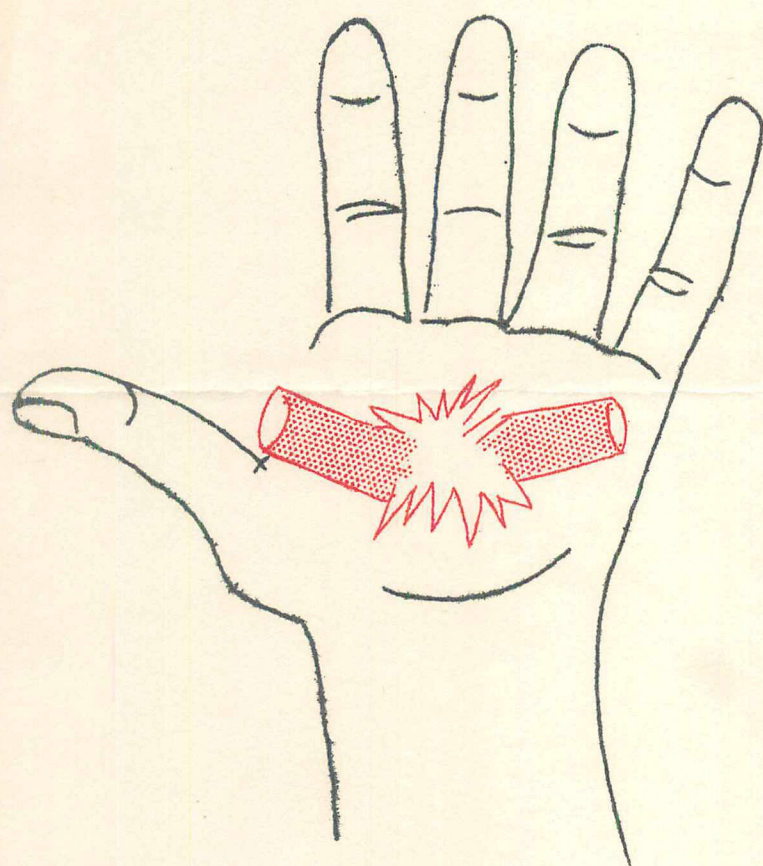




SON OF



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HANK DAVIS

The recent save Star Trek campaign has given me an idea for another campaign of letter writing, this time aimed at the SF Book Club. I am highly disturbed by the fact that never never (not even hardly ever) has an Andre Norton novel been made a selection of the Club. Therefore, I urge all Neffers who are members of the Book Club to write the Club and demand that the club start making Andre Norton's fine novels available to us members. Don't forget to include your account number with the letter.

Another letter campaign! James R. Goodrich wants fans to write to E. M. McKinnon, American Broadcasting Company, 1330 Avenue of the Americas, New York City 10019 to protest the shelving of THE AVENGERS. I am in complete agreement. THE AVENGERS is an excellent show.

I had another idea when I read Matt Venable's letter in TIGHTBEAM #43. I think that I and all other fans owe a debt of gratitude to SF writers and I would like to send birthday greetings to all of my favorite SF writers; not just Heinlein. With few exceptions (such as Poul Anderson and Fritz Leiber), however, the addresses of SF writers are closely guarded secrets. Perhaps the N3F could set up a new committee to which all fans - not just Neffers - could send birthday cards and stamped but unaddressed envelopes. The committee would be in contact with individuals who knew the addresses of various SF writers. The cards would be sent to these individuals who would put the writer's address on the envelope and mail it. For example, Dr. Jerry Pournelle is a friend of Heinlein and presumably knows his address. Birthday cards intended for Heinlein could be sent to the committee which would send them to Dr. Pournelle, who would address the blank envelopes (say, with a rubber stamp purchased with N3F funds, to save Dr. Pournelle's time) and mail them to Heinlein. As a first step in this direction, I am sending a list of all SF writers whose birthdays I know. I'm putting it on a separate sheet, since the editor might not consider it of sufficiently general interest to publish in TIGHTBEAM.

One more idea (boy, am I hot today!). How can we get more people turned on to SF, everyone is asking. BOY'S LIFE, which has a circulation of over 2,410,000 often runs SF stories. A serial by Arthur C. Clarke is currently running in BL. Just suppose ANALOG ran an ad in BOY'S LIFE! Just suppose N3F ran an ad in BL! (Or would it blow our treasury in one fell swoop?) If we did tap the Boy Scouts for new members, we would have to send the new members a more complete rundown on what fandom is and what the N3F is than we do at present. Perhaps Fred Pohl would let us reprint Lin Carter's series of articles in a mimeographed booklet.

