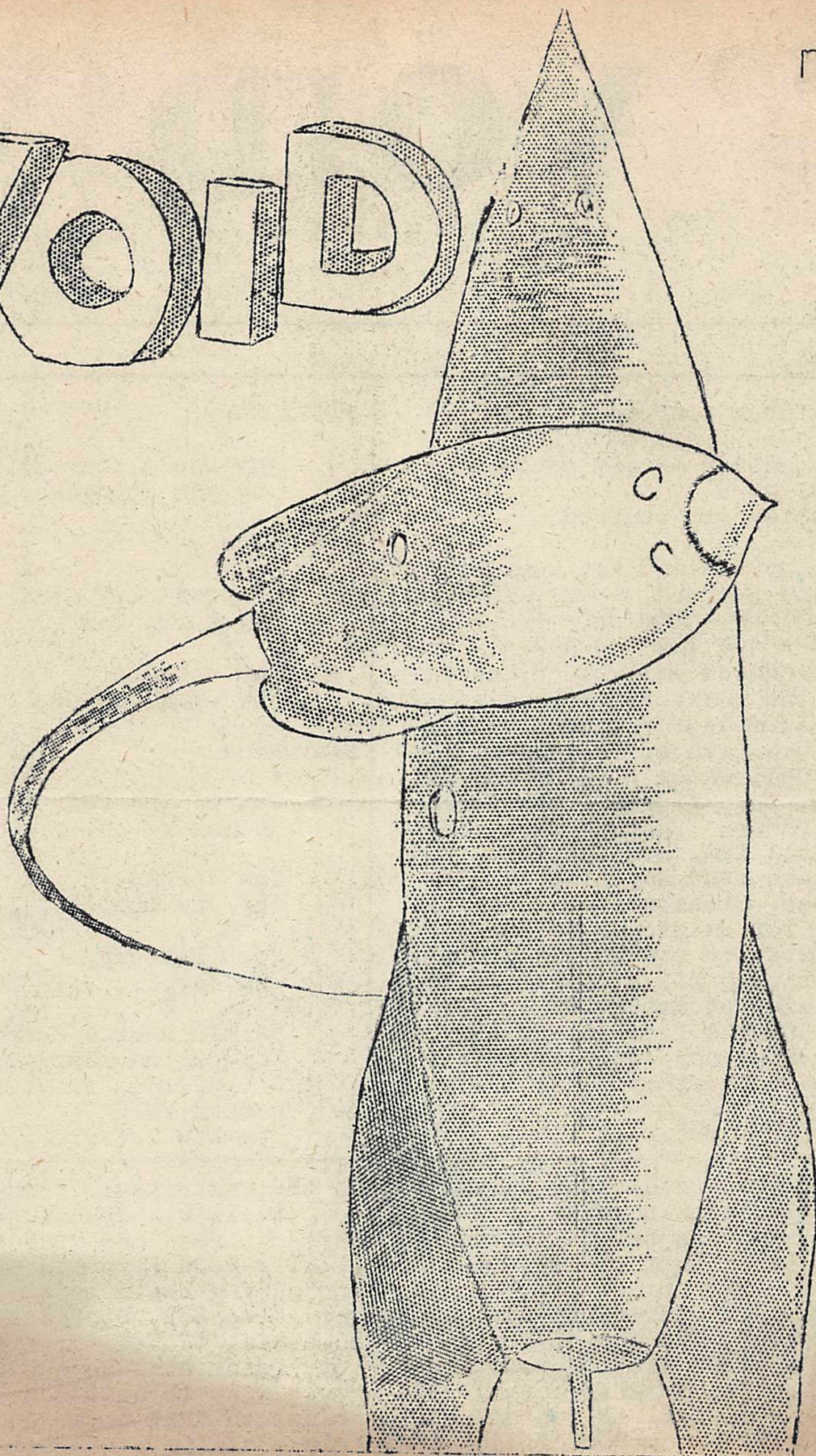


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no. 5

VOID



JEGVES

VOID

- C O N T E N T S -

VOL. 1, NO. 5

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GABS

A few additions to the WetzCon report:

Ann was selling little pins with rockets on them for 25¢ (1DM) each. Hein Bingenheimer was also there along with a friend. Ellis was going to make a tape, but forgot.

