



25 YEARS OF ORGANIZED FANDOM

UMBRA

FOR MAY, 1955



"SPACEWARP"

by

Red & White

EN THI APXHI

PSYCHOTIC IS DYING, JUST AS STREETCARS ARE dying. And Editor Geis is completely aware of this and not at all sad about it. I say that he is aware of what is happening because I believe he has adequate perception to understand what he has done and is doing, without the prismatic distortions of conceit or modesty. Observe: Geis is cutting PSY from monthly to bimonthly--a very sparse bimonthly at that. To justify this, he changes the format to photo-offset, which as everyone knows costs not a little on the upkeep. I am not going to criticize his psychology or lack thereof; I merely think this to be the cause.

Geis certainly knows that he gave up the position of Focal Point of All Fandom (here in America). There are no thirsty quests for power; all this he has given up. In the monthly pages of PSY Seventh Fandom died, and PSY was right along with the turmoil that followed its official collapse. Geis's Funny Face made itself known throughout all fandom. His impeccable, though faint, reproduction held the standard for ditto's fight against preference to mimeo. Neomagazines (Abstract, Fog, etc.) compared themselves to PSYCHOTIC.

PSYCHOTIC was where the BNWs of all time gathered. Like Geis's Western personality, PSY was an uncramped magazine, not bold or self-apologizing but entirely competent while pleasant and concentration-holding. In Geis began the concept of ditto as a freer method than mimeo; his own personality was undoubtedly the origin of this, for he was in every wide margin, every extemporaneous editorial, every spontaneous answer to letters printed, every on-the-spot review. For this freedom was an on-the-spot type--Geis let nothing stand between himself and the heart of the matter. In this he proved himself as an American Westerner of the old, uncorrupted school. This is perhaps the greatest compliment that can be paid an Oregonian; I hope so. (BEFORE PSY 19)

Allow me to inject here my great disgust for the supposedly popular hunk of slightly musical crud, "Je Vous Aime Beaucoup." Perhaps this is the intention of the writer, but the very title is unfrench to the last. One never says "I love you, miss," in the French language. Vous is the polite form. One uses the familiar form in cursing and making love. This would be Je te aime beaucoup, which contracts to Je t'aime beaucoup. This is trite. Furthermore, aime is not pronounced "aim," but "em," in popular French, although it is properly divided "ai-me" and "ai" without a vowel after takes the long form.

Above, I have spoken of Geis's Western character. To contrast with this, I offer you Gerald Steward, of Ontarian infame. Many many months ago, I sent him a letter asking to trade with CANFAN. He very kindly replied that he would (he had not yet decided to try to pick a fight with me; he was too busy making obscene remarks about Raleigh Multog, laboring under the vain delusion that his target was individual). Then he had a brainstorm. We down here had gone far enough. It must be a hoax. I will get even. I will expose everything. Subsequent to his having thus exposed himself in that letter dated last fall, he has remained a loaf (certainly a loofer at spelling in CANFAN), not living up to his promise of delivery. I have had to borrow CANFANS from G.W.; he gave them to me, as non-fan visitors were continually picking up a copy of such matter and it put him, being a fan, in a very unkindly light. I note also that Ger has evidently never had the fannish experience to have heard about George (a fan since the middle 1930s); perhaps this inexperience and newness to fandom kept him from suspecting Wetzel.

PLEASE PASS THE BIER

Le veau d'or est toujours debout.

TWO MONTHS AGO I REMARKED TO MR. HITCHCOCK that the current Galaxy was running a three barreled salvo that looked like it might hit the target. He promptly asked me if I would write it up for UMBRA. It sounded like it was too shady for me, because at the time I hadn't read the stories. I have now rectified all three deficiencies, and frankly, I'm sorry. But to get down to the assignment.

Galaxy's shots set a new record: 1) a ball that had promise, but ricocheted, 2) a complete misfire, and 3) a bullseye. Unfortunately, this Sturgeon was placed at the back of the school and almost didn't get in the swim (it took real courage to get that deep in the mag).

The first story, Project Mastodon, by Clifford D. Simak, a blurb started out "What they wanted was routine." "They" didn't get it, but the customer did. The satire of Washington red tape was fair, but it got a bit trampled under the dreck of the rest of the plot. It seems there was this mastodon.... At any rate, some time travelers were stranded when the helicopter they used to lift themselves off terra firma when they time-hopped (they didn't want to end up with an arm sharing space with a granite boulder) was incapacitated by a rampant prehistoric pachyderm. This account may be incoherent, but so was the story.

The burning element of suspense was that the time mechanism (when one of the group built a tower and went back to the "present") was discovered to be rather inaccurate. The space traveler arrived ten years after he had left. Each trip was a little off--in progressed time. It figures that if the adjustment was none too sharp, the contraption might end up before it was there the last time, but providentially this little contretemps did not take place. Also, the thing was calibrated to jumps of 50,000 years and only made mistakes of ten years at a time. Pretty good for the first try.

To catch the full flavor of the story, it might be interesting

to quote a chapter--Chapter XIV, the last.

He was. Not he alone, but a thousand others, working desperately, knowing that the time was short, working not alone for two men trappen in time, but for the peace they all had dreamed about--that the whole world had yearned for through the ages.

For to be of any use, it was imperative that they could zero in the time machines they meant to build as an artilleryman would zero in a battery of guns, that each time machine would take its occupants to the same instant of the past, that their operation would extend over the same period of time, to the exact second.

It was a problem of control and calibration--starting with a prototype that was calibrated, as its finest adjustment, for jumps of 50,000 years.

Project Mastodon was finally under way.

Dulcie and Decorum, Damon Knight, was from nothing. The line of the bit was typographical errors. A writer began to go nuts because he made too many of them. He collected them and read messages into them. Two electronic brains of the remote future were having a war. Digital Linear Computer (DLC--Duloie) and Digital Computer Reconpen-saeing (sic) Military (DCRM--Decorum) were in charge. DLC had lost a battle (calculated, of course) and had to sacrifice a few of her people in debt to DCRM. She ran out of people and went back in the past.

By sending messages through these typos she convinced our half-wit that he was in love with "her/it." DULCE-ET-DECORUM-EST-FRO-PATRIA-MORI. (Fanfare; trumpets and hautbois.) The dear editor of this rag might have enjoyed this drench, because it kept slipping off into foreign languages incoherently (the writer's great, great, etc., grandson was Russian). I really give him credit for more intelligence, though.

The unfortunate part about all this is that the idea of the story is pretty fair. Don't you go nuts with typos when you're in a hurry? And the idea of mechanical brains thinking our warfare for us is quite possible. It's too bad Damon Knight didn't write a story about it.

He came to the end of a page and ripped it out of the machine. It was getting so that he hated to touch the typewriter; the keys were like little metal teeth that snapped back at him. Not enough sleep last night or the night before. He was on edge.

The last story (WHO? by Ted Sturgeon) wasn't up to the standard set by the other two. It was good. There are times when one wants to spend money just to see a disgusting movie or read a revolting magazine. It's too bad H. L. Gold didn't put in another story like the

other two. It would have been so much fun?

Sturgeon's story was a psychological drama of the lonely months of prolonged space flight, an extremely old subject but written with the freshness and originality of style so terribly typical of Sturgeon. It is rather frightening that Ted can write so many stories and still keep them on an intelligent plane. As you can see, he smoothed off the sandpaper texture of the rest of the issue.

Then there's this: You're alone. You have a shipmate, but even so, you're alone. You crouch in this little cell in the nose of your ship, with the curving hull to your left and the flat wall of the midship bulkhead to your right. Because it's there, that bulkhead, you know that in previous models it wasn't. You can imagine what happened in some (how many?) ships to make it necessary to seal you away from your shipmate.

Psychodynamics has come a long way, but you called this a world; well, reduce a world to two separate nations and see what happens. Between two confined entities, there's no mean and no median, and no real way of determining a majority. How many battered pilots have come home crazed, cooped up with the shredded bodies of their shipmates?

