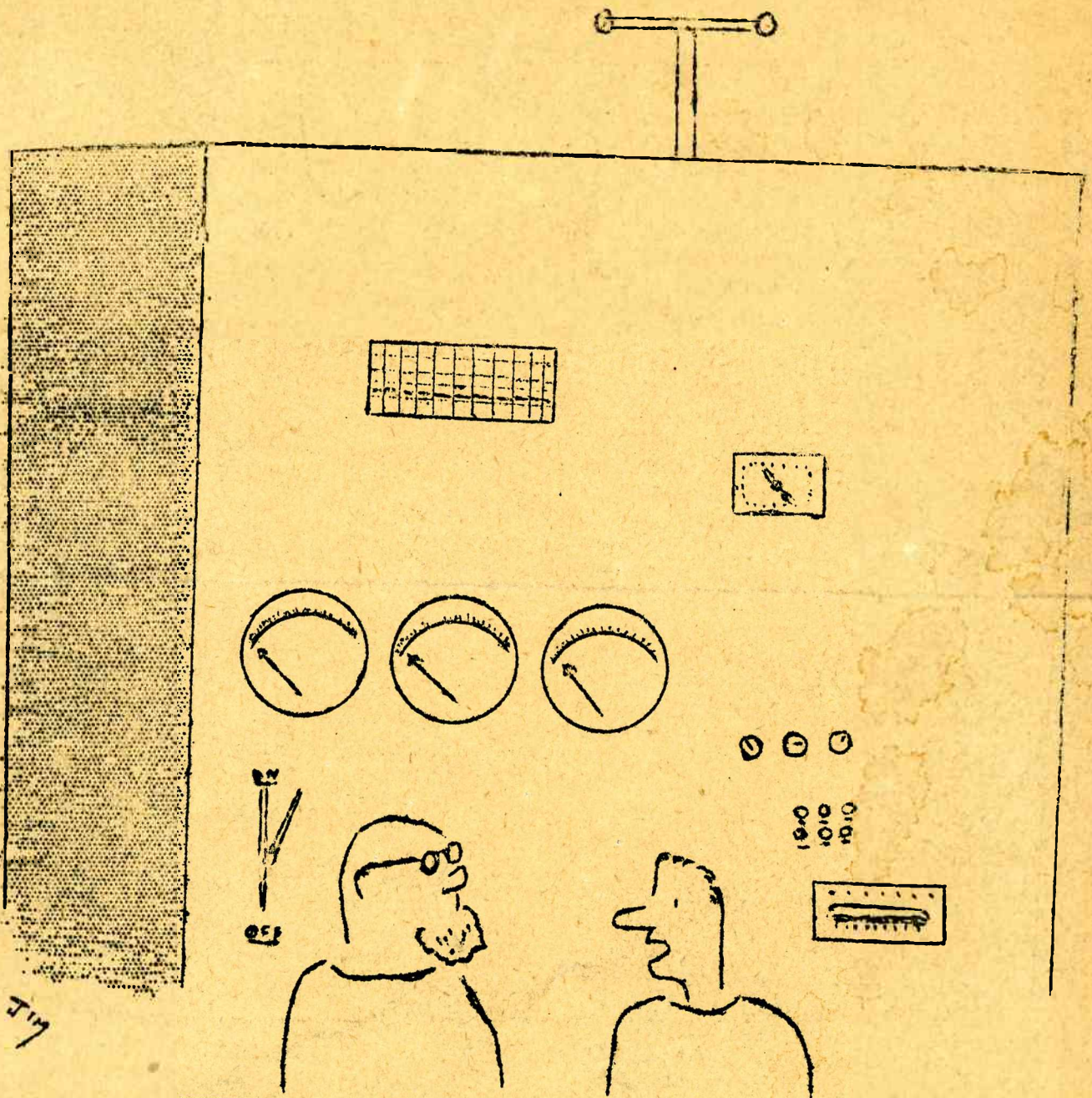


VOID

vol. 1
no. 4



" MAYBE IT ISN'T PLUGGED IN. "

VOID

- C O N T E N T S -

VOL. 1, NO. 4

1955, A.D.

NOVEMBER

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Art Editor — Jim Benford

Lettering by Jim and art work by Henry Pichecko and Jim Benford (Yes, Ann, Henry is the one we were talking about!)

VOID is published irregularly six times a year by Greg and Jim Benford in Germany. Address for countries outside the U.S. is 5 Wartweg, Giessen, Germany. Address for persons in America is % Lt. Col. J.A. Benford, Hq. 594th F.A. Bn., APO 169, New York, N.Y. We will move in the next month, but that will only change the Wartweg address. Send comments, zines, whathaveyou to the wartweg address and it'll get to me. Subscription rates for Americans is 10¢ per issue, 3/25¢. Sub rates for Germans is 40 pf. a copy, 1 DM for three. If you aren't mentioned, that is, you don't have that kind of coin, write and we'll figure something out.

Trades with almost any other zines are welcome.

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GABs
GAB on the contents page

GABs This is the last thing I have to type this issue and as soon as it's finished we'll run upstairs to mimeo it and the other two pages we have left. Ya' know, after a while this gets to be fun.

Got a letter from an English fan named Jim Linwood a few weeks back and seems I ought to quote some of it. Herewith:

"I came to know of you from fan Derek Pickles of Bradford after telling him of your promag UTOPIA, a copy of which I obtained on a recent trip to Germany.

UTOPIA very much resembles the early days of AUTHENTIC....what I can't understand is why all the authors are British and their stories reprints, poor ones, too." Anyone care to answer this?

Oh, yeah, cover title by walt spiegl

OUT OF THE

VOID

COMES THE EDITOR

And another issue of VOID rolls around. The time since the last issue has slipped by so quickly it isn't funny. Gad, I never figured fanning would take so much time!

A few of you readers noticed the slant toward Continental fandom last issue, which was on purpose. The first and second issues used all sorts of material and had no definite purpose. With the third ish I tried to publicize the growth of Gerfandom. Several people (well, one) have asked why I didn't say much about the other fandoms, that is, the fandoms that are trying to get started. For one thing, I haven't heard much news from these other countries, while I have from Germany. So naturally I pick the one that gives me something to write about.

Another thing is the fact that I'm living in Germany and expect to be here for about three more years. Gerfandom has a much closer relationship to me, and I have friends in it, too. Belgium has ALPHA if it wants to say something. As yet VOID is the only English-language fanzine in Germany, and I expect it will stay that way for a while. Right now the competition is in the German zines. Gerfandom looks like it's going to grow fast now, and I think the other fandoms ought to know about it. And know about it in a fannish way, too.

Having a bi-monthly schedule in a rapidly-growing fandom has it's faults, but a monthly would kill me quicker than anything. Every week or so something new happens which deserves mention, but there is hardly anyone who can mention it. With the new German fanzines, ANDRO and X, Germans will have a chance to voice their opinions and talk over how things should be run. And they'll also learn how a fanzine is put out and exactly how one is made.

Ann Stoul was over just yesterday, and I think you'll find an account of it in this issue. We have made plans for a con sometime early next year which should get the fans to know each other and organize things quickly. Also there will soon be sounds of activity coming from the direction of Wetzlar, and the activity will probably be the making of a new fanmag. Plans aren't definite yet, but it will be in the German language and concern mostly science fiction. In short, another sercozine that'll be the same as X and ANDRO. Won't anybody but me be a little fannish?