That's about all I forgot, but no doubt a few more will pop up as soon as this stencil is run off. Maybe you'll find a number of additions

in the next issue. Probably

Ellis was up Saturday and Sunday, the 28th and 29th, and we had a jolly good time mimeoing, talking, and making tapes to WAW. Well, das ist alles for this issue, and I'll be hoping to hear from you soon. The next issue will be out soon, and I would like to have some sort of letter or column next time. So let's hear from y'all.

-- gab

WHY DON'T YOU BELIEVE ME?

By Wim Struyck

There've always been people who absolutely refuse to believe a story, however nice it sounds, if it's not printed in their own favorite daily paper. Since the days of a certain Thomas this fact brought sorrow and shame to many a man. And though the situation improved a lot when science fiction was invented (the flying saucers also did their bit), trustful believing is still a far idea in this world.

Ask poor Johnny Malcolm (no relation to possible other Malcolms), who's now looking for rooms all over our city, just because of this hateful disbelief. If any of you guys, or dolls, know of a nice apartment to let, give him the word, won't you? That is, if you believe my story. Which I doubt. But at least you are stf fans.

The whole thing started that night when Johnny was marching home from somewhere. The boy was just coming home, as you and I and hundreds of other people are doing every night. It was just that he was feeling so lonely that made the difference. When a young man, of small means and too shy by nature to easily make friends, has to live all by himself in rented rooms, he's bound to get lonesome, see? The more so, when such a man is walking beneath the stars and spring in the air and couples in love passing him by. Under such circumstances, "lonely" is hardly the word. "Lousy", that's it. I didn't even have to look it up in my dictionary. It must be the proper word, because I've heard it a thousand times from the G.I.'s of 1945. So that was how John was feeling when he first saw that kitten. To tell the truth, he actually didn't see it just then, but he wouldn't have seen the beast at all if her wailing cries hadn't blended so nicely with his thoughts. For a moment he didn't know if those plaintive tones originated in his head or outside. And he had to make sure. Fortunately, the kitten was there to relieve his fears. In this way he started with a disadvantage immediately. Generally, Johnny didn't go for cats.

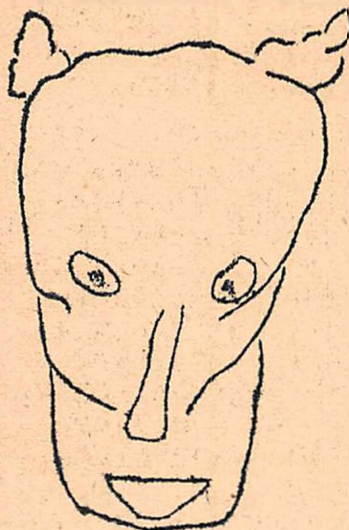
Dogs, yes, cats, no. Though somehow or other he'd never gotten to buying one, his own dog, looking at it's master (Johnny) with adoring eyes. But normally, he wouldn't have looked twice at a cat. Not until now. This goes to show you again how deep a man may sink in his longing for company. This is a penetrating thought, at which I arrived after long thinking. Well, not that long, maybe, but long enough to give Johnny the opportunity to come down on his knees beside the little beast. Not long enough, unfortunately, to miss the peculiar sounds he was producing. Did you ever hear women fussing over a baby? Must I say more?

In the meantime, the kitten was washing its paws, as is their way; I mean, mewling like mad to get your attention, and getting dignified when you start making "pussy, pussy". This one was no better than its fellows. Each time Johnny walked away, it followed, imitating the tortured souls in hell. When he returned, it sat down and looked elsewhere. Being the kind-hearted man Johnny was, this procedure could have only one, inevitable, result. In fact, the cat knew long before John arrived at the same conclusion, and at his front door with the kitten in his arms. Up the stairs they went. Softly, softly, on tiptoe, as not to disturb his landlady in her slumbers. Land ladies are a suspicious lot, he knew. Always thinking the worst, and without the slightest understanding for

"just an innocent friendship". But that's more a personal experience, and has nothing to do with John, who reached his room unseen and unheard. He hoped. But what is hope? I've hoped to get rich since the days of my youth, but will I?? HA!

The kitten felt at home immediately, and after exploring her new-found haven, she curled herself on her benefactor's lap and left him to his own thoughts. wishful thoughts, I must confess. He had company now, sure. His room seemed to be somewhat brighter, sure. But to call the situation highly entertaining, well..... no. Now, if instead of this kitten, he'd gotten a nice big dog, to which you could speak vigorous, manly words.....