So that's easy to understand--you can't trust two human beings together. Not for long enough. If you don't believe it, look at the bulkhead. It's there because it has to be there.

Being a peaceable guy, it scares you a little to know how dangerous you are.

Makes you a little proud, though, doesn't it?

I was more than a little disappointed with Simak, but it was one of those things you can ignore--not especially bad, but far from good. The Knight was downright detrimental to the magazine. It blackened my opinion of GALAXY more than a little. Sturgeon was, unfortunately, good as usual.

As a bit of digression, the issue of Galaxy in question is a good example of an author's genius. Both Simak and Knight had excellent themes for their stories and did a beautiful job of messing them up. Sturgeon took a thoroughly overworked idea and transformed it into a gem. Too bad the setting was so poor.

But cheer up, all you evil little reviewers: someday he will lay an egg. Then you may all eat it.

SNOOPER'S BRAIN WASH

ESCAPE TO NOWHERE was originally published under a hard cover. It was a first class monthly book of the Month Club choice.

I know very little about David Karp; he is a writer of mainstream novels. But I have read nothing of his except the volume under review. It is rumored he is a distant relative of Mrs. Molotov, the wife of the Russian diplomat, but that can be discounted as Karp is a common family name among East Europeans, particularly those of Jewish faith.

So far as I can find out, ESCAPE TO NOWHERE is the only novel by Karp which can be classed as science fiction. The location of the action is never explicitly given, but a process elimination indicates the Eastern part of the United States. The time is more uncertain; it indicates a time when details of the historical forces presently operating have run their course, but the broad outlines of the forces are still in operation. The second half of the twenty-first century would be a good guess.

Apparently, a totalitarian state had arisen in what is now the U. S. A. The chief character of the book, Professor Burden, was a teacher of English in a small college, and also a spy for the secret police, who spent his evenings writing and mailing reports of suspicious remarks dropped by his college acquaintances. He was married and the father of two sons. It is peculiar, but the descriptions of social life indicate Mr. Karp was asleep at the switch. A century or time and the rise of totalitarianism would certainly change college social life more than is indicated to the reader.

Burden is summoned to the capital for a conference with superiors in the Secret Police. The reason for the call is a mystery to him, but he has an idea that he is going to receive a decoration. In the interview, however, his superior, Mr. Genger, scolds him for negligence, and detects deviationism. Accused of heresy, Burden makes the mistake of demanding a formal hearing.

At the hearing, he makes some remarks which violently arouse the suspicions of Deputy Commissioner Lark, the head inquisitor of the Secret Police. Burden is detained under the pretext of a medical examination. He is questioned by Lark under narcohypnosis, and his answers confirm Lark's worst suspicions. Lark decides on a full scale brain washing, to convert Burden back to orthodoxy. The top brass gives Lark two weeks.

Burden is questioned under narcohypnosis again, and various suggestions are implanted in him; among others the idea that his wife Emma has been unfaithful to him and has infected him with syphilis. He is then put alone into a cold, dimly lit room. When he is nearly insane from the loneliness, he is transferred to the psycho ward of a hospital. He is then treated under narcohypnosis so that his original personality and memories are repressed, and he becomes not Burden, teacher of English, but Hughes, an unskilled laborer. He is then turned loose in the company of Cumber, another unskilled worker who is also a police agent. One evening, while talking with Cumber, after services in the local Church of State, Hughes lapses into the same heresies that he had held while Burden. Cumber reports it to Lark, who decides that Burden-Hughes must

NOAH McLEOD

be killed. Yet Lark knows that he and not Burden is destined.

The cover blurb of *ESCAPE TO NOWHERE* is a desire and demand for a new morality, labeling science fiction as a "new morality" it in the story of the "new morality" of the soul. If *ESCAPE TO NOWHERE* is a book about the morality plays of the Middle Ages, then his statements that he wishes to remain an individual, as known as totalitarian state has lost.

There have been a long series of dystopias beginning with *1984* which treat of the sufferings of the non-conformists of the hands of totalitarian dictatorships. Yet, democracies, too, have committed some monstrous crimes against non-conformists. The democratic Athens made Socrates drink kyonion; the democratic Swiss burned Savonarola at the stake; the democratic Americans lynched Joseph Smith, who founded the Mormon Church. The Dutch of South Africa, one of the most democratic people in the world, expect a rigid conformity both in behavior, and in outward speech. It may be truthfully said that although dictatorships produce Himmlers and Berias, democracies produce McCarthys. It would be well if all readers of dystopias describing the sufferings of non-conformists, instead of congratulating themselves that it can't happen here, would remember the fate of Socrates, and firmly resolve, "it won't happen here."

It seems to me that Karp has not been realistic in his treatment of the totalitarian society he describes. Where is the Elite Party? There must be an elite from which to recruit the leaders. Where is the semi-divine dictator? The top dog in a totalitarian setup is either a semi-divine dictator or a scapegoat like Malenkov. There seems no middle ground.

Karp was not using his imagination properly when he described the social life both in college and in the working class section of the city. It is practically unchanged from the present. But perhaps he was tired of the reckless extrapolation of some of the second raters who write for *STARTLING* and *PLANET*. But it is noticeable that Orwell in *1984* and Grossen in *YEAR OF CONSENT* used extrapolation successfully to heighten the drama.

Lark, the inquisitor, reminds one of no other character in fiction. He is not like O'Brien, the inquisitor of *1984*. He reminds me of Beria, the subtle but ruthless Soviet police chief, who brought Russia to the verge of civil war in the days following Stalin's death. Can it be that Karp actually modeled Lark on Beria?

The most successful piece of social extrapolation in *ESCAPE TO NOWHERE* is the Church of State, that strange mixture of Unitarian theology and Revivalist enthusiasm. It is here and in the details of the brainwashing of Burden that Karp rises to full stature as a science fiction writer.

ESCAPE TO NOWHERE is well worth the thirty-five cents asked. But it should be followed by Alan Paton's *TOO LATE THE PHALAROPE*, which shows how a democracy can persecute a non-conformist.

ESCAPE TO NOWHERE, David Karp,
Lion Books, Inc., 655 Madison Ave.,
New York, N. Y.; paper bound, 35 cents.

GEORGE HETZEL
5 STAYFIELD ST
DUMFRIES

The reproduction of this issue is excellent, and if that hyper-critical guy named Dead Doggs makes bellows again about your zine, I think it just means that he takes nasty pills. Fact is, your ditto actually beats many mimeo zines I have seen, even including some of my own mimeoed brochures ((well...)) for neatness and legibility.

"Ev to Appx," which you wrote, was a very interesting bit of word painting, and I wish you would do more. I note your awareness of unity effect therein. ((??!))

McLeod's present pungent review also well liked. One disagreement I do have with Crossen (whom McLeod is reviewing). Crossen apparently does not know just what "brainwashing" actually is (nor do the general public), for he says (according to McLeod) that in his future society people who knew too much were brainwashed, and if that failed, lobotomized. Believe me, the two practices should be reverse for a proper understanding of their degree of effectiveness. When you have been brainwashed, you have had it! The lobotomized person exists thereafter docile and many times almost mindless. But the brain washed unfortunate has full awareness of all his past, but has an abysmal fear to THINK certain things. The matter in which this is accomplished has been done in an article by me soon to be issued in Murdock's fanzine THE GALETIC ((sic)) HERALD. Brainwashing would keep all dissenters in line because they would never know when their minds were being tuned in upon by the operators of this device--except when a modulated brainwave was transmitted to their brain and thier brain flooded with varying amounts of such electric energy, which itself and other methods similar cause intense suffering.