I'm in school now, and haven't had as much time to answer letters. Sorry, but my mother insists that school work always has to come first, and I'm working hard to pass the mystic subject of algebra. And a language known as German. And it ain't easy, believe me!

"Get away from me, you smell like a neofan." -- overheard

As you can see, I'm still tampering with interlineations. Some people have been getting disgusted with them; I've been putting them in letters. Why does everyone hate only my interlineations? Well, this is the end, so I'll leave quietly. Bye.

---- GAB

SOME ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIGGING

-joe gibson

Anyone in American fandom knows Forrie Ackerman, Bob Tucker, Bob Bloch, Sam Moskowitz, Bob Madle and David Kyle. But few Amerifans today would probably recognize Ollie Saari, Art Saha or Jack Chapman Miske. All these scoundrels are Old Fans; they might be more aptly termed Prehistoric Fans---when they became fans, Fandom Began!

I drop these hefty names simply because it was just such company I found myself in during the Clevention. There were several hundred fans about, and much mixing of the clans---but the one fannish memory I have of that 13th World S-F Con is Moskowitz, Ackerman, Madle and Saha all standing in a row behind my wife's chair in the bar. Sam was even having a drink!

Whether it was me gravitating to these Old Fans or them gravitating to me, I don't know. Perhaps my wife had something to do with it. Anyway, it was almost an instinctive recognition by the Old Guard who knew of an historic event in fandom, one which has happened before but happens all too rarely--a fan marrying a fanne, and attending a Con on their honeymoon (as only True Fans would do). Or at least it seemed that way. I don't know. My wife is rather attractive, too. But I recall someone mentioning that it was an historic event; I think Sam himself said it! We'd even had our engagement announced in Fantasy Times---they've all been my friends for so long, too-----

But Robbie is attractive. H'mmmmm.

However, it's not unusual for me to be amongst these Old Reprobates, and that's the point I wish to make clear before delving into the ruins of Ancient Fandom. While I'm not quite as Old as they say, I've at least a reminiscing acquaintance with that era when fandom was young.....

The only trouble is that I can't mention Mike Rosenblum, Sam Youd, Eric Bentcliffe and a few others in the same gathering---which is a sore point with these so-called "World" Conventions, anyway. But there was a time I got bounced over to England, but with only enough time to get acquainted at the Golden Lion in Congleton and sleep in a beautiful, soft, downy bed at the Rosenblums' in Leeds one weekend that a buzz-bomb blundered into the area. I understand they knocked at my door after the sirens let go, but got no answer so assumed I'd already dashed out. So the womenfolk bundled off to the bunkers whilst Mike and his father had tea in the kitchen downstairs. When they inquired politely, at breakfast next morning, if I'd had any trouble finding the air raid shelter, I hadn't the least idea what they were talking about. They were wondering how I'd gotten back into the house without anyone seeing me! But that beautiful bed---it even had one of those thick, fluffy quilts so soft it seems to float over you.

Ah yes, these typical fannish gatherings---so let me inform Jan Jansen, Julian Parr, Walt Spiegl, Walt Ernsting and anyone else involved that everything I read in the last issue of Void sounded hauntingly

familiar. The way today's razzle-dazzle, sumptuous American fandom began was with a few serious, constructive individuals who simply read and were interested in science-fiction. Things fancish didn't get frivolous until much later; in fact, there would seem to be a cycle to fans' behavior since today's frivolous fan activities are directly the opposite of the deathly serious attitudes you found in fanzines prior to WW2---tho their seriousness, then, was often as silly as much of their frivolity is today.

But more specifically, I (or any of the Old Guard) can inform Ernsting that he won't have any great number of active fans on the Continent until there's a science-fiction magazine appearing monthly with a reasonably active letter-column. Experience has proved that it's the only way you can attract s-f readers who will embrace science-fiction as a really active hobby and thus become active fans. There is perhaps one such person in every 100 casual readers of the genre. Subjecting all the readers to the bait of a letter-column in a prozine is the only way you can hook these few. The same technique applies to the problem of getting members for a fan club; you've got to get an announcement into a prozine letter-column. Flyleafs or posters planted in libraries or bookstores have very little success, for some reason--probably because they have a very limited distribution. A fanzine also has limited distribution. It isn't enough. And merely having a prozine letter-column, in itself, isn't enough---it's got to be a good letter column, full of serious discussion and interesting controversy. Once that gets going, you'll have active fans whether you want them or not! You simply have to include the full address of each person whose letter appears in the column. Many people have a shyness about getting their names and addresses in print; but they're interested in some controversy. Or oftentimes, they reason probably won't be good enough to get printed in the magazine. So they'll pick out a name and address from the column and write that person. Correspondence begins, flourishes, grows voluminous (I can remember when, as a young fan, I corresponded with as many as 50 fans at one time) and inevitably somebody realizes it would be easier to mimeograph 50 copies of a fanzine than to write 50 letters with a good deal of repetition. So you get fanzines.

And people who have corresponded a lot enjoy meeting each other, and those in the same locale begin meeting regularly, so you have fan clubs.

Those who live some distance away take an occasional trip to a get-together, so you have conventions. And through it all, you have the not-inconsiderable enjoyment of being a pioneer.

Of course, the projected Continental fandom poses some distinct problems of its own. The language barrier, the scarcity of current science-fiction, the language barrier, the relatively high price (to anyone experiencing Europe's wage-scale) of American subscriptions, and the language barrier. I would be interested in exchanging American prozine subs for subs to European magazines--but there, of course, I would prefer English-language 'zines. I've heard of British fans trading French girlie photo-magazines for American s-f prozines, but I wouldn't be interested in subscribing to a girlie magazine. However, news photo-mags would probably prove interesting no matter what language the captions appear in. The thing is, I haven't any idea what European mags are available, even of the English-language variety, with subscription prices a Continental fan could afford as easily as I can afford American s-f 'zine subs. And in any event, I would want only a few such subs, sufficient to exchange with



ACTIFAN

only one Continental fan. For any such exchange to be effective on a large scale, you'd need someone handling it as a full-time service for all concerned. And of course, I don't even know if it's workable. I'm probably showing up my abysmal ignorance again.

Another item I would heartily welcome is some "AME" editions of any Continental s-f prozines and fanzines. Seems to me Jan Jansen's experiments in ALPHA with bilingual, even multilingual, issues could be done a lot more constructively---but it would cause someone a hellova lot more work. When, f'rinstance, are you going to publish a Deutsch edition of VOID? with letters from German fans translated in the English edition? I know: twice as many stencils and six times as much work. Four such issues and your subscribers had better start learning to telepath! But I'd like to see UTOPIA get as good on the American market as the Volkswagen. I'm suprised that more Amerifans aren't reading British prozines, some of which are publishing better science-fiction than the American variety. They're readily available through a good many book/magazine dealers, but hardly anyone contacts a dealer except the collectors, and few active Amerifans are collectors today. The

flood of mags on American newsstands has markedly diminished the old fan-habit of subscribing to the promags. Perhaps a well-advertised exchange service could do something to offset this, too.