John Boardman's announcement that he is Eric Blake proves what I have thought all along; that his comprehension of what conservatism stands for is nil, as witness the fact that I, a gung-ho Goldwater man since 1961, have violently disagreed with everything that I have read of "Eric Blake's" writings; particularly his support of censorship.

//I understand (hearsay) that THE AVENGERS is slated to come back, a good thing in my opinion; I like the show. + All these letter writing campaigns break me up. With the post office as bad as it is now, you want to add more mail to the system. Gasp! + Is everyone asking how to turn on more people to SF? I'm not, but I'm perverse. Besides I'm sure what N3F needs is a bunch of Boy Scouts asking what fandom is. Most of them who would join would belong exactly one year until they got bored; fandom is not (unfortunately?) SF oriented. That only serves as a measurement of one's open-mindedness; ultimately fandom gives the opportunity for free-wheeling discussion of any topic. It is the fact that SF acts as a stimulant to these discussions by its treatment of ideas that makes this SF fandom. A group of people interested in crime detection and police methods could easily form a fandom based on their common reading of Detective Fiction. People

who enjoyed DF for its "thud and blunder" aspects, however, would not be interested in that fandom. I'm afraid the general SF reader is not interested in further discussion of the implications of what he reads. Am I too serious for you?

PHIL MULDOWNEY

TIGHTBEAM #44 was another spectacular issue, all eight letters of it. All the protestations about what the N3F should be are but hot air when all the work is left to a small cadre. Enough of that, however, it is not a subject that particularly interests me.

The photoprocess may be quick and all that, but it seems rather expensive and difficult to read. If the print in any of those issues gets any smaller, my magnifying glass will have to get larger. Well, I suppose the logical conclusion would be to print an issue of TNFF the size of a postage stamp. It would save postage costs.....

One of George Wells' ideas is rather good; every adult should be allowed as much pornography as he likes. How about starting a campaign now. WE WANT MORE DIRTY SF,....!

A point in Donald Franson's letter. Does the right to vote make a person feel involved in Government? Universal suffrage has been offered as the panacea for all ills for so long now, but is it so great? One vote in many millions. Do we have real Democracy? From all the patronizing talk of politicians from many countries one assumes we have. But who believes the politicians? Modern society is controlled by the monolithic power blocks, not by the individual.

Stephen Compton's letter was interesting, he seems to be a ready convert for the NEW WORLDS experimental style of writing. I think he hit the point on the head though, Joyce was a genius, and no other writer since has had the talent or ability to match him. Moorcock in NEW WORLDS has certainly used 'experimental forms', he has not however had the writers to succeed. J. G. Ballard's writing over the past two years have been quite beyond my comprehension. Some like him though. Well at least Ballard has some ability to use language. Some of the stories from the newer writers have been stylistically totally unreadable. Only Brian Aldiss, Roger Zelazny, and Thomas Disch seem to be able to use experimental techniques successfully, Brian Aldiss's story REPORT ON PROBABILITY A is particularly fascinating. It needs unusually good writers to be successful with experimental techniques, and it seems that few are available.

NEW WORLDS has at last come out in its new format. It is now about the size ANALOG was, when it was full size. Glossy paper makes it look very impressive. Content is still not particularly inspiring though.

I'm not particularly interested in John Boardman but the Eric Blake thing looks rather shabby on the face of it. Okay, fair enough for an investigation into right wing affairs, but why bring it into fandom? Just that little irritating air of a false sham.

The American postal system fascinates me. TIGHTBEAM #44 posted on July 28 (if I read the postmark correctly) reached me on August 15, about 2½ weeks by third class mail, while TIGHTBEAM #43 took about five weeks by first class mail. Nuts.

Anybody heard anything about Kubrick's 2001 A SPACE ODYSSEY? I thought it was going to be premiered in New York some time ago, but I have heard nothing from that direction as yet.

//Who wants more dirty SF? We do, according to you. I don't. I get all the dirty anything I need by walking down the street in Philadelphia. Use your imagination! + True enough society is controlled by monolithic power blocks, but they, in turn, are controlled by the people capable of swaying their associates. It is the concern of individuals to join the power blocks and influence them as

they proceed to make their policy decisions. Anyone who wishes to ignore the "sordid" facts of life is voluntarily giving up his rights and should not be terribly surprised to find that no one else is looking out for him. Of course, as a society we try to be a little altruistic by maintaining very expensive police and fire departments (do they still call them brigades over there?) and other services too expensive for the individual to afford. It is odd that many people who read stf (my choice) and the daily papers (is there much difference?) choose to let a man make a decision for them simply because he stands up and says "I'll make the decision for you." To decry the power blocks as bad is to ignore the facts of life. The judgment of a society's structure must be made on the purely empiracle results: does the society as structured tend to kill itself off? does it provide outlets for the physical and emotional needs of the people living in it? is it restrictive to individuals? can the elements within it experiment and change with conditions to solve problems destructive to the society? etc. The development of the US has been pretty good so far in meeting the needs of people. I fear some trouble in the future though. + The American postal system is a wonder to us all. Depending on the post office in which you deposit your mail you get good or bad service. It all seems to amount to the attention or care the clerk at the office gives your mail. And, unfortunately, the civil service examination for those jobs doesn't inquire into the pride of service and work of the individual, just can you read and write. This tyrade is getting pretty long, isn't it?