And John, always inclined to day dreaming, got so absorbed in this particular dream, that he soon didn't even realize the reality in his lap anymore. It is a regrettable oversight, because, where a few minutes ago the kitten had been, was now a hazy, misty shimmering substance, whereupon the lovers of supernatural phenomena would have feasted. For one moment, growing bigger all the time, it seemed a strange miscut of cat and dog, but then John's imagination made a daring leap, and with an exasperated sigh, the nearly steadied outline on his lap disappeared anew in swirling mists. It grew rapidly, and increased so much in weight now, that even the most obstinate daydreamer couldn't possibly have failed to notice. Too late now to move himself away from the horror on his lap, John could only stare and swallow. Before he actually realized what he was staring at, the most beautiful girl he ever saw was staring back at him. And believe me, she was worth a look or two. Now, I don't want to write a pornographic story, but I must keep it scientifically justified. In respect of this, may I remind you of the fact that kittens wear no clothes, and that clothes have to come from somewhere, and they weren't there before. It was Newton himself who found this when the apple fell on his head. What's good enough for him should be good enough for me. And you.



gab

Consequently, the girl in John's lap was just that. I mean, just a girl, without superfluous additions. Even John, who never had a sister, could see that much. There were "things" to be seen that didn't leave a doubt, and John wasn't blind. Neither was the girl. Though newborn, as you might call her, she very well noticed the admiration in his eyes. Her first words proved her womanhood, illogical as ever: "So this is how you want me to be. why didn't you tell me sooner? why give me so much trouble?"

See what I mean? women! Always ready to put the blame on a man.

"You know, we from Venus can take any form we want, of course, but the custom is to take the form our partner wants. That's only decent, isn't it? When I crashed here on your planet, however, it being the first time I could come so far, I didn't know the preference of people here. So what could I do? I had to contact someone, somehow, didn't I? And then you came along. I tried to read your mind, and you did think of that little animal, didn't you? Or was it that bigger one first? I got so mixed up, and I tried everything, and it got to be this form, and.... 4
do you mind terribly, Johnny?" Johnny didn't. Had he been thinking of a
(con't on page 6)

L'Apres-Midi D'un Fan

— TERRY CARR

Jan Jansen's article a few VOID's ago set me to thinking about some of the difficulties in trying to be a fan in a non-English-speaking country. Disregarding the more obvious things such as lack of stfmags and inability of many people to read the few U.S. and U.K. ones that do drift in, how about the truifan who wants to spread the word around?

Now, it's bad enough in the United States and England. If I, for instance, walked up to the Man On The Street and said, "Say, friend, ever consider joining fandom? Get lots of egoboo, read fanmags, and so on. Engage in a little crifanac. Kicks!"---why, I'd get a hell of a blank stare.

The situation is worse in Europe, I should imagine. For instance, just how do you translate "fandom" and "egoboo" and "crifanac"? Oh, sure, you can leave them in the original terms, but their meaning then is even less clear than they are in English. Ghu, at least in English they employ recognizable English constructions (the "dom" in "fandom") and parts of normal words ("crifanac" and "egoboo"). Once you explain the meaning to an English-speaking person he can grasp the way the word grew. To a man who speaks a different language, the word is a mystery even after he knows its meaning. And hell, some of the words are pretty interesting by dint of their very construction. "Egoboo", for instance, has a pretty humorous sound to it--if you're accustomed to the semantic connotations of the sounds in English.

And if you do decide to translate fannish jargon, you'll still run into difficulty. Is "fandom" masculine or feminine? (Of course, Laney would assign it to a neuter article, but that's beside the point.)

Or let's say you're in Spain and you want to drop off a few "Big Brother Is Watching You!" cards. After a few times you'll suddenly realize that the people who find the cards don't have perplexed expressions on their faces for the reason you intended them--hell, they can't read them! Translate them? But what kick is there in leaving cards saying "El Hermano Mayor esta mirandole a Ud."? Somehow it takes all the fun out of it.

If you go to France you've got to have your quote-cards read "Tucker est mort" ...no fun at all, I say.

but like I mentioned earlier, it's pretty hard to get fans even in the U.S. I think maybe we should have a class in fandom established at all major universities. why, just think...you could even get trubluue stfish credits for taking the course!