Of course, I'm very good at thinking up fan projects for someone else to do. Especially unworkable projects. But mainly, I would prefer hearing a good deal more about Continental fandom in something resembling English, which is about as well as I can understand it. Having Forrie Ackerman know all about it doesn't tell me anything; and brief tidbits of news in Fantasy-Times doesn't get me acquainted with most of the active fans on the Continent, nor them with me. They might object to this, quite understandably, so I suppose I shall just have to bring my wife along to London in '57.

Editor's Note: Just want to put in a bit here concerning Joe's article. His suggestion of a Gorman promag, monthly, with an interesting letter column, I'm afraid is impossible at the moment.

UTOPIA is quarterly right now and unless there is a large increase in circulation it will probably remain that way. There just aren't enough stf readers in Germany now to make a monthly worth the expense. True, it would greatly improve the growth of Gorfandom, but I'm afraid at the moment there isn't enough support for a monthly, but nevertheless, fandom is growing over here, and it's here to stay.

+++++

The Real Truth.....

Long have I wondered over the mysterious letter that appeared in the letter column of FANannIA. That missive which was signed with the strange words, "Your very best F.". But now I know! The author of this strange, weird document is.....

And don't tell a soul, either, cause otherwise Ann would come over here and....ugh.....the very thought sends waves of fright up and down my spine. Now, don't tell anybody!!

Since the last issue came out we have been receiving more fanzines than ever before, and consequently this here column has grown a lot. I always make it a point to review fanzines cause it gives me a large amount of pleasure, and after all, that's what I'm in this fan-editing deal for. So I guess I'd better leave some reviews for the mags, or maybe write a separate column 'r sumptin'.

VOID Reviews

where you get
something for
nothing at all

GRUE, Dean Grennell, editor. 402 Maple Ave., Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. Dean charges $\frac{1}{2}$ cent a word, thish is about 15¢. Send him 25¢ and he'll send you the next 50 or so pages. Irregular, Gestetnered with the finest

precision. Grue is about the best fanzine there is around the states these days, and when I say best I mean best. I started VOID around the time the last issue of Grue came out. I kept sending Dean copies of Void, and I didn't assume he was going to put out anything for a while. And one day a few weeks back I received a bunch of fanzines from the states; on top was Grue. Now the only thing I'm sorry about is the fact that I wasn't around to get any issues before. With that opening you can tell just what my opinion of Grue is, and I can assure you that I really mean it! The first thing that struck me when I opened the mag was the Gestetner work. It's the best I've ever seen, and if I remember other reviews correctly, it's the best done anywhere. Gads, if I only had one of them there things.....

Besides the neatness, Grue is still one of the top mags in material. Unlike some of the top zines, Grue does not abound with BNF's. Oh yes, there are several, but the main part of the mag is filled with fans who don't show up so often everywhere. And the material is just as good as the BNF-writers could turn out. In order to cut this review short I'll just say that at all costs get Grue!

OBLIQUE, Cliff Gould, ed. 1559 Cable St., San Diego 7, Calif. 15¢ per. Bi-monthly (?), mimeoed. The first thing that struck me about OBLIQUE when I lifted it out of it's envelope was the cover. It's a fotoffset job of "Oblique's Fan of Distinction", and pictures a drunk bum leaning against a piano. This really killed me when I read the title inside. Wish I'd thought of it. When I read this zine I found an odd thought lurking in the back of my mind, a thought that was somewhat disturbing. Is Oblique edited by someone as gifted as Rich Geis? This may be not true, but I'll bet it isn't far wrong. Never before have I heard or seen a noofan enter the field (if it can be called that) and turn out such a good zine so quickly. Of course, I may be way off in my conclusions, but I still think Cliff will go a long way. The two things that I enjoyed most in this issue were "Conventions Are Fun!", a takeoff on Gregg Calkin's article about Pete Vorzimer, and the Letter column, Last Class. In the letter column I find some support for my opinions on Oblique. Vern McCain says that the zine has "a certain feel to it", and mentions that Walt Willis said something to that affect last issue. Old McCain even sent Cliff some \$\$\$ to back up his statement. No matter, I'm sure you'll like Oblique. It will probably go far in the months to come.

VIEING, Wayne Strickland, ye ed. Apt. C, Bldg. 113, U.S. Naval Base, New Orleans 14, La. 10¢ each, 3/25¢. Irregular (?), mimeoed. This is another new fanzine, though not as old as Oblique. And not as good. True, the mimeo work is almost the same, though a little under-linked in places, but the material isn't so good. The most interesting items in the issue were "Looking Rearward at Fandom" by Bob Tucker (reprinted) and the editorial, by Wayne. However, the thing by Ian T.

Youngfan is a little above adverage. Also present are the first Charles Wells cartoons I've seen in a half year. I would say that this is another fanzine that might hit the top except for one thing. Vieing runs too many reprints. There aren't a great number of reprints in this zine, but the things which are printed, except Tucker's piece, shouldn't have been run a second time. Some of you will like reading these things, but I never have liked reprints of anything except a few immortal bits. You can base your opinion on that fact. But I may be wrong about Vieing, as several people were wrong about Oblique. Maybe this one will get better. Lets wait and see.

ANDROmeda, Walt Ernsting, ed. Ruppichterorth/Siegkrs., Velken, Germany. 50 pf., about 12 cents, each. Quarterly, mimeoed. Last issue there were a few vague mentions about a German-language fanzine supposed to come out in October. Well, it did come out, and in October, to boot. For a first effort it isn't bad at all, except for the few things that always turn up in first issues. For one thing, the zine doesn't have a good layout. The articles, notes, what-have-you are thrown about any way which seems to strike the fancy. This can be excused, though, as I know that Walt hadn't seen many fanzines before ANDRO came out. In a way this first issue is like the first ish of Void. Walt has the same probelms, the same shortcomings as I had (have) back long ago (must have been at least eight months) when I entered the field. The material is written almost completely by W.E., and there isn't very much art work. In fact, the art, when it is present, is very badly drawn and even more poorly put on stencil. But one thing which deserves credit is the mimeographing; it's perfect. Now if Walt will get better material and art work, as I expect he will, ANDRO will improve a lot.

SCHNERDLITES, Nigel Lindsay, ed. 311 Babbacombe Rd., Torquay, Devon, England. Nigel, I expect, will take a trade. Every three months, mimeoed, maybe duplicated; I cain't tell the difference. I was actually suprised to find SCHN (Nigel says that's the way he abbreviates it!) come in so soon after Void 3 was mailed out, and after I read it I was suprised at the high brand of humor included inside. Unfortunately, I haven't been associated with English fandom (Irish, too, for that matter!) for very long, and this type is new to me. In some spots I was left in the dark, but what managed to break through the Night of Ignorance was worth it. Oddly enough, the best thing in the issue in my humble opinion was by not Nigel or Helen, but the JazzCon report by Moe Dunstyle and Dick Land. Maybe that's because I'm a sort of Jazz fan, tho. The Film Sequence by Dave Wood was tops, to say the least. Oh, well, enuf raving about SCHN; get a copy and see for yourself.