JOHN W ANDREWS

I really don't think the U.S. is as homogeneous as some prophets of doom say. But they have gotten pretty good at hiding their regional differences in this country. I think Wisconsin is significantly different from Northern California or New Mexico. I suppose that our nation-wide membership can pretty well settle this question: Is the United States becoming too uniform, or is it keeping up its regional differences?

I am pleased at the response to my "Utopian" proposal. At least the fans don't fall for one of the oldest political chestnuts of all: the rule that the "wisest" should hold the power. You'd be surprised at how many people still have not caught on to the pitfalls in this political scheme. Try asking around. Since a considerable number of people in the club seem to be involved with computers one way or another, I guess it's worth pointing out that this technology is bound to have a big effect on our way of life. A person who sees which way we **are drifting** (or think he sees) should speak out, not wait too long, the way it has been done in the past. I assure you that many of the decisions about just how punched-card systems should be set up have not only been made arbitrarily, they have been made stupidly, by those who happened to be there at the time.

I disagree 100% with Stephen Compton about literature. I have what I consider very broad tastes in SF and Fantasy; but I do draw the line, leaving Joyce and Wm. Burroughs outside the limits of literature itself. And while I'm at it, L. Durrell has nothing to recommend him. In my humble opinion, that SF should have kept itself relatively free from bad influences is one of its grandest features. If this stuff crept into the field any more, I should not mourn the merger of SF with the main-stream; no, I should be hurt by seeing it flow into the sewer. I know how many of you will smile, thinking I am "not in the swing of things." Well, I am not afraid of disagreeing with any number of literary lights --- yes, I think James Blish made a whale of a mistake in getting tangled up with Joycean literature.

Since I don't read trash I must admit that I am at a disadvantage in judging many of these works. However, (I can almost hear snickers already) in the worst

cases I think I can smell the stuff. Just from reading a few pages, reading between the lines in reviews, and a little biographical research I think I can tell ahead of time --- in the worst cases. There is one sad thing about literature in this century since, say 1910, that few people will own up to. By and large, fiction in this century hasn't been very good. Not in English. Not only is 90% of everything crud, but the 10% have fallen down on the job. Different ages flower in different arts. The Twentieth Century is just sad in English literature. And it takes more than a Nobel Prize to convince me. Remember, they have to give prizes to someone.

//Oh, boy! You really stir the hornets nest. I'll take a crack at you first, me lad. First, you must read to understand what is being done in literature. You admit you don't actually read that stuff, just sniff at it (I'm hope that is a figurative statement). I contend that you have to read as much as you can get your hands on if you wish to understand it; i.e. the more detective fiction you read the better you will understand detective fiction, its past glory, its present level, and what can be done in the medium. If you only read the best stf (presuming you followed the advice of some "infallible" critic, none exist) you would still have no base to use in judging that which you did read. Making a value judgment involves comparing one event, object, etc. against a scale built from past experiences with similar events, objects, etc. To judge without an experimental scale is to judge a priori and in error. I frequently meet people who read a little stf (really mediocre stuff) and rave about it. I feel a little sad about such occurrence since I feel they would really enjoy and "get" the good stuff if they would only read it. However, they are busy and only read a little, probably all they are ever going to do without their attentions being drawn to the field by general fiction critics (such as happened with Lord of the Rings which I was surprised to learn even my brother read).

I really don't know if you are in the "swing" of things. I can only say that I feel myself to be a fairly good critic of the current scene (as are many people nowadays) and I never get enough to read, nor do I have enough time to read all the things I want to. I just completed a four day holiday (IBM gave us an extra day after Christmas) and during that time I read five books and finished up one I had been only partly through; read a couple of magazines (The Reporter and National Review). My future reading list is still crowded.

In short, my friend, if you would stop sniffing and do a little reading even I hold some hope for you. (Anyone who thinks this century's fiction isn't holding its own probably isn't fit to judge in the first place. I recommend: Report from the Red Windmill, Flee the Angry Strangers, Giles Goat-Boy, Lord of the Rings, The Magus, Gone with the Wind; etc. to name only a few more recent works.)