I can see it all now. Professor Floyd Scrilch stands before the class and says, "In the beginning there was Ghu. He created fan-heaven and mirth..." (Fan-style humor is supposed to be the main thing that sets Us Apart from ordinary mortals.) He tells all the eager neofen about the history of fandom, the rigid caste system (perhaps for a beginning we could get this installed as a special section for sociology majors), the fannish language. Textbooks? why, "The Immortal Storm" and

the "Pancyclopedia".

Midterm tests would be of the usual type, but the final would be one big whopping one-shot session. Grades would be determined by the reviews the one-shot received. The professor could gather much material for his own fanmag by assigning term reports.

Perhaps...perhaps, after a while, we could even get fandom in as a separate major field of study. A few special shops curriculum could be added handling the operation of duplicating machines of all types. A gym class could be established placing emphasis on ability to consume huge amounts of beer and Jack Daniels. Those with doctors' excuses from r.e. could concentrate on chola.

And the finale? At graduation, those students who have majored in random could wear robes made of mimeo stencils, and would have propellers on their caps instead of tassels. Those who failed, of course, would receive in place of a diploma five pounds of sheep dip; those who passed could get a genyouwine certified swamp-crittur badge!

(continued from page four)

kitten before he saw her, or was it after? why, no, it had to be first. Oh, well, why bother? So she came from Venus, eh, she was an alien? what did he care? Especially when those two, nice arms crept around his neck and drew him closer? when her nearness made every logical thought impossible?

The more experienced among you will know what should have happened next. No need to read further, they'll say, the rest is obvious, spare us the details. But they're wrong. And how. Because the landlady was still more experienced, and at this moment she entered the room. without knocking, too. And can you beat it (I told you the world was bad, didn't I?), she didn't believe one word about the whole story. Not about the kitten, not about Venus, nothing about crashing spaceships. what a woman.

So now, John is looking for an apartment. Could anybody help? He doesn't need much. Just one room for one man and a kitten.....

A FEW NOTES.....

As this is an awkward issue, and we don't know how many pages it'll have, I'd better get in my editorial where I can, and add anything else that comes along later. If you are the type person who pages through rmz and reads everything but the editorial, you have probably noticed that there is a conrep at the end of this. (This has a chilling effect on me, 'cause I think of what might happen if there's no conrep...)

This part of VOID (about up to page 19, I imagine) is being mimeoed in the Christmas vacation, and the second part, which will contain the report and anything else that comes in (late, as certain reviews are without material to work over). From reading this you can tell exactly how it was done. in one fine rush. Not this first part so much, but I hate to think of the hurry the second will be made up in.

At this moment I'm still waiting for parts of the official program to come in, because the Amas mail has slowed it down somewhat. Mail has been irregular; we received a card from Julian rarr on Christmas morning, which may be strange to you, but not to the German Postal System, if there is a system to it. The yearly willis card, filled with good humor and puns (there's a difference, y'know) arrived on Amas eve, was read, and I didn't sleep well that night.

6 Possibly there will be more of this editorial thing later on, and then possibly not. Oh well, you can hope.....

--- gab

VOID

reviews

the column with
the monotonous
title

Or maybe this should be called 'null reviews', it seems to mean the same thing. Oh well.....

TACITUM, Benny Sodek, editor. 1432 Calhoun St., New Orleans 18, Louisiana. 15¢ a throw, 4/50¢, pubbed about eight times a year, which makes it.....ah...irregular, mimeoed. TAC is an interesting little mag, from the South, and naturally real southern and like that. It's one of the advance guard of a great flood, like the red tide, of southern zines that are sure to

crop up in the near future. I say this because the South is beginning to be heard now in the fannish world, with zines like ELITOME (which by all signs, tho, has folded), HANK, and TAC. Also, though I haven't seen a copy of it, I hear Jan Sadler has her SLANDER out now. "The Chopping Block" is fanzines by the editor, and very well done, too. I see Benny reviews VOID, and even believes that Chola line. Another who couldn't see through it all. The Clevention report by Kent Corey, editor of ALICE, is pretty good, and gives the lowdown on 'Cheech Beldone Ellison' and the New York gang. Jan Sadler, femmefan of 16, gives a conrep on the Agacon, which by all appearances was a real riot. I've been to many of the places mentioned, and it seems a funny thing to look back on someone else's views of the same place. Dallas Derogation is a well done takeoff on Raeburn's Derelict Derogation, and brings to light the few fans of Dallas.....oops.....DALLAS region. The Silent One Listens is an above-average lettercol, and the most amazing thing about it is the fact that Rick Sneary didn't misspell one word in his whole letter, which was four paragraphs. And that's no mean thing, believe me. Or maybe I can't tell if they're wrong.....