Add to that the fact that brainwashing devices can transmit and receive from all over the world the brainwave from any person, and you have a slave humanity, fearful of the possessors of the device. American POWs during the Korean War were brainwashed, but you never hear anything about just what that term actually meant, save some vague allusions to it. If any future dictatorship comes into existence, it will without question be a police state based on the thought control of the people by these brainwashing devices. In my opinion, it will be the psychiatrists we should watch as they are the ones who have it in this country, and this device is strangely not mentioned in any of the medical or electronic journals I have checked--including the extracts in the periodical indexes in the Pratt and Hopkins libraries.

The letters were very interesting--Stewart really must be taking gas by now. Stewart should have found some interest in my Natural History opus, as I had a datum from his home town. He said it was stodgy, and I always thought a stodgy was a cheap cigar. Well, you know I do smoke cheap cigars and may have done so while writing of the eels and the fish; maybe that is what he means?

WHAAAT?

Letters - - -

John Magnanimous left me on the corner ((by Magnus's place, 10 miles from Dundalk across Baltimore)) about 2 a. m. the other night ((when the 20 bus runs once an hour, a est-ce pas?). Before that I introduced him to his first submarine sandwich at a place three blocks from his house. He is sold on them now.

Incidentally, do any of your readers know if Harlem Ellison's confessions of a kleptomaniac are a hoax? Harlem ~~CERTAINLY~~ ~~WOULDN'T~~ admit having such a psycho--or would he?

Harlem does not believe that Multog is an alias of mine but that Multog really exists as an individual! On the other hand, when John Branamen wrote Harlem a letter and sent a sub, the damnfool Harlem sends Branamen's money to me and tells me in nasty words to stop sending him letters under fake names! Honestly, I don't know what to think now. Let Harlem prove that John Branamen is a creation of my pen. Yet he doesn't believe me when I say Multog IS a fictitious entity of mine, invented by me. Gasp... I am getting so mixed up I think I better quit now before I start believing Multog is alive, Branamen non-existent, and Harlem is really a shoplifter working fulltime with a mob.

((At last I have somebody to support me against Boggs. Now all I have to do is get in a feud with him and I'll be all set. Up. George actually had "En thi apxi," which is only natural. But in small letters, you put on the marks, N becomes like v, H looks a bit like n, and the I goes under the sta:n. Otherwise, a good job of conversion.

George had commented that McLeod's articles are too short. He would like something four pages in length. Now I would too, but you see, George, I, as editor, must consider the average level of intelligence of the reader. This is obvious, as Gerald considers your documentaries "stodgy," whereas he labels works by McLeod as "slightly stodgy." So in publishing two page reviews, I am only attempting to approach his level of interest.))

TED E. WHITE
1014 N. TUCKAHOE ST.
FALLS CHURCH, VA.

1) Wit de #8, ZIP changes its name to ST. 2) With issue #9, it adopts a whole new policy, because, non-co list that I am, I am tired of pubbing "just another fanz." 3) This new policy is to publish nothing (with the exception of editorial and letters) but fan-fiction. Not imitation pro-fiction, which is erroneously ((sic)) labeled fan-fiction, but the genuine article, written about or concerning fans/fandom. (The Enchanted Duplicator is an excellent example.) ((Indeed it is. Willis, this is your opportunity to put out a second printing of it. Mr. White is able and ready; he will improve vastly on your first try at it. He will correct your spelling errors (as above); he will type chapter heads with his billings typewriter, which as you know is much easier to read than a handwriting head; he will himself LETTER the cover !; and to top it off, he will make it 100 pages long, thereby giving you NOTICE!)) 4) To pub a zine like this, I need a GOOD editor, one who knows his English, and really knows how E D I T in the fullest sense of the word. After seeing how he handled Wegars' bit in Feb 10, I was convinced that Stark was the man. I wrote him and he agreed. Me? I'm now publisher, editor-in-chief, and managing editor. Stark simply

passes on all material, decided if re-writing is needed, either does it himself or tells the author what is needed; in general does all the things a real editor will have to do. Our private name for it is "Tech. Ed." or technical editor. ((How do you manage to think such things up?)) As far as I know, Stark's only zine is for the Cult ((and all this time I thought White was the fellow that put out 10 mags for the Cult)), and I work with him on that ((you sure hide yourself well, then.))

With ZIP #6, I began a campaign which will be heightened by #7, of convincing the BNFs that I can present their material as well as any of the leading zines. ((But do THEY know about this?)) I don't mean to be bragging. I've spent an awful lot of time and money on top format and presentation, because I believe that a good-looking mag will always attract more top material. There is hardly a page in #7 which won't have more than one color. Several will have three. ((?)) I went and bought quite a few more lettering guides to add variety. For the past couple of weeks I've worked like a dog.

I still don't know whether I'll get the hair in time or not. I hope so, because I hope it will have better synchro than the present machine. Still, I think I can use the Heyer satisfactorily if I need to. I turned the necessary parts to fit in shop. The result does not look jury-rigged in the least, and works much better.

Let me clear up the mystery of the Tuckahoes...As repeatedly said, Tuckahoe exists all over Falls Church, Arlington Co., Fairfax Co., and there is even a Tuckahoe School over in Arlington. Ask Stark. He and Lenky ((guess who)) couldn't even find me the first time ((maybe they didn't want to))--they found the 2300 block, the 1900 block, and a few others, but not the 1300 or 1200, or 1000, which all exist right close to here. ((Go on...I'm fascinated)) Because the address would have seemed too close, I had to do a little fibbing--worse has been done in the name of a hoax.

((Stark as editor of STELLAR will be like Turley pitching for the Orioles. Great stuff, the kind that makes a star, but nothing to work with. You just won't get enough GOOD FAN FICTION to support a whole fanzine. But I suppose Larry's resigned to writing most of your material.

However, I have seen some of the repro on #7, and it is gorgeous. The color blends on the cover (I forget front or back) are masterpieces of mimeography.

Originally, I was going to box in the filler art, such as at right on this page. However, I decided not to this time.

All I need now is for that pic to have been drawn by White himself!

Quote from the Lord of Gases:

"Hitchcock has finally published the latest issue of UMBRA."



LARRY STARK

ROUTE 9

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J.

There are writers and Writers, Sean. I don't believe I've ever had Silverberg admit that I'd done a pro-type job. One year he suggested I hold for a few years and then rewrite, but that's about all. The GIANTS of fanzine-writers can't make a dime out of their scribblings...nor can they accept the cliches and formulas that a pro must work with.

In essence, the Ten Nights are pieces of a short novel in the tradition of Tennessee Williams' most famous plays: The Romantic Illusion versus a whole world-full of Reality. Stylistically, it's full of half-digested Hemingway and half-comprehended Anderson. It's a description of prolonged and lonely adolescence, and its setting is more a concession and a compromise than a conviction. It would never sell, to anyone... but I'm going to have to finish it.

You misunderstand my methods completely if you expect "strong" statements. I'm not a very very obvious writer; and I haven't a feeling for description.

My powers, however great or small, don't lie in driving a point soundly home, but (if you'll pardon an elaborated metaphor) in explaining in a calm, quiet, unhurried voice "You have a knife in your back," and then twisting it, just to remove all doubt. That was, basically, the manner used in DIRTY PRO and in CALYPSO BLUES: Let the situation emerge, fuzzily, and then add one slight tap for confirmation.

Critical articles are something else again; I just get hold of an idea, usually something out of the normal reach of whatever's before me, and build and elaborate on it. For instance, Ted and I saw REAR WINDOW when I was in Falls Church. Good, entertaining, suspenseful Hitchcock type movie (the OTHER John ((?)) Hitchcock!). But I had to ask the question, Who Won the Argument??? Did the woman give up the new-dress-every-day and go live in jeeps and foxholes...or did our dashing young LIFE photographer turn into an anchored fashion-photographer? The picture itself is obscure: femme is seen in dungarees...but reading a copy of VOGUE, as the fadeout occurs.