By the way, to allay any commentary, I don't even count the stf I read in my "reading list." An stf novel only takes a few hours and can be read rapidly. I am talking about main stream fiction and political works, my current favorites.

• • • ANNOUNCEMENT • • •

If you will send Gestetner stencils (precut) I will run them off at cost rates. You can figure about \$3.00 a ream for paper, \$.75 per 100 pages for ink, and postage of about 3¢ a copy (mailed back to you in bulk, uncollated). I do not have time now to cut stencils for you or for collating and stapeling (?). But you will have fun doing that yourself!!! Your choice black or red ink (specify on each page). When final accounting is made you will be billed for balance or overage will be refunded. Here is your chance to get into NAPA even if you have no equipment. All work slipsheeted and done promptly. Allow about one day for each four pages (a page is one side of a sheet). Do it now and avoid the rush!

DARRELL SCHWEITZER

The idea of an N3F genzine strikes me as a good one. I would like to help with one but what can I do to start one? Nothing! However, should the suggestion materialize into anything more than a suggestion I can help by contributing material. One thing that Alma and whoever else is running the thing will have to realize is that if a story is good enough for a prozine that is where you will find it. Therefore, the material submitted will be of inferior quality. (Not mine, of course! The prozines just aren't ready for me yet.)

"Eric Blake" certainly refuses to be uncreated. Besides haunting many peoples' minds he also haunts the membership roster. Maybe he exists after all and John Boardman is a hoax. You never know.

I agree with Ross Peterson. Someone should discuss S.F. for a change. To fill this need I shall proceed with the following:

I have found several contradictions in E.E. Smith's SKYLARK series. First of all in The Skylark of Space it is stated that because of the green suns the inhabitants of the Green System are green and that under the proper lighting they are the same color as Tellurians. However, in Skylark Three it is stated that Seaton, etc. are white under the sun of Norlamin which is in the Green System. Also, in Skylark of Valeron Seaton travelled into the 4th dimension, so why was the "gizmo" considered such a radical breakthrough in Skylark Duquesne? Another point: in Skylark Duquesne there was mention of the Mariner probes, but why send out Mars probes when intergalactic spaceships are available? Finally, in Skylark of Valeron the Skylark Three was destroyed by the disembodied intelligences but in Skylark Duquesne it is stated that it is used as a lifeboat for the Valeron.

Answers anyone?

//There are many problems in writing a series of novels, creating an entire cosmos in the process. When it's done over a period of many years it gets even rougher. I, for one, don't even get excited to find errors like those you mention; I rather expect them. Frankly, it's as silly as calling a politician down for having changed his views on (say) the farm subsidy problem between the years 1939 and 1967. Time changes things. It is the function of an editor, I suppose, to make changes when necessary to make the novels fit together. Perhaps an error purged edition will come out some day. Perhaps you will edit it!

I guess that's it. I just received the Schweitzer letter, but I figure I might as well shoehorn it in. I ran 400 copies of the cover, then got the word from Janie that we now have over 400 members. I then ran 500 copies of everything else, but I suspect that some of you are gonna end up with a substitute cover -- or none at all. To be a little fairer, I have made certain that those members listed as paid up for '68 or later get the original cover. See, it does pay to renew early! Happy New Year to all, and thanks to those who voted me into the work farm. You will be pleased to know that the Directorate has swung into action. We seemed to simultaneously write each other on the same topic: money.

ghl

star struck

To some who walk apart from traveled ways,
And gaze in worship at night's glittering dome,
There comes a sinse that Earth is not their home
More than the blackness where the comet strays.

A hunger, which no reasoning quite allays,
Moves them for gulfs that stars and nebulae roam,
Where suns are scattered thick as gale-tossed foam
And centuries are less than human days.

As surely as the vast, pavilioned sky
Has cradled the Earth and all the darting spheres,
It beckons to its children cooped below.
And some turn spellbound to the dark, and sigh,
Bemused as landlocked sailors, in whose ears
The breakers pound, and the salt breezes blow.

Stanton A. Coblentz

The recent save Star Trek campaign has given me an idea for another campaign of letter writing, this time aimed at the SF Book Club. I am highly disturbed by the fact that never never (not even hardy ever) has an Andre Norton novel been made a selection of the Club. Therefore, I urge all members who are members to

My apologies to all for not slip-sheeting this zine, but I was too busy and it's easier to just run 'em through. It will not happen again! This is Son of TIGHT-BEAM published by Gary H. Labowitz, 362 Prince Frederick St., King of Prussia, Pa. 19406
REMEMBER TO SEND IN YOUR DUES FOR 1968!!!

from: Gary H. Labowitz
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~~PRINTED MATTER~~



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