and easy form of BAB and that it is difficult to be as confident in one's self, or is it that you just didn't feel like writing an editorial (did you know that Isaac Asimov is our Garbage-man??) (Yes.))

Speaking of Jerry "apidus", I think you have accomplished something in the late BABs and now in the new SYNDROME that has been lacking in Jerry's fanzine and written philosophy. And that involves Gary Hubbard/any Frolich's appearance together each issue in "The Cracked Eye." You have developed a very nice continuity. That is, each issue you can find interesting (well, at least entertaining) reading and fine cartooning together. A type of constant, a pleasant norm, and one I hope we can set up with my illos and St. John's column...good head on your shoulders there boy!)

((Okay, so here's why there's no St. John/Steffan in this issue of SYN, Dan and all you people out there. Back in about September Justin came through with a letter to me, saying that he'd gone into a period of gafia, turned up in San Francisco, but wanted to get back into action again. In fandom, that is. In three weeks he'd send a column, he promised, absolutely, he had notes roughed out, all that stuff. I answered the letter, and that was the last I heard.))

Al Snider
c/o Brownson Debate Society
Seton Hall University
South Orange, N.J. 07079

Your Hugo comments were interesting, and don't always coincide with thoughts on the subject I have. As far as Wendy Fletcher goes, I think you'd have to come

to a Westercon to see some of her artwork. There wasn't any this year, but I can remember that in previous years there was quite a bit of good stuff. Obviously, though, she is a local phenomenon, and I wouldn't rate her for a Hugo, but I certainly would say that a lot of her work is good...sort of like an early Barr/Austin. For best artist I think the nod has to go to Canfield. I mean, I have been a Rotsler promotor for years, and I'm pissed as hell that he hasn't gotten a rocket yet, but Canfield's talent continues to amaze me.



Digby is an interesting story. In fandom at the present time Digby is unique. He is not flowery, fantastic or overly skillful at the art of writing power-packed articles for anyone. His real ability is with the apazine. Digby's style is one that seems to emphasize clear communication of meaning with as few frills as possible. This sets up his type of content. I can rarely remember Digby writing about something for more than a page. If he has an idea he states it clearly and then moves on to something else. The

reason that a lot of LA people have nominated him again is the number of ideas he has. He has a tremendous mind that thinks of things at a tremendous speed, jots them down, and then moves on. I don't think that Digby is the top fan writer, but I would probably put him up with the big boys. An issue of PROBABLY SOMETHING (his zine in APA L) is not impressive, but always interesting. It's only after you read a hundred or so that he begins to amaze you. In a way he sort of reminds me of Harry Warner. Both of them have the ability to say anything they want in a very interesting manner. Time spent reading their stuff is time well spent.

Terry Hughes
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Windsor, Mo.
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The best piece in the issue was by Calvin Demmon. It was a typical Demmon piece: great! Somewhat longer than most of his recent output but like his earlier and current other writings this piece was made up primarily of paragraphs, sentences and words. And humor. Funny as hell (which is supposed to be an extremely funny place). His style is just marvelous. He builds things up with complex sentences and small bits of humor and then powie! he hits your eyeballs with a simple sentence that is a devastating punchline. Calvin has to be one of the best writers in fandom; yes, indeed. This piece is full of half-truths and lies but has enough pure truth in it to fool the casual reader--if someone can just casually read Calvin Demmon. Now if Calvin would just get off his ass and write more stuff for fanzines...

Donn Brazier
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63131

Received SYNDROME #1 yesterday. After reading one of your articles I was pretty burned up. I have had the conviction that some bottles--notably women's perfume and men's aftershave lotion--were phallically shaped. So the idea wasn't offensive to me; just the language. That is my thing; can't abide the language.

However, such an idea, had I been editor, would not have appeared in such length and so many contrived filthy connotations. So, I hope this isn't the new way you plan on going... And I'm sure that you would have no interest in getting TITLE which is serconish, and stays away from items in bad taste.

Jeff Schalles R. Meltzer has been hanging around RAPS for quite a
603 Barmore Ave. while now (though I think Hulvey kicked him out for
Grove City, Pa. sending in a bunch of Xeroxed sheets with cum and
16127 pubic hairs depicted on them, which was Meltzer's
 answer to his first try at getting actual cum and
 pubic hairs sent through, though the OE at the time rejected them, and
 now he tried again with Xeroxed ones, but Hulvey...) and has provided
 me with a laugh or two this spring. I must admit, his article is pure
Meltzer, through and through.

Mark Mumper Now knowing much about the current "Justin St. John
1227 Laurel St. is an asshole" scandal (if there in fact is one), and
Santa Cruz, Ca. not really caring, either, I'll hazard a favorable
95060 opinion on his column in SYNDROME 1. His prose is
 pleasant and he manages to be sophisticated, enter-
 taining and creative. I have no idea what his past sins may have been
 (I get the impression from the last CUM BLOATUS that something was
 going on), but he seems all right from here. Ah, and by the way, he
 may be interested to know that niacin is technically called nicotinic
 acid and is synthesized from the oxidation of nicotine. I don't pre-
 tend to know what that means, but armed with such knowledge the thought
 of popping "10, sometimes 20" tabs a day is heavy. Man, what does it
 do to you.

With the exception of one thing SYNDROME would come across as excellent. That one thing is R. Meltzer's little jerk-off, which while starting off with an imaginative idea becomes regressively more disgusting with each variation; it's like a mediocre joke told over and over ad nauseum. Not to mention the shitty syntax employed in his schizoid piece.

Another thing that strikes me as strange in both the zine and BAB's last lettercol is the noticeable absence of women as contributors and the obsession with offbeat sex. I won't draw any conclusions about this, but where are the female fans? The zine could use some.

Mike O'Brien Actually it doesn't seem a while since I wrote you
158 Liverpool St. a LoC, but your zines are among the few that in-
Hobart, Tasmania spire me to mount the typewriter. (Sounds disgust-
Australia 7000 ing, doesn't it?) ((Hey Mark Mumper, did this guy!))
 The first thing I turned to, opening SYNDROME 1 at
 random, was R. Meltzer's bottle cap piece. Ow-wow, I wailed, Lunney's
 gone over into that curious limbo known as Underground Magazine Pub-
 lishing instead of fandom!! I calmed down after recovering from read-
 ing the article (not straight through, I must admit; my eyes tended to
 skip around disbelievingly). Good thing you're not putting this out
 ten years ago--it would never have passed through H.M. Customs at that
 period. I still feel mildly amazed.

WAHF: Cy Chauvin and Darrell Schweitzer (in particular), Nick Shears,
Aljo Svoboda, Ken MacDonnell, Eric Lindsay, GEORGE SENDA, Redd Boggs.