X or IKS, depends on how you look at it. Klaus Unbohaun, ed. No price listed, maybe you can write him and get a copy. Adorsstrasse 34, Wuppertal-Elberfeld, Germany. Bi-monthly, duplicated, I guess. When I read a while back in some fanzine that a fandom grows by spurts and bursts, I supposed the guy was right. Now I know he was. No one had expected another German-language fanzine to come out for some time after ANDRO. In fact, I would have been willing to bet on it. And now, just three or so weeks after Walt's mag turns up, here's a second one. I'd heard of Klaus before, in a letter from Ann Steul, and learned from various sources that he put out s-f movies. Amateur movies, of course. There had been no mention of someone else trying a fanzine. The short time between the arrival of ANDRO and X leads me to the conclusion that perhaps Klaus was trying to beat Ernsting to the title of the first German-language fanzine. He almost did. At any rate, X (or IKS, as it's spelled on the cover) is slightly

better than ANDRO. The duplication is the same, though X does have a slight margin with it's yellow paper. And I like the small size which a lot of fanmags are using now. The headings are a lot better than ANDRO and they stand out a lot. Artwork is better, and from what I can make of them, the articles seem to be more interesting. Walt will have to work hard to catch up with Klaus, and he'll have to do it quick. If any of you readers would like to get your dirty paws on this zine, write him and maybe he'll send you some left over copies.

PHANTASMAGORIA, Stan Thomas and Derek Pickles, eds. Stan's address is 22, Marshfield Place, Bradford 5. "Subscriptions are not requested, but gifts of money...will be gratefully accepted. Exchanges are welcomed, but please drop us a postcard if you do intend to send your mag. Letters of comment appreciated, sending one ensures your getting the next ish." Irregular, duplicated. This one is sub-titled "The Young Fan's Guide", but only the cover gives any sort of direction. Maybe that's the general idea; a neofan can just glance at the cover and obtain Immortal Knowledge. What an idea! Somebody could start a business out of this. Best thing in the issue was the editorial which manages to say more things in four pages than I can say in eight, and "Willis Exposed" by Derek Pickles. I'm glad someone finally found something wrong with Willis. After all, there has to be something bad about Walt! Doesn't there?

A BAS, Boyd Raeburn, ed. 9 Glenvalley Drive, Toronto 9, Canada. 25¢ an ish. Irregular, mimeoed. I believe someone mentioned A BAS once and said it was on a par with HYPHEN. Well, it's not quite up to the standards set by Walt, but a lot of other zines lag behind it. This guy Raeburn appears to be quite a character, wearing yellow leather jackets, and green suede shoes. Now, I'm no conservative fellow, in fact, the ~~plastered~~ teacher has been giving me lectures on conduct and such every day now. No conservative would ever go along without making some kind of general mess or confusion. Blue suedes aren't so bad, but green??! And yellow leather? Mine's just plain old brown. Maybe I'm not a trufan. Some day I'm going to meet one of these tru-fen and then I'm going to ask him if he ever passed algebra.

Back to A BAS. I enjoyed Derelicti Derogation 4 a lot, and even more so "How The Other Half" by Alex Kirs. From the letter column I can guess that I have Missed Something. Somebody was having a big argument with Vorzimer, but Little rete is out of fandom now, and the thing has been dropped. Shux, I wanted to get in a few words myself. Opps, looks like I slipped up above and said that a conservative would always make trouble. What I meant was the opposite. To save space I'll just say that A BAS is a jolly good mag and you should get it. If only to read about Raeburn's green suedes.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW, Rich Geis, ed. 1525 N.E. Ainsworth, Portland 11, Ore. 15¢ each, 7/\$1. Monthly, Gestetnered. Now, before anybody comes up and says, "Youse is a poor stupid fool fer not knowin' Geis has kilt off SFR and's startin' PSY back" I want to say that I do know. Yes, I do. But I thought it would be rather fitting to review the one attempt Rich made at being Serconfannish. I told ya' it wouldn't work, Rich, I told ya'.

The most noteable thing in the Thing (that's a nice way to put it) is on the contents page where Geis complains about repro I for one would sign away my life for. Just shows you how fanning after a long period can warp your mind. Dialogue was most enjoyable cause it was filled with personality and therefore filled with hidden meaning. I recall Geis saying something about having a long letter column in his mag. He doesn't seem to have too many to publish 9

this time; there's only two pages. And, as everybody probably knows by now, Rich has decided to quit SFR and PSY will be back, 50 pages and quarterly. If you don't get PSY, I would advise you to arrange it real quick.

PLOY, Ron Bennett, ed. 7 Southway, Arthur's Ave., Harrogate, Yorkshire, England. One American promag in trade. Irregular (very), duplicated. Somehow Ron managed to get out the forth issue of PLOY only a few months after the third, and on top of that, he did it just after moving. Not much to say about this one, except that the content is good and the duping is a lot better. The most enjoyable thing was a reprint (which proves I'm not entirely against them) of "Born Into Fandom" by Cliff Gould. I missed the first printing of it in an early issue of Oblique, and I'm glad Ron got it for Ploy. That is the kind of material that should be reprinted. As a whole, Ploy is good and worth getting.

FAFHRD, Ron Ellik and Ed Cox, eds. Ron's address is 277 Pomona Ave., Long Beach 3, Calif. Write a letter of comment and you'll get a copy. Irregular, mimeoed. There really isn't much to this mag that one can talk about. The Westercon report isn't outstanding at all and reads like the author (Charles Stuart) was disgusted with the whole thing and would have passed out if he had the strength. It's things like these that either ruin an issue or cripple it badly. But then they have something that really messes up a fanmag! And that is something like "H.P. Lovecraft" by Don Wilson. Stuff like this is dead in fandom now and I don't think any faned in his right mind would print it. Oh, maybe it's well-written, but the subject is wrong. The few Lovecraft fans would undoubtedly enjoy it, but I don't think anyone else will read it. This mag is worth the letter of comment.

FANDOM DISPATCH, Dave Rike, ed. Box 203, Rodeo, Calif. Free, I guess. Irregular, mimeoed. A little bit sloppy newszine. Pretty fair.

WENDIGO, Georgina Ellis, ed. 1428 - 15th St. East, Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Letter of comment gets you one. Irregular, mimeoed. Wendy is legal-size, filled with interlineations, and darned interesting. It might be called the Canadian Spiral, as it's full of personality and such. The letter column takes most of the mag, and boy does everybody hate Vorzimer..... "Dutch Fandom" by Wim Struyck was interesting to me as I live near said country and write to Wim every so often. And it further supports my agrument about Gerfandom. Some people think I ought to give a lot of space to Dutch, French, and Belgium fandom; they've been around longer than Gerfandom. There aren't many fans in Holland and it looks like there won't be for some time. The same with France and Belgium; Germany has a great potential and I'm not going to pass it by. Besides Wim's article there're various things, all good. Get wendy if you can.

MERLIN, Lee Anne Tremper, ed. 1022 N. Tuxedo St., Indianapolis 1, Ind. 10¢ each, 12/\$1. Monthly, mimeoed. For some reason this zine has stayed the same all the time. All the time it presents adverage material, never getting better and occasionally getting worso. Every issue has a lead article/story/Thing by Dave Jenrette. Every issue has columns by J.T. Crackel, Bob Coulson, and Rusty Jenrette. Every issue. They write $\frac{2}{3}$ of the mag every issue. I have no objection to columns, but too many of them tie a fmz down. Merlin is a sad example of editorial failure; Lee has been pubbing for three years and never gotten any better. Merlin is fairly good in some places and bad in others. The wasted space in the zine is awful; Lee could widen the margins and bring the zine down several pages. Take it or leave it.

10 No more space. Send your zines to me and I'll kill them off. Bye.

SF IS WORTH A FIGHT

S.F.