ALPHA, Jan Jansen and Dave Vendelmans, eds. 229 Berchemlei Borgerhout, Antwerp, Belgium. 15¢ each (?), quarterly, mimeoed. This of ALPHA is the first of the quarterly series, and the last of the co-editor issues. From now on there will be two 'A's under the same cover. There will be a 'Jan' section and a 'Dave' section, each run under different editors and containing what each selects for the zine. Just like the old COSMAG/SFD days, except the pages might not be reversed. The reason for the split is not given, but I have a good idea from what JJ told me a while back. An' I ain't gone say, neither.... There's an article on religion by Anton Hagatzky which is average, and not what I consider the right topic for fanzines. Religion is becoming a large subject (always has been, for that matter), and has been played up a lot in fanzines. But I maintain that fanmags are for fannish (or, if you prefer, sercon) material, not religion. I'd suggest a change or something. Ambrosia this time is small but interesting, and good. I'm waiting to see what will happen to 'A' when it splits.

UMBRA, John Hitchcock, ye ed. 15 Arbutus Ave., Baltimore 28, Md. 10¢ per, 3/25¢, irregular but frequent, duplicated. John is a college student who has a thirst for fandom and foreign languages. And his mag reflects his personality very well. The editorial, En Thi Apxhi is good, but I wish I knew what the blamed thing meant. Sounds like Greek or maybe Latin; they used a lot of 'x's. Larry Stark writes of the many sins of the guy who owns NBC, Pat Weaver. The ed nimsel' gives his life history with fannish comments, and writes one of the best things in the issue. The man with a roker was fairly interesting, and could be commented on with humorous results. But I don't feel like doing it. Uit Vlaanderen (who thinks up these titles?) Engels by Jan Jansen is the best thing in the issue, and very well written. It concerns the policy of faneds toward staples and other fanzines, a topic which never ears out in my opinion. The many things a faned has to make decisions on and the things he should be aware of make interesting reading for me, and not only

because it's my concern, either. UMBRA's letter column is above adverage, and I found G.M. Carr's missive the most interesting of the lot, which brings us to Chickenscratches, reviews by the editor. Besides the mistake on how to spell Texas (John obviously forgot to put the typer back on normal and the shift lock rolled merrily along.) the reviews are very good, and well writton. In short, UMBRA is a Jolly Good ~~Maggy~~ mag, and it would be to your advantage to get it.

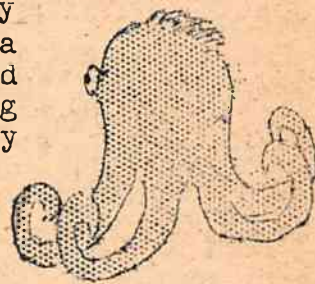
BEM, Mal Ashworth and Ted white, eds. Malash's address: 40, Makin St., Tong St., Bradford 4, Yorks, England. Irregular, mimeood. This is the well-known next-to-the-last-issue of BEM, the humor-zino of Britian. Not the humor-zine, you understand, but about the best, I think. "Uncle Frank and the Early Birds" by Nigel Lindsay was the funniest thing by far, and the best lino was "Snakes are not slimy, they just glisten." That sent me into bellows of laughter. Next comes a williscapeade, "The Case Of the Disappearing Fan", that explains why Bob Tucker returned from the dead, among other things. Post Humus' most interesting letter was by Terry Jeeves, using the Jeeves Kwik-Speed dummying system. Glancing down the page it occurs to me that there is still another Carr now in fandom, G.M., Terry, and now Joan. If This Goes On..... anyway, I would advise you to get the last ish of BEM, as I suspect it will have that something special which makes the last issues of good mags their best.