Then, elaboration: Isn't the photographer's entire life that of an international Peeping-Tom: sneaking a look at Spain's back-yard war, or France's cabinet-crisis, or our own Korean back-yard? Isn't the real reason for his watching his neighbors' lives the fact that that's what he's done all his life...spy into other people's lives and dramas?

If so, what is the final decision? That the spying is, on a major or a minor scale, neither ethical nor productive (In other words, that to be a fashion-photog is his only honorable salvation)...or that, by spying, he just might happen to see something that will, if he tells others about it (Prints his photographs in LIFE), prevent murder (of the gal-next-door, or of a government?)

Naturally, since he did unmask a murderer, the latter is true, and we have to conclude that the jeans, and the copy of Vogue extraneous, really determine the ultimate ending. (However, were I doing the picture, there would have BEEN no murder, the photographer would have been mauled by his neighbor because his privacy had been invaded, and the central character would have been forced to make a significant decision.) As it stands, he started a LIFE photog, always maintained he would stay one, and ended as one. The only decision was made by the "antagonist":

his girl, and THAT decision was to capitulate. I don't like melodrama!

I looked at Disney's 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA as an exercise in Cartesian philosophy. Only Nemo, Ned Brand, and the professor are "real" people, or, pushing it to its ultimate conclusion, the Nautilus is merely the skull of Captain Nemo, in which Ned (his enjoyment of living, his humanity) and the professor (his intellectual achievements, his more philosophical side) war with Nemo, the autocrat, the righteously outraged commander, the one who prevents wars by sinking munitions ships.

In case I didn't mention it before, your own performance as a critic in the letter section was much better than either the letter writers', or McLeod's. I just don't consider Noah a particularly thorough nor impressive critic. In a great many cases, the points he picks to attack just aren't pertinent to the basic elements of the story. Nor does he usually argue from evidence that fits the case, or is unquestionable. He attacked one book because snipers hiding in the rubble were cleaned out so easily, once the cleanup committee got to work, and cited the difficulties the Germans had in cleaning out the Warsaw Ghetto. The trouble there was the Jews in the Ghetto did more dying than their persecutors did, and one of the reasons they could be so successful at street fighting was that the Germans tried sending a bunched-up platoon of soldiers into a block of houses, making targets for snipers easy to find, and allowing snipers to dodge from house to house, and ultimately to hole up in the first house searched. (I finished THE WALL yesterday; and John Hersey is more a reporter than a novelist.)

It would be VERY helpful if you'd insert translations in the wine somewhere. We're in the throes of T. S. Elliott right now, and if there's anything more exasperating than a writer who PURPOSELY sets down his pertinent lines in Greek or Arabic or German, I don't know what it is. The most hilarious thing about THE WASTE LAND is the way Eliot's notes run: After a full paragraph of Greek script, he'll say "From AGAMEMNON"...and not a damn word more. That's worse than no notes at all!

((Okay, let's take REAR WINDOW. What is it? A SUSPENSE movie. Therefore, especially at the climax, any extraneous analysis of character, life decision, or even stress on the photographer's problems would sap from the SUSPENSE. The only problem to be settled is trapping Thorwald. If after that is accomplished, the hero or the heroine make any other important decisions, the effect of the SUSPENSE attained is reduced drastically. If you were making the movie, you would use the murder chase as an instrument to force the internecine conflict to a head and bring forth the decision, the compromise. Many things might have happened after the climax. Not everyone is dead (or taken up to Heaven) yet, and in one second of life many strains exist coincidentally. The fact remains: This is a suspense movie. The goal is to get the solution of the murder over with and then be FREE to go on to other things. This idea brings up another question: What is SUSPENSE?

In suspense, you know you are going to pull through (I am already identifying the audience with the hero); but you also are aware that there must be sacrifices made. In its name, suspense is a state of hanging, a state of not knowing what is coming off next. You don't know where the sacrifices will come from, you don't know how heavy they will be. Take, for instance, one of the greatest suspense movies of all time--Hughes' **THE THING**. It could be anywhere--remember when they opened the double hinged box in the greenhouse and the dog fell out? Remember how many times there was a knock on the door, and just the played-down romantic interest came in? You never knew where it would spring out next; this worked you into such a state of nervousness that when the **THING** did appear, you nearly had a heart attack. That is one kind of suspense, where you don't know where the danger is coming from, but you are familiar with this danger, and you know very well what is apt to happen. Now remember when the fellow guarding the **THING** threw a plugged-in electric blanket over the hunk of ice it was imbedded in. Slowly the ice melted, and his back was turned all the time. Outside that room, everyone was oblivious of the oncoming peril. No one would find out until it was too late, and the sacrifices were being made. You knew that in the end the crew of men would survive, decimated or not; but you didn't know whose life would be sacrificed. You knew next to nothing about the monster itself, other than it was in the shape of a man, about seven feet tall and correspondingly well-built, and that it had piercing eyes; i. e., it was conscious in the ice and was observing the men from its sanctuary! This is the second kind of suspense, and it makes you so nervous that when the action finally does come, again you nearly have a heart attack.

Now all would have been lost if Hughes had not played down the romantic interest, put the environment as the barren Arctic, free of distracting motion and activity. In fact, I believe Hughes brought the woman along just to play down the romance. Notice also how tightly everything fits about the **MONSTER**. All the parts work with each other to engender a sustained suspense--from five minutes after the picture begins till two minutes before it ended. True, Hughes had a world-shattering conclusion, which would have made a retrospecting Stark very satisfied...but by the time you got down off ninety minutes of sustained suspense, you really didn't give one damn about the conclusion; i. e., it played itself down!

McLeod's great argument seems to be against loose ends, and the abundant presence of these distracts from an otherwise well meant dystopia. He goes after little things, true, but (1) he chooses stories to review that are good enough not to have any defective "big things" and (2) the little things build up. # I know nothing re Eliot, but from what you say, a) he is a pedant, or b) he is writing for an audience which understands many tongues, and he feels he can express himself in some foreign language better than in English. The untranslated foreign expressions I use are all parenthetical.))

leaves are found by the zoologist Dr. Anton Braun, the parent of which might easily be the so-called sea serpent. Significant is the knowledge that for years prior to 1875 sea monsters were sighted off the New England coast. The next century led to this.

THE SEA SERPENT

(Baltimore American, August 8, 1875) Five people in a boat were watching a school of blue whales, when the head of an immense fish or sea monster came among the school. The yacht was headed in, to get a closer look, when at a distance of two miles the thing decided to meet them. The monster grabbed a swordfish and tried to eat them, and tried at it when they heard the thing. They chased it about the bay for two hours and killed it at about twenty times, without perceptible effect. Only once did they hear the thing. Finally the thing started out to sea, and they drift. All the time that they had chased it, the black fish, some 15 or 20 in the number, accompanied it. The description of the monster is best given, as before, in the original statements of the interviewed.

THE FLYING SAUCER "HYSTERIA" focused attention on strange objects that have been haunting the earth's skies for decades before, and it started the very first effort, on a large scale, of investigation of one type of Fortean phenomena. But there have been other such phenomena, forgotten now and considered scientifically unrespectable, like the continual showers of frogs and fish and sulphur, green rains and red snows, and the oft-reported sea serpent. It is this last—the supposedly mythic sea monster—of which I have collected sighting data, from old newspapers, and which I present with the intention of starting the foundation of similar newspaper data to document the monster's occurrence.

(Baltimore American, July 28, 1875) A steamer's passengers saw this particular sea serpent off Cape Cod, where it had been observed before for some time. The quotation of one witness gives the account better than a paraphrase of it: "The creature was within 400 yards of the steamer. As we brought our marine glasses to bear upon him, a swordfish of medium size arose to the surface and advanced to attack the object of our curiosity. When the sword fish first attacked him, he reared his head at least ten feet above the water, and then dived down once more. These actions he kept repeating so that we had a fine opportunity to scrutinize him. His head was rather flat, and closely resembled that of a turtle. The fin we first observed, was on the back, several feet from the head, while small fins protruded on each side. The body was at least 8 inches in diameter, and presented a slimy surface, covered with large, coarse scales. When he reared his head, the water seemed to fairly boil as he rapidly dived his way through the waves, so that by far the largest portion of his body must have been under the water. We estimated this length to be at least 60 feet, but the pilot informed us that a few weeks previous he rose alongside the steamer Roman, and they reported him to be 120 feet long."