At least, that's what WALTER ERNSTING thinks.

I will never forget that day in April, 1934 (exactly 14 years after my happy first birthday), when I was merry about freedom, the coming holiday, and lazy like every boy in school (except you twins!). It was the last day, and the teacher was allowed to read a book in front of the whole class. What a book, friends! I'll always remember it, even though I've forgotten the title. The hero of this novel invented a spaceship, used it as a submarine, airship, and moonrocket all the same. Adventures and all that wonderful thrill only SF knows.

That thrill did it! Space! Time! Infinity! I was a victim of something I didn't even know yet. A real addict. I only knew to go to the bookshop and buy a book set in future times---to feel that thrill again. Yeah--and so I became a sf-fan at 14 without even knowing what it was.

In 1937 I betted 3000.-DM to the fact that within fifty years man would conquer the moon. It looks like I'll win that money. The unlucky chap has to pay for his disbelieving.

War came and with it early KZ because some fool detected my collection of English and American Mags (imagine--smuggled sf mags!). Then POW in Russia until April of 1950. I returned to Germany, ill and beaten by a cruel fate.

1951! Bookshop! Science-fiction! Life is better.

1952! Collecting sf again. (Why only in the English language?)

1953! Collecting sf. Still no German publication. Why? - and it struck suddenly home! That idea was to translate a novel and sell it! But at the same moment I knew that the final solution had to be another one --- a sf series!

A German science-fiction periodical. Nothing else would do.

1954! UTOPIA-Grossband was published. I had to convince the publishers of a little risk and a wonderful result. work, work, work! No money for good and expensive novels, so we published these so-called 'space operas'. And they weren't the worst of the kind.

There was a man who was interested in the fact that Germany had found it's way into the field. A man who had spent his entire life in and for sf --- America's fan No. 1, Mr. Science Fiction, Forrest J. Ackerman! His German agent, Walter Spiegl, established contact (I will never forget it) and Forry and I became business-partners and friends. I called Forry my honest friend in every situation that passed, and I will call him my best friend in every situation that has to come.

Remember Bonn! You may read about it in Fantasy-Times or Science Fiction Quarterly if you like. It was only Forry who saved UTOPIA and sf in Germany when it was in danger of being banned by the Bundesprüfstelle. Remember the case of Ackerman-Kranold in Los Angeles, if you heard of it.

And then came the idea --- found the German sf club.

"No money!" I told Forry quite hopelessly.

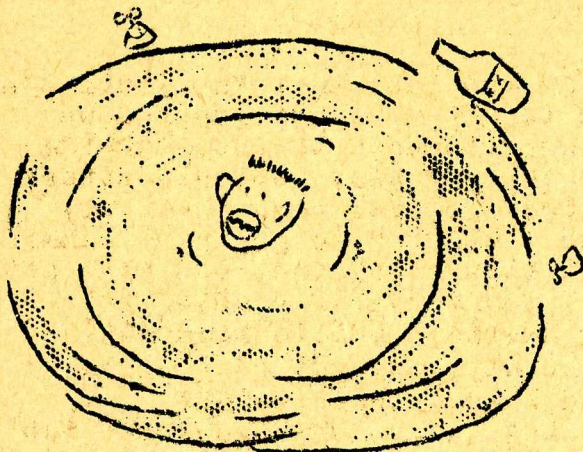
"Take my commission!" Forry wrote in return. "Put all my money in the ALDEN LORRAINE ACKERMAN FUND - to found that club."

I did---and the SCIENCE FICTION CLUB DEUTSCHLAND was born. It was a lot of work, a lot of trouble, and a hard, difficult job, believe me that. But the terrible situation - a lonely fan is in a terrible situation - was over. President of Honor is Forry Ackerman. Some Members of Honor are: Willy Ley, Anthony Boucher, A.E. van Vogt, Hugo Gernsback, Krafft Ehrlicke, James Taurasi, Curt Siodmak, both 11

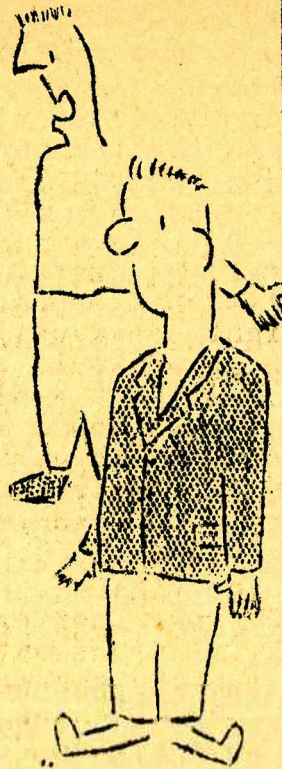
Casewits and Theodore Sturgeon.



The Wotunk S-F Club by Sin B.



"HEY FELLAS, HERE'S A
NEW MEMBER. FELLAS, OH, FELLAS..."



But it would be unfair to forget another man in this fight for German fandom, a man who is a real fan and a true fan: Julian Parr in Cologne/Dusseldorf. His ideas and his help (especially in the 'Battle of Bonn') can never be payed off. It was not without him that the SFCD was able to begin it's wonderful life. Sorry is American. Julian is English, and I am German - there is no difference between human beings called "SF Fans".

Let me finish without telling you about the hard and bitter weeks of work, harshness and disappointment. Be

sure that sf did not find its way alone and without help into Germany. But be sure that we have won now. SF is my hobby, but it is my life, too. I am not living from, but for sf!

It was payed for with sleepless nights, with illness, and with hopeless situations---but it was worth a fight: today sf is no phantom anymore, sf is---for Germany---a fact. A wonderful, beautiful, and marvellous fact!

UTOPIA may have it's failures, I know that for sure. But the real fan will be fair enough to be happy about the pure fact that the first step is done. The first step to organized fandom.

UTOPIA is the first German sf series. It will not be the only one or the last!

The SFCD is the first sf club in Germany, perhaps it will stay the only big one. But in any case it will be the only one with such a President and with such wonderful members.

That's what I'm fighting for!

That's what I'm living for!