PEON, Lee Riddle, ed. 108 Dunham St., Norwich, Conn. 20¢ each, \$1.00/6, irregular, mimeood. It seems every issue of PEON gets better. Either the duplication improves, the material is above PEON's high adverage, or there are some good cartoons that highlight the issue. This number has everything, and all of them good. Lee has a new mimeograph, of foreign make, electrically operated, which yields wonderful results. Now if it was only done in royal blue ink..... "The Fall of Ygnarth" by Zin Carter is a well-written fantasy about the various kingdoms and such of Ikranos, a not-land. Fantastuff, by Terry Carr, is one of the best columns PEON carries, and the only one devoted to pure interesting notes; its main asset is the way Terry keeps them short and to the point. The fannish 'Perfect Squelch' this issue is terrific. Eric Bentcliffe carries on in fine fashion, followed by Jim Harmon, who makes another dash at satire; this time 'Pete Friday's Dragging Blues'. Sort of good, but....well, there have been others. Bob Lowndes does a longish (for the subject) article on "Bais in Criticism" and Ted Watkins comes after on science fiction. Dave Mason, the editor of COUP, writes about the Old Fan and the Last Fanzine very well and ends on a political note. PEON Notes by Lee himself relates the story of his meeting with Basil Coukis, a Greek fan. All in all, PEON is one of the best mags around today, and if you're not receiving it now, write Lee at once.

PSI, Lyle Amlin, ed. 307 E. Florida, Hemet, Calif. 10¢ each, bi-monthly, mimeood with dupered cover. Since its first issue PSI has improved a lot, and now has 24 pages. The mimeographing came through on the cover and ruined it, but there wasn't much to ruin in the first place. The first editorial is good, above adverage, and the second better. Ron Allik is a character. Pete Eberhard rambles on about some outdated books (like I AM LEGEND) and does an adverage job of it. Felice Perew writes about some experiments in telepathy which didn't prove much, and tries to project the Spell Of The Unknown around, failing miserably. Lyle runs a rating column in his zine, a pratice I would like to see more of, though I realize it's a lot of work. Provides egoboo, and you've got to admit that it helps. Not much, tho. Janus, a poem of four lines, takes an entire page, in lettering guides, yet. A mighty weak excuse for filling up space, if you ask me. The editor does the farmag reviews, and doesn't understand, of all zines, GRUE. This represents the reviewing attitude very well, and you can draw your opinion from that statement. Dainis Bisenieks writes

very well on an unlikely subject: exploring the moon on a pogo stick. The lettercol, a French title, is below adverage, and the funniest thing in it is where, just a few pages before, Amlin states that he has to spread the material thin this issue. Then, at the end of the column, "I have more of Redd's letter, but haven't got the room to print it." Ah, a second rap. Taking everything into consideration, I'd say the fmz isn't bad at all, just a little above adverage.

CAMBER, Alan Dodd, ed. 77, Stanstead Rd., Hoddesdon, Herts., England. Irregular, mimeood, and I think Alan will send you a copy for a letter of comment or a trade. The day CAMBER arrived it was raining, and we were waiting to be picked up at the local AYA. The family car (a '52 black Dodge) pulled up and we ran out to it through a hail of wet droplets. I picked the envelope lying on the front seat up, and the flap fell open, as a shower of sheets flow out. All 33 of them. Now, I like to receive CAMBER, but if I have to assemble it myself... As a matter of fact, one of the things that makes it hard to assemble are the hard covers. They're tough to get staples through, and then there's the other 31 sheets. Makes it hard to hold the mag, also. Confused Thinking, by the editor, is (sorry, I couldn't resist that) How To Live On A Staple Diet by non Bennett I think is the best thing in the issue, and was thoroughly enjoyed for its informative value. Tho the subject is a little old, the Staple war appears to still be alive and kicking. I expect it will keep that way for quite a long while. There are 13 egobooful pages of fanmag reviews by the editor, and a running account of the "wars Of The Gods Of Fandom" by Vernon Ashworth. Vern seems to be half-in, half-out of fandom, a state I know just won't exist for very long under his conditions. Having a brother in fandom, reading fmz, and writing occasional letters and articles like this; they all help to drag a person into the marsh. Terry Jeeves has more egoboo in one issue than I've ever seen before, being mentioned 92 times. The rest contains 30 pages of letters, and this gets a little boring towards the end. Too much of a good thing, y'know.... If I were you, I'd send for CAMBER as soon as possible. It may not have the best material, but it has a high adverage, which is more than you can say for many other zines.