(Baltimore American, July 30, 1875) In an editorial there was a review of the sea serpent sighting just given, and several explanations were advanced. The most interesting, attributed to some unnamed naturalists, was that the monster was a surviving saurian from dinosaurian days, which idea is tenable—witness the living fossil, the coelacanth, found off the east coast of Africa. Or consider the five foot (!)

larva eel found by the zoologist Dr. Anton Brumm, the parent of which might easily be the so-called sea serpent.

Significant is the knowledge that for years prior to 1875 such monsters were sighted off the New England coast. The next datum adds to this.

(Baltimore American, August 8, 1875) Five people in a yacht saw a sea serpent near Swampscott off the Massachusetts coast. They had been watching a school of small whales, called black-fish, when the head of an immense fish or sea monster emerged among the school. The yacht was headed in, to get a closer look, when at a distance of two miles the thing decided to meet them. The narrator grabbed a breech loading Ballard rifle which they had with them, and fired at it when within 300 yards. They chased it about the bay for two hours and fired at it about twenty times, without perceptible effect. Only once did they hear the rattle ball strike it, but it seemed to be unharmed by the shot. Finally the thing started out to sea, and they quit.

All the time that they had chased it, the black-fish, some 15 or 20 in the number, accompanied it. The description of the monster is best given, as before, in the original statements of the interviewed witness who first sighted it: "The head emerged from the water, long, flat on top, from two to two and a half feet across; with eyes large and prominent, set well back on the upper part; a large mouth, which we could see open once signally. This head it raised about 5 feet from the surface of the water, bringing it up slowly, and keeping it up 5 to 10 seconds, when it would plunge back with a quick motion like a dive, and showing a small portion of the back, where we could see a pointed fin about 12 or 2 feet long, standing straight up, and in front we could see the upper part of what looked like short legs or the flappers of a seal, but it never raised the extremities from the water.

"Its color was a smooth, glossy black, except the under part of the lower jaw and as much of the breast as we could see, which was white, with a distinct line of demarcation between the two colors. I could see nothing that looked like scales. We could, of course, tell nothing about the length of his body, but there must have been an immense power somewhere to raise such a head and neck slowly such a distance above the surface and to hold it there for so long a time."

Not all such strange sea monsters were serpent-like; the one seen near Dundee, Scotland, was described by affrighted fishermen there as the "herring hog" (Baltimore American, February 21, 1876). It was well known to them, but this was the first newspaper account of it.

A crew of a fishing boat were hauling in their haddock lines when it came up, to blow, only a few yards from the boat. It had a huge head of 6 feet by 4, which seemed to be full of slits or holes, and its eyes resembled those of an ox, but larger. The skin was black, rough, and changing to a lighter hue toward the lower part of the body. It had a tail of 6 feet from each tip. The body was 45 feet long; and the thing must have been very old, as its head and tail were covered with large white barnacles about 3 inches long, and one of its fins was partially eaten away, as if by decay.

It took several haddocks off the lines and then broke the line the crew were hauling in. In alarm they stoned it, one stone striking the "herring hog"; and it plunged into the depths, to reappear a great distance away, giving a loud roar.

(Baltimore American, February 3, 1879) A sea monster had been sighted several times in 1877 and 1878 off Greenwich in New England. Then in 1879 it was seen again by three sailors in a sloop off Greenwich Point. Captain Dalton said ten feet of it was exposed to view; the head like that of a snake, being flat on top and $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet broad. In color it was black with green spots. They could only see the left eye, which was as big as a saucer and stuck out of its head like the eye of a frog. The head was about three feet long, or at least it began to taper down about that distance from its nose. The smaller part continued for about 10 feet and was held up completely out of the water. After that it began to swell all at once until it was as large as a barrel. Its length was thirty to fifty feet.

Captain Dalton claimed this was distinctly some sort of snake, as he had seen all sorts of creatures in his travels over the globe. From the fact that so many people had seen a sea monster off the New England coast during that period, it certainly cannot be put down as imagination, just as flying saucer objects also have been labeled and snickered at. Nor do the sightings of sea serpents occur in one locale, as this next account shows.

(Baltimore American, June 9, 1879) Captain Davison's steamship was nine miles off Cape Satano (the cape is part of the island Kyushu, Japan) when the captain and his chief officer observed a whale jump clear out of the sea, about a quarter of a mile away. Shortly after, it leaped out again, and something was attached to it. The captain got his glasses, and the third leap revealed something holding on to the belly of the whale. With the fourth leap the whale shook free this object; then it turned out to be a large snake-like creature, which reared itself about thirty feet out of the water. It appeared to be about the thickness of a junk's mast; and after standing so erect for ten seconds, plunged head first into the water. The color of it resembled that of a pilot fish.

The method of attack on the whale by this sea serpent is quite like that of certain fishes and eels, and suggests that this sea serpent more likely belongs to ichthyic rather than ophidian nomenclature.

Another variety of sea monster appeared off St. Elmo in the Pearl Island group, 50 miles from Panama. (Baltimore American, October 28, 1883) Seamen had put off in a small boat to catch one of a school of whales. The water broke ahead of them and an animal like a horse slowly arose, saw them, and dived.

It was 20 feet long, with a horse-like head and two unicorn-shaped horns protruding from it, with four legs or double-jointed fins, a brownish hide speckled with large black spots, and a tail divided into two parts.

The animal was seen once more; but because of the whales about, they could not risk attempting to catch it. Others had watched it before, and always in this locality.

(Baltimore American, December 7, 1883) Members of a life-saving station at Long Branch, N. J., were fishing in the ocean when a hideous sea serpent pulled up near their boats. It was 100 feet long and 30 feet wide, and more of its body was beneath the waves. Two blowholes about 9 feet long and 2 feet wide were 20 feet from the end of its nose. The body was black, the head short, and near the nose were two stubby horns.

(Baltimore Sun, December 24, 1883) The sea serpent or monster at Long Beach was "identified" as a devilfish of South America, by Prof. Baird of the Smithsonian Institute, who went on to say the witnesses had

overexaggerated the things size, inferring it to be 25 feet across and less than this in length. I might possibly consider the devilfish classification save for the fact of the monster's elongated, rather than squarish, proportions and its size. It is one thing to discredit observers, but it is another thing when one is on the scene and knows full well what he views. The seamen there would know somewhat of marine life besides having an eye for distance and measurement judgment.

3 (Baltimore Sun, August 31, 1886) A sea serpent invaded the Hudson River and emerged near Kingston Point. Its witnesses numbered some Rondout boatmen, some boys in swimming, and a schooner captain. The anaconda, or water bear, of the Amazon best described it. Its head, which was raised 6 feet out of the water, had a 2 foot diameter. The throat was a dirty white, and the back mottled with light and brown. Six feet behind the eye began a fin that ran the entire 55 feet visible length of its body and no doubt the part hidden under the water. It lashed the water with its tail. Even some people on the Dutchess County shore later reported seeing it.

About two weeks before (Baltimore Sun, August 16, 1886) a sea serpent had been spotted off Cape Ann, New England, by a school master. It was 80 feet long and continued in sight for 20 minutes--so he had a good long time to study it, which he did. The head was raised out of the water--this action occurs in some of the past stories of the more snake-like monster, and is in itself a thoroughly ophidian characteristic--and ten or fifteen ridges or coils could be seen at once. Fully 50 people likewise had a simultaneous view of it; and some enterprising soul with an idea of winning the \$20,000 reward offered for it by Barnum, the circus man, fitted out a boat in Gloucester to hunt it.