--- Walt Ernsting

~~~~~

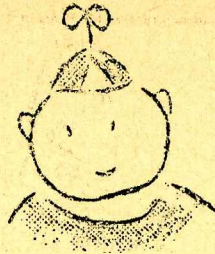
We have just received notice from the Army that we will be moving in the near future. About two weeks after this comes out, in fact. No, we aren't moving to another city, country, or anything like that. As it is now we have a nice three-story house in a quiet section of town. But the Army likes to gum up nice things, and they've managed to do a pretty good job on this one.

Soon we will be in a small apartment in a noisy part of Giessen. Our German address will change, but not the one for people in the States. Write to 5 Wartweg, and I'll tell you the new one when I reply. That's only for British, Belgium, and German fandom, tho.



# FIRST ENCOUNTER

Second  
In  
A  
Series  
Of  
"The  
Life  
And  
Times  
Of



A  
Gerfan".  
The  
First  
Of  
Which  
Was  
"A  
Jan  
Report".

It was a normal Saturday, except for the fact that the local AYA (American Youth Activities) had managed to get up a hayride and we were going on it that night. As usual, we went down to the shopping center right after lunch so we would be able to play pool all afternoon. I lost every game. At about 4 o'clock we came home (home, by the way, is all the way across town) and I started to get some fannish correspondence done. But soon, as almost always happens, the warm afternoon pulled me away from the typer and I found myself reading The Lonely Crowd, a book about the changing American public Rich Geis sent me for some reason. The book, by the way, may get me 9 or so points on the 40 I need for English. And I need those points.

However, I am a 100 proof American Boy, and therefore broke the grip of the afternoon. My mind automatically went to correspondence, and I tried to remember who was the next on the list to get answered.

It was Ann Steul. We had been arguing for some time about several topics, and I naturally love a good fight. Unfortunately, my desk was covered with all sorts of junk, and it didn't look like I would find Ann's letter very quickly. Nevertheless, I started.

And the doorbell rang.

Our study is on the second floor, and I wasn't about to run all the way downstairs to answer the door when Jim was just a few feet from it. So I kept shifting through the papers on my desk.

The front door opened. I heard some faint noise.

Probably somebody wants to see Mom, I thought.

"Oh, Jimmy, it's.....", Mom said. The rest was lost in the schuffle of the paper.

Hmmmmmmmm. Wonder who that could be?, I thought.

There was some scraping on the steps outside. I heard Jim walking toward the door. More schuffling.

Well, I thought, maybe I'd better see what's going on.

I hurried down the stairs and to the door. Jim and Mom were standing there talking to someone outside my range of vision, so I stuck my head out the door.

It was Ann.

"I say," I said.

Ann was propping up her bicycle at the bottom of the steps.

"Hello," she said.

We brought her inside, got seated, and the first thing she asked was:

"Well, I suppose we're still friends?"

Jim is always fast with a come-back, so he said:

"Guess we'll have to be, we're too close to each other to be enemies."

From there I hastily changed the conversation, and ended up taking Ann upstairs to our, well, you might call it an office. Mainly it's just a place to store things and do fannish work in.



She pounced on our collection at once, making notes at top speed on what she didn't have. Between notes we managed to get in a little discussion on stf in general. Finally, after about a half hour, everything had been gone over and we could sit back and talk.

Ann is a nice person to know, and has a personality somewhat like Jan Jansen. Which is saying a lot if you've met Jan. Next year, if there's a con in Wetzlar, some of you will meet her and we can then agree on her personality.

It took all our strength, but Jim and I managed to pull Ann away from the fanzine stack and upstairs, where our duplicator is kept. As we were going up the stairs I made the comment that our duper was kept in the top of the house because it was close to heaven. Of course, that left me wide open and Ann mentioned it should be in the basement. She saw the grand old machine, the grand old mess all over the room, and added several interlineations to my notebook.

"with this machine you can be sure of perfect duplication 24 hours a year." --- Jim

As we talked time sped by, and soon it was time to leave for the hayride. We hurried downstairs and Ann asked for a drink of water. It would have been perfect if she'd have wanted Chola, but things don't always go the right way. Oh, well.....

We stood in the hall discussing plans for furthering Gerfandom for a short while, and then hurried outside to the car. Ann was returning to Wetzlar, which was in the opposite direction from the shopping center, where we had to meet the hayride. There were a few rushed goodbyes, and we left, leaving behind poor Ann who had to return to Wetzlar by bike.

## SECOND ENCOUNTER

It had been exactly one Saturday ago that Ann had arrived and departed in haste. This time plans Had Been Made. She was to arrive in the morning and stay almost all day, so we had a lot of time to talk.

It was almost a quarter of noon when the doorbell rang and I rushed downstairs to greet Ann. We came upstairs to our study at once and looked over various fanzines for a while. Ann had brought along some copies of FEMIZINE for us to read, and we gave her some prozines she didn't have. We sat around for a short while just talking and tossing insults back and forth, lunch was enjoyed by all, being made up of French fries and hamburgers.

Ann appears to be a great fan of games, and after lunch we asked her if she would like to play checkers or maybe chess.

"Why, yes," she said. "I like chess."

Now, Jim's only beaten me five times at chess in three years. I naturally figured I might be able to win a game here and there. We got out the game, set it up, and I opened with a charge down the middle of the board. However, I learned not to try anything like that. Never again.

The point of my attack was smashed, the men behind the point overwhelmed, and I retreated with what was left of the attackers. Ann didn't follow her attack up, however, so I rebuilt my forces and sent out lines to the right and left. There was my big mistake. She blunted one attack and demolished the other, leaving me defenseless. In a last ditch attempt I pulled some men in around my king and tried to maneuver my queen into good fighting position. By some devilish trick she neatly picked off my queen and only lost two points doing it. From then on it was sheer murder.

14 Jim then tried. I started reading a fanzine, as I thought he would naturally, of course, be overwhelmed quickly. After a short



time I looked up and counted points on the board, Jim was winning! As I am a better player than Jim, I naturally decided he needed help, and told him where to move for a while. He did, but Ann didn't do the right thing. So I told him to lead a pawn into a spot where she would fall into a trap-----but again it was no deal. Ann just doesn't play chess correctly. Jim didn't trust my judgment any more, though, so I sat by and watched him get beaten. The killing blow came soon thereafter when Ann got his queen; the game broke up.

We arranged our chairs in a three sided circle (?) and started griping about various fans and fanmags. I made a chance remark about a convention in Giessen, or maybe Wetzlar, and Ann jumped on the idea at once. Sure, she agreed, a con should be held in a small town to avoid large hotel bills.

Since then the details have been arranged and here's how it stands: The convention will almost certainly be held on January 14 and 15 (a Saturday and Sunday) in Wetzlar. There are rooms which will cost you about 4 marks and there will be a dinner Saturday night to get acquainted. Also there will be a dinner Sunday noon. Altogether it will cost you about 9 marks (\$2.25) for the whole thing, room, meals (two of them), and a service charge. Write Ann at once if you plan to attend, because there are only about 15 rooms available. That is, if we don't know how many are coming. But if everyone lets Ann know, we can probably arrange some way for you to get in. If you don't tell us that you're coming, however, you may very well find yourself sleeping in a higher-priced hotel, or, as Ann put it, in the haystack next to the hotel. But if you intend to attend, write Ann.