JIM

HYPHEN, Chuck Harris and walt willis, eds. walt's address is 170 Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast, North Ireland. Irregular, Gestentered, 15¢ or 1/- a copy. Unfortunately, it's been a long time since the 14th issue of "-" came out, and I can imagine the pleas walt received in the mail for the next ish. The cover knocks a film Jim liked (and drew much comment from the more scientific amoung us), woodchuck Harris contemplates joining Fakefandom, and damon knight reports in fine fashion the Clevention, a rather calm affair. I wonder if that theory (can't remember where I heard it) about the Americonventions has some truth in it? '52 was wild, '53 calm, '54 a mad house, and this year's was ~~dead~~ moderate again. Ghod save New York.... Bill Temple recounts his moving adventures, a thing that happens to us very often. But at least we don't get such characters to "help" us! John Berry tells of Bob ("Breaker of the Fanlight") Shaw and his attempted dirty trick on George Charters, followed by failure. TOTO maintains its high standard with good exerpts and interlineations, while Sadie Shaw, BoSh's Frau describes their tramp to James white's house and back, all for nil. Another Chuck Harris (luckily he's not on this continent) makes implications right and left about his (there's a word I can't think of here; it means a person who has the same name as another) and WAW. An article like this makes one Stop And Think. If just one of these things was true, 'twould be quite a story. But then, I suppose Tucker wasn't really born twice....was he?

BoSh admits he's soft-hearted, and the readers riot (sorry, non...) 9

CONFAB, Bob Retarowsky, ed. Box 634, Norfolk, Nebr. Trade or letter will get you one, maybe some money, "A sometimes-zine", dittoed. The last issue of CONFAB was one year ago, January 31, and I had given up all hope of ever seeing it for a long time. So the other day this thin group of dittoed sheets held together by a few staples came in with the regular shipment of fmz from the States (have to come over by ship, y'know). Esham (does anybody know who he is?) is ever-present with his illos, few bad, most good, and Bloch renders more entertainment per page of type than anybody else. My copy has one bright page in it (7) and the rest look as if they could use a shot of gin or whatever Bob uses. The CONFAB of old may return if it can get up the necessary spirit (not gin), but this is a small example of what it used to be. Let's wait and see if anything happens.

Out of the darkness of England comes TRIODE, Terry Jeeves and Eric Bentcliffe, eds. Eric's address is 47. Alldis St., Greatmoor, Stockport, Ches., England. Irregular...about every three months, 15¢ each, mimeoed, with acid, to boot. This arrived in a large envelope along with a letter from Eric. And a large envelope it needed, alright. It has 50 pages to it, and weighs about 6 oz. The front and back covers must sop up the ink, as the effect is one of pure black. Cutting a stencil with acid is something I've never tried before, and this is the first time I've even heard of it, for that matter. The effect is good, but the back cover looks a little overdone, with all that black. And then again, the pad doesn't always strike the page evenly, the ink doesn't come through, or SOMETHING doesn't always go right, because my copy has a patch of white near the side. These are small matters, tho, for the use of acid is the best I think could be done, and the result far better than ordinary shading.

When I opened TRIODE I noticed at once the photo-offset page inside. Thish has four "flying saucer" pics, which could have been easily faked, and some honest-to-gosh faaaaaaans, too. Of course, I recognized Bob Bloch at once in the picture with Harlan Ellison, Evelyn Gold, and Ego Clarke. Gregg Calkins shocked me with his fish shirt, and partly because he looks something like me. Poor thing. John Berry looked weird with his conservative suit, and Charles Wells looked intelligent. The flying saucers looked like old television tubes caught in flight. And Dave Vendelmans looked. Dave Smith tells us how to spell, but I already knew the stuff mentioned. This is old hat compared to the chants I've heard at meetings of the ASFO. For once the editor doesn't review fanzines (ahem) and lets Don Allen do it. Very good job, too. Pete Royle has family trouble and left me wondering about Willis' age. Fan-Dance is an interesting lettercol, and easy to read. John Berry turns up again like lice, with "Coup de Grass" and later on with the "Future History of Fandom", both first-class. Malash reveals the fact that he is a fiend for all the world to see. But we knew that already, so that's not new at all. TRIODE is a good mag, and I'm wondering how to pronounce it, even tho it is one of the best things being pubbed in England today. Get it.

ANDROMEDA, Walt Ernsting, ed. Ruppichterorth/Siegbkreis, Velken, Germany. 50 pf or maybe a letter, quarterly, mimeoed. ANDRO has its second issue out, and it's a great improvement. The cover is drawn by a pro artist, and a lot better than last issues'. Walt has been able to get some scientific articles and even a Clevention report from Harry Ackerman, which has raised the level some. The headings are on the average, but the typed ones don't make much of an impression. The headings that are illustrated are copied from the columns of the Stateside promags, and still well-drawn. To keep it from being entirely sercon, Walt has included some fanzine reviews. Not many, but it's still something. Julian Farr will probably have a further review of ANDRO later on in this issue, if every thing goes right. At least he can read the material.