Disregarding the different lengths of the Hudson River sea serpent and the Cape Ann one--as such lengths were but estimates--could not both have been one and the same monster?

The monster in the Hudson River had shown up on August 30. Then it put in another visit a few days later (Baltimore Sun, September 3, 1886), getting suddenly vicious. A watchman on a wrecked steamer perceived it in the night, with its head extended 5 feet out of the water. Two men who were rowing in a boat caught its attention and the monster veered from its course after them. They reached the Dutchess County shore in safety but were terribly frightened, for the thing's inimical purpose was plainly expressed in its fury at their escape. The tail, 75 feet from the head, lashed the water in anger.

Before starting up the Hudson again, it squirted from its mouth a stream of foamy stuff resembling long shavings from a pine plank.

Captain Conkling then encountered it in his boat, but gave it undisputed right of way in the channel. The following morning it was seen in the river near the Flatbush ice houses, and at Rondout.

(Baltimore Sun Supplement, September 4, 1886) Before dark, the monster passed several steamers near Bearen Island in the Hudson River. This is quite a ways up and is the only known inland invasion of such a monster.

A Prof. Gill of the fish commission in Washington, D. C., said he did not believe in the existence of any such monster as was reported in the Hudson. This reminds me of the classic example of the savage of equatorial regions who refused to believe the existence of such a thing called "ice" simply because it did not exist in his environment and because he could not account for such a phenomena of "cold" as it was always hot, was it not so?

(Baltimore Sun Supplement, October 12, 1886) Another sea serpent was chanced upon off the Connecticut coast by some pleasure-bent people in a sailboat. They approached what they thought to be a school of porpoises, but within (or slightly) of a mile they were startled to find it a sea serpent. It showed its head 5 feet out of the water, and 75 to 100 feet of its body was seen as it moved. On perceiving them, it sank out of sight and increased its speed, leaving a foaming wake similar to that of a steamboat.

(Baltimore Sun Supplement, January 15, 1887) Dr. Samuel Knobel wrote a paper on why he believed such a thing as a sea serpent existed, pointing out paleontological evidence for supposing so. Prof. Agassiz, he said, believed likewise and pointed to the forms of the Ichthyosaurus and plesiosaurus as points of identity with the questionable sea serpent. In the annals of Norway are reports of such sea monsters, though that was less of a serpentine creature and instead described mostly as akin to an enormous star fish, which was one of the things to which the name "Kraken" was given.

(Baltimore News, September 19, 1922) Sea monsters of 40 to 60 feet length attacked fishing boats out of Bristol Harbor, Trinity Bay. A large school of the monsters had appeared there, almost swamping several fishing boats, so that fishermen were reluctant to go out on the grounds.

(Baltimore American, August 17, 1923) A few miles southeast of Miami, Florida, at a place called Key Biscayne, a dead sea monster drifted ashore. It was not of unusually large dimensions, being only 8 feet long, 4 feet in depth, and 1 foot across. Much of its description, which I will not repeat here, was truly bizarre. But it did sport an odd rudder of tail fin which seemed to be hinged as a ship's rudder. My particular reason in including this datum, though it has no relation with the so-called sea serpents and the other peculiar sea monsters recorded of herein, is to show a case wherein an impossible-to-believe marine creature had in one instance been caught, thus giving some grounds for faith in other even more incredible and as yet uncaught sea monsters and sea serpents.

(Baltimore American, October 5, 1923) But there was an even more remarkable sea monster hauled up on a hook and line from the deep seas off the Virginia Capes. Its appearance had resemblant features to the Dundee, Scotland, "herring hog" and to the monster at Long Branch, N. J., that was stupidly dubbed a devilfish.

It had a body like a flounder and wings that measured 6 feet from tip to tip. The head was hog-like, with a sharp, long bone protruding from the snout, and a whip-like tail that measured 65 inches from the body to its tip. At the end of the tail two horns extended from each side. The body was 11 inches thick. I can only think of the demon paintings of Fuseli or the gargoyles of Gothic Cathedrals to compare for pure hideousness this horror from the seas. To pull up a fishing line to find such an abomination so hooked must have nearly cost that fisherman his peace of mind. I wonder if the pedantic Prof. Gill, who pooh-poohed the sea serpent in the Hudson River, would have also disbelieved this creature if it was "the one that got away"?

(Baltimore American, July 15, 1925) Off Fenwick Island Shoal, in Rhode Island, was reported a dead sea serpent seen by three different captains. It had been killed when struck by a steamship, went the conjecture. At least 80 feet long and 15 feet in circumference was its size. This may have been the same sea serpent seen some fifty years ago, at least, around New England, which had its longevity abruptly shortened. Unfortunately, no one bothered to go and procure the carcass.

gathering of sea serpent tales from another Maryland newspaper, the Baltimore Sun, which reported that on the morning of September 20, 1876, a monster was seen by the officers and passengers of a steamer. This monster had a square head and dragon-like tail. It was white and black striped, and a body 50 feet broad when it raised itself. The head was 12 feet broad and was erected 6 feet out of the water. The scaled body would undulate a part of a time, in serpentine fashion. The dragon of Chinese myth might well have a foundation in fact. (August 2, 1877) The place was the Mediterranean Sea. The ship was off the coast of Sicily when a crewman noted a long row of fins appearing above the surface of the water, of irregular heights and extending about 30 feet in line. In a few seconds they disappeared, giving place to the fore part of the monster. Its bullet-shaped head it occasionally threw out of the water. It was 15 feet across the back, and its flappers had a semi-revolving motion that paddled it along. 50 feet of it--about one third its total length--showed above water.

(September 25, 1879) The ship was 100 miles from Brest, off the coast of France, when one of its bridge officers saw something black slowly lift itself 20 feet above the sea. To his profound amazement it was five feet in diameter and of indefinite length. It could be no delusion, for it was no more than 300 yards away, and its snaky contortions caused a commotion in the water as if a school of whales were fighting.

The man felt no fear until the immense mass began moving toward the ship. Just at this moment it lifted its vulture-like head aloft and with fascinating grace dived into the waves. Before the thing disappeared, he noted its great melancholy eyes, its deep black color, and its eel-like shape.

(Odd Fellow, March 2, 1882) At Long Branch, N. J., appeared a sea serpent 40 feet long and of 15 feet thickness. The head was flat and 6 feet wide, with an immense crown on the top. It had two tusks, and its eyes were at least one foot in diameter!

A number of people had assembled on the bluff to gaze at it. The crew of the life-saving station there saw it pass. It lingered in the vicinity of the pier and sported about, raising its head 15 feet from the water, disclosing a long white belly, and then letting it fall with terrific power, causing the spray to fly many feet in the air. The body was a deep green color and covered with a coat of armor of innumerable scales. Propulsion was by its tail; and when it left it went at express train speed, leaving a foaming wake, traveling altogether on the surface.

This account just given should be collated with the one given earlier on page 3, when a sea serpent was spotted nearly two years later--December 1883--by the men of the same life-saving station while out fishing in the ocean. The point to be noted is that the dogmatic Prof. Baird could not explain away this 1882 sighting as a devilfish, for the sea serpent was seen almost entirely above water. Significant also was the reappearance of the monster in the same locale, almost as if the upper half of the eastern United States coast were its habitat.

5 Coming up to the present, there was an account in the Baltimore Sun in November, 1954, of a monstrous scorpion-like creature--whose outline was traced on a sonar chart!--by a fishing boat in an Alaskan lake; this creature had figured in many hitherto supposedly superstitious tales of the Indians there. The sonar tracing constitutes

--when the specimen itself is not captured--that marine creatures, generally called "sea monsters," really exist.