As for the program itself, it will be mainly a meeting to get everyone to know everyone else. There will probably be two or three speakers, but the con won't follow a set program. Everybody will probably show about a short while after noon, and the afternoon will be devoted to meeting people. So will the dinner that night. The next morning (though we'll probably get up at about 12 o'clock) the speakers will have their say, there will probably be a short discussion of a subject, and we'll talk till it breaks up in the early evening. If there are any large changes in the program, you'll know about it.

The only quote I can remember about the discussion on the con is:

Me: "The only thing that's out of place with this is that we don't have something big to offer the fans."

Ann: "Yes, that's what we need, something big....."

Jim: "Well, there's Ann."

For a long while we discussed fandom, it's faults, the people in it, and Gerfandom. I took out Joe Gibson's article and let her look it over; she liked some points in it. I took out the letters and she looked them over. He must have read half the issue.

"The first person singular sure gets a lot of use on his typer."

I started looking through a pile of fanzines on the bookshelf and at the same time was commenting on ALPHA, Jan's mag. I must not have been thinking about what I was saying, for I made an insane remark about VOID, which I refuse to repeat. I honestly haven't seen a person laugh so much over a chance saying in years. And when Ann Steul laughs, the house shakes. You haven't lived til you've heard (or felt) Ann laugh.

And, yes, I refuse to repeat the remark. And I hope Ann will.

Soon it was time for the old girl to leave, and just as she was preparing to get her things downstairs, she dropped a hint about FANannIA. It seems I said something very funny and laughable in a letter of mine, and she is going to print it. She wouldn't tell me what it was, but if it's as she says, I'm in for it. Why did I ever start writing her, anyway?

She left soon, to return to Wetzlar by train, and with her went our good wishes; she's the second Continental fan we've met.



the

# VERDICT

jim

- benford

Starting out with a few Ace Double-Novels, the kind you flip over and there's another novel on the other side; I find THE GALACTIC BREED and CONQUEST OF THE SPACE SEA by Leigh Brackett and Robert Williams respectively. The BREED is the best of the two. The plot is of the galactic intrigue type and is very interesting; Brackett holds interest very well which makes this an enjoyable book. However, Williams' piece isn't as good, but is still readable soap opera.

Next in the double field is a reprint of FOUNDATION by Isaac Asimov and NO WORLD OF THEIR OWN by Poul Anderson. Anderson's is one of those star-ship-that-comes-back-thousands-of-years-later-ones that has been written and rewritten so many times it's pitiful. I was surprised that Anderson would use such a hack and well-worn plot. This has been written so many times I thought I was reading something I'd seen before.

The third Ace double book has SOLAR LOTTERY by Philip K. Dick, a novel concerned with a society built on the Theory of Games (Minimax), a good enough idea, but Dick couldn't hold my interest enough to make me finish the book. On the back of this is THE BIG JUMP by Leigh Brackett. This one reads like a poor imitation of Spillane and has a sick plot to boot. The characterization isn't what you might call perfect, but it is convincing. All over opinion of the book: mildly interesting but painfully hack.

Four Conklin anthologies next. The first is S-F TERROR TALES, containing such writers as Bradbury, Heinlein, and Sturgeon which Conklin uses to put out a fair selection with a few touches of genius hiding here and there. The backcover ballyhoos them as being truly in the great tradition of the blood-tingling short story, which this selection certainly isn't.

SCIENCE FICTION THINKING MACHINES is edited by Conklin is on the same level as TERROR TALES. The theme in this one is robots and computers, a very good field to anthologize, but not done very well by Conklin. The best items, I think, are by Anderson and Sturgeon.

INVADERS OF EARTH is a reprint of the Vanguard Press original published in '52. This is a smaller version with some cut out. It's one of Conklin's best yet, and contains several very enjoyable items including the script of the Orson Welles invasion broadcast of 1939.

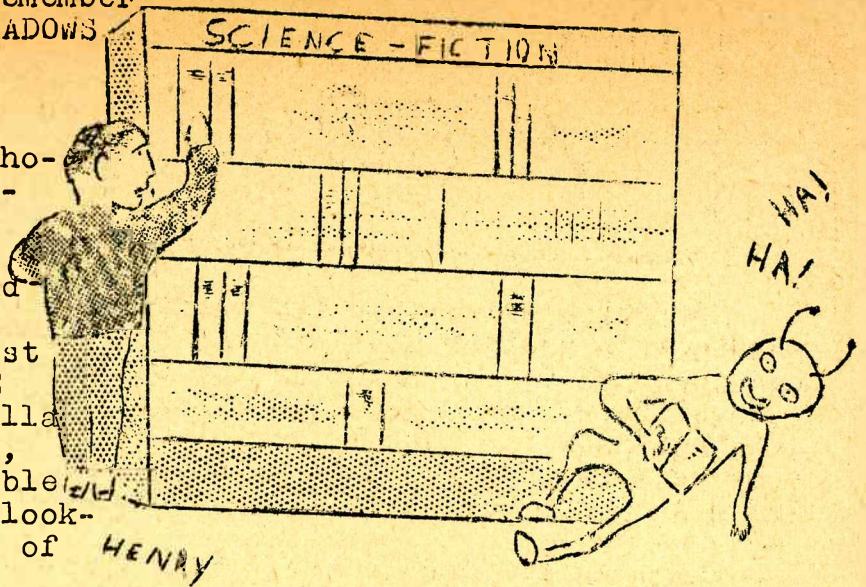
The fourth anthology in OPERATION FUTURE dealing with just plain old sf, on the same level of INVADERS OF EARTH. I would advise you to get all four of these books or at least OPERATION FUTURE because of the pure bulk rate you get in the stories.

Still in the anthology field is ANOTHER KIND by Chad Oliver. This one is really good. It's built on stories with anthropological themes, the best being "Artifact" and "A Star Above It". As I said before, this one is really good. Oliver is a up and coming author of many



merits. Some of you will remember his well-accepted book, SHADOWS IN THE SUN.

THE SPACE FRONTIER by Roger Lee Vernon is an anthology of stories from an unknown (to me) author. The first thing I noticed when I saw this on the newsstand was that the cover was the same as the one on the first stf novel I ever read, THE STAR KINGS. This Vernon fellow puts out a great anthology, every item in it was readable and fairly enjoyable. I'm looking forward to seeing more of his work.



MAN FROM TOMORROW is a reprint of WILD TALENT by Wilson (Bob) Tucker. It has a suspicious note to it centering around such characters as FBI man Ray Palmer and spy Walt Willis of Ireland. The book itself is about the life history of a telepath which is thoroughly convincing and probably Tucker's best work to date. Of course, there was Bloch the gangster, Conklin the government man, and Dr. Grennell, but the bit about WAW really got me. I laughed my head off at some of the things they did. That's a nice, easy way to strike back at fandom: write a book. The latest F&SF says this one is outselling THE SEVEN YEAR ITCH. That's something I would like to see more of in the stf field.

Last but not least, from the hardbound field is Jerry Sohl's latest book, POINT ULTIMATE. Sohl shows his best points in this novel while digging into a plot line about an occupied post-war America with revolutionists streaching all the way to Mars. This is one of the few books that should not be read in less than one sitting. It's that good; a really first-class book that is highly recommened for many reasons.

For some reason this sort of review column is a lot easier for me. Maybe it's because I like to read science fiction and then talk about it for a while. Besides, columns that review books, mags, etc. are easier to write as they have something definate to say. What ever it is, I think I'll stick with it. Less work and all that, you know.

~ ~ Jim

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( continued from page 18 )

And during the day, you hear music blaring from above, telling you what to buy and why. People can buy and will buy, but all that advertising is driving me nuts.

For, you see, I am one of the few people alive who still remember the peace and quiet of those happy years before the invasion.

--- Ann Steul

=====

VOID a la Webster---Null. Producing no effect, useless. An empty space; a blank. Having no legal force or effect. Nothing. Not occupied by anything; having no value.



# THOSE HAPPY YEARS

ANN  
STEUL

Thank heavens this is another national rest day, the first, and five more to come! The month always seems to drag along, once we are back in town and there are only six rest days anyhow.

If we had invented time travel, or if it were possible to pass this story on to someone in the past, they would not believe it. I am very old now and my memory might not be as good as it used to be, but there are things I cannot forget. My life span has been extended several times, but next term I will not go back to the board. Now I have reached the point where death is indeed a very welcome friend.

When I am out here in the country I always sit on this porch. By day I like to see the luscious green of the plants coming out of the brown earth. Nothing like that in the cities. Oh, of course, there are the parks. But they are mostly artificial nowadays. Out here, all things still are they used to be before the invasion. And when the evening comes, there is nothing nicer than watching the stars or looking at the moon. That is why people desert the cities during the national rest week.

People from the past would conclude from this that men have to work all the time and only have a few days of each month. My son in law is a clerk for National Distribution. Like everyone else he works four hours a day with indays off. You see, we are a highly technical society. Our world is divided into seven national estates. The former continents are each a separate national estate and so are the northern and southern polar regions.

This division was brought about by the invaders, as were so many other things, like the solution of the Atomic Power Problem and World Peace. I still remember growing up in the years 1945-1962. If we had known then, we would have been prepared.

Of course, much was written and said about flying saucers even then, but no one had an idea of what was really in store for us. We were so wrapped up in war and hatred and longing for peace and understanding, that the solution of our problems always managed to escape even the most willing among us. That was one point where the invaders came in, and, in my opinion, it was the only good thing they did for us. Though I am grateful for the national rest week, it would not have been necessary, but for them.

You from the past might wonder, why an old man sits all night long on his porch and looks at the moon. Well, I can tell you. When I am in the city and the rest week is over, all hell takes over the heavens. You take a stroll through the town and look up at the moon, and what do you see? All night long changing letters screaming at you: "The moon might not be made of green cheese, but it helps make Sprats Pasta the most delicious of all!" That is for the benefit of the people in America. In Europe they tell them: "Keep up with the man in the moon, try Sprats rasta to-day!" The whole blooming sky has been taken over by the invaders. And they are salesmen, believe me. There is not one constellation in the whole area visible from earth, where they don't produce and advertise something.



# MARKED

## VOID

Seems every issue I get more letters. And every issue we have to cut more of the letters in order to get everybody's say in. Everyone who has something worthwhile to say, that is. There's no use making the usual announcement, as everybody knows it by now. So I'll get on with the things.....

RON BENNETT, 7 Southway, Arthur's Ave., Harrogate, Yorkshire, England, rambles..... Thanks very much for the copy of VOID 3 you sent me seemingly years back. What with moving across the country and getting settled into my job and the Liverpool SFS, I've not been able to devote as much time to fan-mail as I would have liked.

Now, had you started plugging chola a year ago I might have backed the project, having been on the wagon for over four years. Alas, no longer. I was as merry as any at the Twerpcon, but even so prefer British beer. Come to think of it my favorite is OBJ, which is served only in Yorkshire which means I have to put up with inferior stuff over here.

I don't altogether see why Jan labelled me poor Ron because I took up his invitation. Notwithstanding the two nights without sleep to get there, and the blistered feet and the language trouble, I really enjoyed myself. I went over to Vinz Clarke's ployce and the Bulmers' and to Tony Thorness' and the Globe besides seeing London for the first and second times (there and back), and travelling abroad. Why, I'd do it all again. Even to nearly getting thrown off the cross-channel boat for swearing at one of the stewardesses. I might have known, tho', that neither Jan nor Dave would be fooled by the oneshots each was putting out 'without' the others knowledge.

It could be noted as regards those postcards we sent out to all the femmes we could think of, that the one we sent out to Ina Shorrock was labelled "Wonder how you survived the Norman Conquest," or some such message. We meant her husband, Norman, of course. Now I'm living practically next door to the Shorrock's ployce these days (the LSFS's 200th meeting party, an all-night affair, was held here last weekend) and I learned from Ina that at the time she received the card Norman Wansborough had been paying them a visit. She wondered how we knew. I think the expression on my face gave me away.

Interesting, too, to read of the fanzine ANDROMEDA. Wonder what Pete Campbell will have to say to that. ((So far nothing.....))

DICK ELLINGTON, 113 W. 84th St., New York 24, N.Y., babbles...

Great scott! An Anti-Bheer drive! Great idea. Keep these disgusting bheer drinkers and their bestial, belching habits away from the cons by all means. And let's get rid of all these filthy drinkers of cheap corn whiskey and \$2.83 a fifth rotgut while we're at it. Make it a real campaign.

Stop.

Just a little minute now. SOFT DRINKS!!!!!! What are you - crazy or sumpin? That stuff is sure poison. It's almost as bad as (ugh!) water. Looks like we'll have to dissolve the concerted campaign. I didn't



know it was gonna be a temperance society. I was thinking more on the lines of a rule that nothing except the products of Jack Daniel's distillery to be allowed in, preferably Black Label and certainly nothing less than Jim Beam, the po' fans' friend. Chola indeed! I grotch in disgust.

It's about time the continent came to life fannishly. Glad to see this surge of activity. Bodes well. Hope there's more. Jansen's report was good and filled a needed gap since even Alpha didn't have a Twerpcon report.

Met Joe Gibson's doll of a wife at the Clevention and planted the Ellington seal of approval on her. Best by taste test. Accept no substitutes.

And the World Con will be held in N.Y. next year. We're gonna start a big poosh of work pretty quick. Some fun. Hotels are fighting it out to see who will get our magnificent patronage. And you might give us a plug. Anybody with a li'l ole two dollars to spare should send it to:

14th World Science-Fiction Convention  
P.O. Box 272,  
Radio City Sta.,  
New York 19, N.Y.

((And I did. Seems every time a con comes along I'm the one who hears a lot about it and doesn't get to go. Every time. Nuts.))

JULIAN PARR, Hauptstrasse 66, Rodenkirchen/Rhein, Germany, grumbles..... I must confess that I think one of the main failings of fandom nowadays is the degrading habit of being content with the egoboo attached to the mere apperance of one's name, quite regardless of the quality of the stuff accompanying it. This has brought about a surfeit of fanzines and the general quality has suffered.

Jan's article was the most interesting item in the issue, - more for his review of his experience with Continental fandom than for the report on the con. In fact, much that he says emphasises the difficulty we will meet in Gerfandom - most of the readers must be sercofans to start with, and only as they begin to "catch on" can we hope that some (a minority, as Jan says) will display the fannish talents described by Jan: the spirit of informality, the capability to think up the wierdest schemes possible and enjoy their daydreaming...

I was fascinated by your Jan Report: and by the savior faire which you displayed throughout, carefully refraining from mentioning your parents who - I presume? - accompanied you! I would like to read more of your expeditions into darkest Continental fandom! How about your impressions of Ann Steul, who must be a fascinating person! I find her verse very impressive for an "Auslander" - she has a remarkable command of the English language. What do you know about her? Where did she learn English? Etc etc? ((well, to tell the truth, I know plenty about Ann. But I'm sworn to keep my tounge, and I will. At least, partly so. See the article about her a little bit back. There are hidden meanings in it. Very hidden.....))

WALT WILLIS, 170 Upper N'Ards Road, Belfast, North Ireland, sez..... Jan's report of the Twerpcon and your account of your meeting with Jan were some of the most interesting items I've read in fanzines for some time. Not only is it sort of awe-inspiring to witness the genesis of Continental fandom, it's even more fascinating to try and read between the lines and wonder what Jan and Ron and you and Jim thought of one another. You all seem to me such highly individual types. This clash of divergent personalities has always seemed to me one of the most interesting spectacles fandom has to offer. I'm eagerly awaiting the first European fan feud....

Best thing in the rest of the issue, it seemed to me, was the readers' letters, though some of the editorial interjections were a little brash and irritating. (Incidentally, I think "Cor Blimey" (rarr's