Walt Disney advanced his theory that sea serpents were but a tentacle of a giant squid raised above water. He came to this conclusion when researching technical data for his movie 20000 Leagues Under the Sea. However, most of my data given herein is entirely free of a giant squid's tentacle being so mistaken for a sea serpent. The Alaskan data just given contradicts Disney's all-inclusive dictum.

Here is another. (Baltimore Morning Sun, December 4, 1954) The Loch Ness monster in Scotland, first seen in the early 1930s, has been the subject of a controversy, whether it was a sea serpent or just some one's over-active imagination. But in 1954 a fishing boat, sailing there equipped with a radar device, picked up its outline.

The image was a round head, a tapering tail, and four legs on either side of the body. The monster was 50 feet long, 20 feet wide, and lay 90 fathoms below the surface of the lake.

I believe this lake is reputed to have some underground connection with the sea, which might explain how it got there.

There was the appearance of a sea serpent in the Atlantic coastal waters not long afterwards. (Baltimore News-Post, January 8, 1955) Two people saw it off the coast of Fenwick Island, Delaware. One of the witnesses said the closest thing he could find in a book resembling it was an ichthyosaurus, which has been extinct for thousands of years.

He said it had a huge serpent-like head, a neck 30 feet long, and tremendous arched shoulders or wings. The other witness described it similarly. The giant squid theory got a working over from those who did not see it--which one might have expected. A tracing on a sonar chart--if it were lucky to have--would add one more irrefutable datum to the undoubted existence of sea serpents.

ETHERLINE.

Fortnightly, a journal of Fandom's adventures below Capricorn. Much more economical than long distance phone calls to find out what's going on. Get on the ball and get this Cornucopia of information and opinions, direct from the bush. Contact me at 15 Arbutus; in U.K. that's Ken Slater. Ge' wi', ma'!

THE SAUCERIAN.

Quarterly, the real dope. STUDD with photos--the authenticity of which is left up to the reader to determine. Intelligent editorial attitude. Gray Barker, Box 2228, Clarksburg, W. Va., gives with.

One apple picker turned to another saying, "That your place?" "Nossuh, tha's a house of a different culler."



CHICKEN

It has been no more than a month since I finished CHICKENSCRATCHES for UMBRA 5; yet only five fanzines have appeared in the mails. I hope a few more turn up before the end of this month, when I begin to ditto up the mess I have created. But let us begin:

ECLIPSE Ray Thompson, 410 S. 4th, Norfolk, Neb., bimonthly, 10¢, 50¢/6, mimeoed, #2-1, 26 pages.

Mr. Thompson is evidently a believer in the legend that great things come from lowly starts. Therefore, since he was unsuccessful with EEK in 1953, he has decided to renease it on an even poorer level of quality than that on which it originated. To help him, Dave Mason purposely (he certainly knows when he's engendering crud) let him abuse an assinine "dialectical." And look what he does to Swift: "...lying in a bed twenty y~~h~~atswide." Well, at least he inked that page.

VAGABOND John Murdock, % Henry Moore Studio, 214 E. 11th St. (N000!), Kansas City 6, Mo., quarterly, invitation, mimeoed, #1, 50 pp. Here is the answer to Boggs's exclamations against unjustified magrins with mimeo reproduction. Beautiful, beautiful... I can just picture Geis drooling over this. I hope he doesn't gafiate permanently until he has time to review VAGABOND. Very good selection of material, including a partial biblio of H. P. Lovecraft by George Wetzal, to be cont'd next. Somehow, I feel that the editors might have broken up the story and kept Wetzal intact, but this is the only fault I can find. Fanzines for review to Keith Brandon, 4367 Beatty Dr., Riverside, Calif. Another one of these mags whose editor is incapable of reviewing his own trades in his own zine?

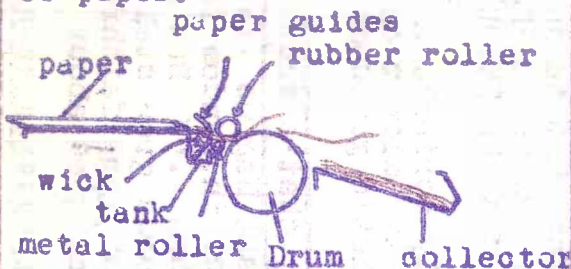
HYPHEN Walt Willis, 170 Upper Newtownards Rd., Belfast, Northern Ireland irregularly, 25¢/2, #13, 42 pages.

All three of these magazines arrived yesterday morning (April 18) along with information on how to grow roses, the fifth in a series of notices that this is my last chance to get a copy of H. G. Wells's Crux Ansata (six months ago I noticed a copy of the thing lying on the kitchen table), the letter from Stark, and GUANO, from Phlyons. That was the day I was going to start on my term paper (due, incidentally, on the 28th).

KAYMAR TRADER Gary Labowitz, 7234 Baltimore, Kansas City 14, Mo., 10¢, mimeoed, regular?

M. Labowitz: PLEASE look to the quality of your reproduction. It may not be Q U I T E so important with a fanzine, but when you are printing a trade journal, there must be NO faint spots. Otherwise, business will falter considerably. I see you have out out the adtrading carried on by Carlson. Very well, then, I shall discontinue advertising KT in UMBRA. I am glad for this opportunity, because I don't seriously think it's worth the extra time and trouble of drawing a couple straight lines to frame an advertisement. The ultimatum is rather clear: Improve or DIE! I know, I should talk, but that's the way it stands. And now, on to greater heights, 9 inches greater heights.

Red lines represent sheets of paper.



A few words, in varying degrees of apology, are in order for this issue and its reproduction. Below we find, if we be lucky, a simple diagram of how the Tower Spirit Duplicator works.

The fluid is poured into the tank (you pull up the paper guides and there it is). It absorbs itself gradually up the "wick," which is a piece of cloth wrapped around a small slab of metal nine inches long and about two inches wide. When we are ready to operate, we clamp the

various rollers together; the rubber roller presses upon the other two.

The paper is caught by the rubber roller and the metal roller; and since the wick rests on the latter, it is coated with wet fluid, which coats the paper. For this reason, the paper had damn well better not be absorbent (as is most of the stuff used here, although this page is being run off on sheets left over from Dm 5).

Next the freshly coated paper is squeezed between the rubber drum and the drum on which is wrapped the master. The carbon on the master reacts (?) with the spirit, and wherever that paper is wet it gets printed.

This process lets the paper off in midair. Like as not it falls back on the drum before going into the collector. Hence the scratch marks on the bottom of the page; the sheet is not yet dry.

SCRATCHES

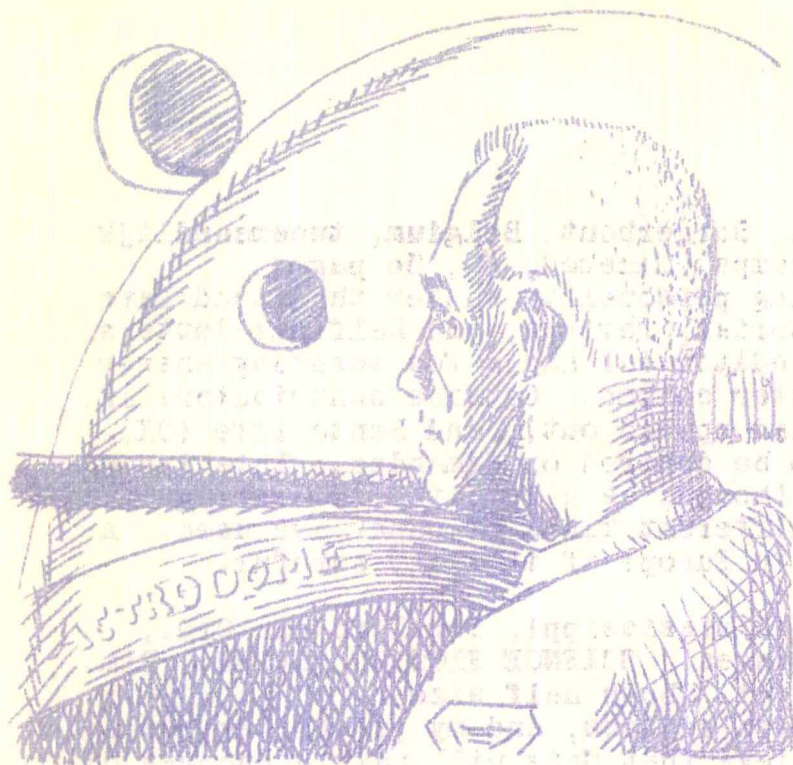
ALPHA Jan Jansen, 229 Berchemlei, Bongerhout, Belgium, tweemanded11jk, 100, 600 for 6, in mint stamps, mimeced, #9, 34 pages.

Jansen shows himself as the leading personality rather than coed Dave Vendelmans (jj conducts rear editorial, reviews, and half the letters). Vendelmans, in fact, only has an editorial and a few scratchy answers to letters. In his half of the letter column. Outside contributors are Grennell (meaty), Lindsay (weak and spread out), and Bentoliffe (OK). The mimeography leaves nothing to be desired or demanded. This issue has a rather ragtag appearance, though, as a result of the irregular dimensions of the pages: three different kinds of paper are used. A will soon be the leading fanzine in Europe if it isn't careful.

PSYCHOTIC Richard F. Gels, 2631 N. Mississippi, Portland 12, Ore., photo-offset, #19, 32 pages. SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW: Bmo., 100, equally photo-offset. Both half size.

Gels is leaving the ranks of fanish editors, and my pre-mortem was a bit appropriate after all. I believe that Gels will make a success of his SFR in fandom after all, too. Anyway, this next-to-the-last issue of PSYCHOTIC contains Graham's three part con report, Bloch, McCain, Silverberg, all quite well worth the expense of the medium. Letters as usual. If anything, Gels is actually taking advantage of photo offset.

And by Ghod, that's all!



Last Breath

IT'S NO FUN SHOUTING UP A BLIND alley. It's no fun to try to better yourself when nobody will give you standards to aim for. It makes you frantic. It puts you up against a wall of silence and the stone in the wall is rough and it cuts your fingers to bleeding when you push against it.

Yeah--the air is chilly, cool, the stars are but partly overcast as they mock down at you, hiding their silly faces in weak little wisps of clouds, your clothes aren't just right on your body, your mind is screaming with the rack of tear-

ing pain...no, you don't know the pain of futility.

It's no fun when you turn down the curls of each and every sogging paper that comes off your ditto, when you see a master ruined because the bent up sheet didn't feed in right, when you ditto off a hundred and twenty lousy, beautiful, sharp copies, and then turn them over and look at the showthrough. It's no fun when your back shrieks with pain--sciatic--from standing up bent over so you can bring the ditto into focus, and see the typos you didn't correct and watch the red lettering fade after the sixtieth copy.

It's no fun when you go through nerve-wracking work, when you feel your mind can think only in circles, when you can only talk in cliches--and all for nothing. One pitiful letter straggles in...then another...maybe a third...but not really saying anything, because you know they're just philanthropic with advice. It's no fun to have to collar your friends and beg them to write something you can fill up your letter column with. And you're still in the dark. You don't know what to do with your magazine. Most everybody who writes completely ignores UMBRA; not an embarrassed silence--that can be picked out; that's a REACTION--just nothing.

That's why I'm turning to you now. You can certainly scribble a couple words on a postcard... "Drop dead" or "Didn't read it, didn't care" or "Boring"...let's cut out this communication barrier, let's get something definite. Let's know where we stand.

"You're an aloof and noncommunicative campaign CATALYST, that's what!!"

Sometimes I wonder how a fan feels about fandom. Take Magnus, for instance. Ah! how often has he repeated to me, "I'm just in fandom for fun. If it ever gets dull, I'm going to leave quicker than...". But as he reavows his insecure presence with us so often, the words grow stale, and they begin to sound affected. I rather think he's the very faithful type, and is ashamed to admit it. After all, not everyone goes about advertising his in-fandom-for-fun tenets that strongly.

DEATH RATTLE this issue is conducted by

Larry Stark (next page)

man dig those

quasi quotes

SLOWLY, CLUMSILY WE CLIMBED THE LADDER AND CRAWLED THROUGH THE PORT. The sunlight struck bright sparks from the grotesque helmets, the polished fittings. So much less gravity, yet under the weight of our protection we found it difficult to move.

"Clear the port."

The captain's voice rasped, foreign-sounding, in my headphones. We stood, like misshapen divers, up from the depths of the sea, no one speaking, all avoiding one another's gaze.

We should have blown taps, I was thinking. A soldier dies, and his comrades bury him and mark the place, but that is not all that must be done. If we were at home, if this were Earth, we could have done it right. A muted, single bugle, calling his soul to rest. A volley from the guns of friends to tell him we respected his bravery, and would take up his fight. It should have been more than this. There is more to death than this.

Air began hissing into the cramped metal cabinet, audible now, because enough air had entered to make sound possible. In a few minutes we would free ourselves of our grotesque cocoons and be men again.

He died a soldier, I felt like saying. Someone had to say something; a man does not die and go to rest in silence. He died a soldier, fighting all the thousand unnamed, unknown enemies we found when we arrived, fighting space in the name of all mankind. A loose rock, a clumsy uniform unfit for walking, and that long, slow, sliding, screaming plunge to the black bottom of the crater. I think I shall hear that tinny scream in my headphones every night of my life.

The panel clicked a cheering green flash at us and went dead. We began to undo all the complicated fittings imprisoning us in our snug protection.

We made the cross from magnesium alloy, with a slicing torch, a cross to stand forever over a spaceman's grave. I couldn't help remembering as I fumbled with my suit. We had to bury him in his protection gear. When the helmet shattered, blood pressure, gas pressure...it was as if he...just exploded. We dug it deep and covered it well, and set the alloy cross in place; an unnatural sentinel on the floor of the waterless sea. But...no one found his tongue enough to speak. And no one could blow taps. There isn't room for a bugle in the helmet of a space suit.

As the captain began to screw the inner port free, I saw the lieutenant staring out the port; I moved over behind him...we all did...to see the same magnesium alloy cross standing on the same unmoving sea, as it will stand on into unnumbered years to come. Its sun-glint looked...so lonely. The lieutenant turned toward me, and someone had to say something.

"Someone...We should have blown taps..or something."

"Taps?" he said, confused. "What do you mean? Blow taps on what?"

"I...I just thought..he deserved a better funeral, that's all." I knew how foolish it all sounded, in the cramped metal cabinet...a quarter of a million miles from Earth, worrying because we hadn't brought a bugle.

"We couldn't; and we haven't the time," the captain said. "Seventy-two hours and we've got to go back. Maybe later...maybe next time we can do it proper. ...Let's get inside."

STATEMENT REQUIRED BY CUSTOM.

UMBRA is published irregularly by John Hitchcock, 15 Arbutus Ave., Baltimore 28, Md. Price ten cents, three for a quarter. 25-35 pages, depending on material.

I give myself a 50-50 chance to put out another issue of this. The present issue was so miserable I may well fold. I just don't have the money go to out and get gypped again and again for worthless supplies. 24 pound paper, which allegedly doesn't show through, is \$3.75 a ream. That's \$15.00 for paper alone. Heavier paper means 4¢ stamps. That's \$19.00. Fluid per issue is another dollar. Master units make it \$23.50. I'd have to replenish my stock of lettering guides: \$24.50. Carbons: \$29.50.

Just between you and me, I don't think I can afford it, because I usually get all of half a dozen replies, from 120 copies sent out. Fandom is no longer a labor of love. Nothing to love any more.

But I'll probably go through the whole hell again, anyway.

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