10 well, that's all for this issue, I'll see you later on if there's room.

--- Greg

MARKED

VOID

JOE GIBSON, 6708 S. Merrill, Chicago 49, Ill., scrawls.....

Your chain-letter scheme is as bad as your "chola" campaign. Both are nonsense and I can't get interested. And tho usually I'd be quite pleased and smug about the play I got in Void 4--the lead article and a good say in the letter column--it seemed this time I was rather depressed by it.

The reason is simple enough: I hoped for more from Continental fans. I'd like an article by Julain Parr on the "Bonn Incident" Ernsting mentions in his article this ish. I'd like a more complete review of ANDKO and YKS by, say, Anne Steul, because all you did was merely say they were published. I'd like to know the titles of a few articles they had, who wrote 'em, and what they were about. Even if I wrote the editors for free copies, as you suggest, if they're in German I'd know little more than I do now, after receiving them--and I don't know (you obviously didn't, either) that I would receive any. But apparently things were popping around there so fast you had trouble just keeping score, without banking any fancy snow.

But I was slightly disappointed that the letter column didn't have more discussion of Jansen's article, particularly by Contifen, rather than so much jousting at chola windmills--or is it ginmills? Must be I'm going SerCon! However, the interest evoked by your accounts of fan-gatherings, and Jan's of fan-festivities, was a pure symptom of TruFan fever. Your continued reports were the best thing in this issue, too; may as well reconcile yourself to its becoming a regular column-type feature from now on.

This sudden appearance of two (possibly three?) German fanzines tends to make hash of some of my statements in my article. Seems I dwelt too much on the early growth of Amerifandom via monthly promag letter columns, assuming entirely too great a parallel between that prehistoric era and the current growth of Continental fandom. I'd have remembered, if I took time, that Amerifandom came onstage when stf collectors weren't even called "collectors" because enough stf hadn't yet been printed to make a sizeable collection! But in Europe today, there are collectors with enough stf on hand to be called collectors; there are even enough collectors around to be calling each other names! It is now quite obvious that you don't need a monthly promag letter column to start them corresponding, publishing fanzines, and forming fanclubs for the explicit purpose thereof--with a rare SerCon project actually completed, if only to lend variety to the proceedings. And with as much activity as has shown itself lately, I would guess there are far more stf enthusiasts in that hunk of geography than Jansen, Ernsting, and most of the others suspect.

Of course, I'm not saying a monthly promag letter column wouldn't help. It certainly would, culling the fans from a promag's mass of readers. But it was sheer accident that the U.S. ever had monthly stf promags when we did. They were brought out by chain publishers, mere additions to the detective, western, and love-story pulps they were already publishing. And few stf promags ever made money on a monthly schedule; more often, the detective, western and love-story pulp zines paid off the losses of the sf pulps. And for years, the publishers considered sf to be a mere parasitic growth--with the result that, during those same years, we had stf mags with lurid, bright colors and nakkid girls because that's what



sold the detective, western and love-story mags. Few Amerifans at the time were willing to appreciate this situation.

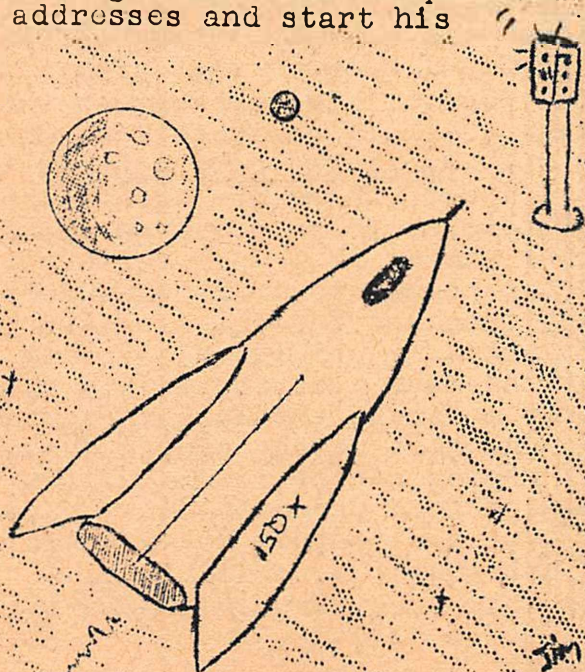
Oddly enough, what killed off the pulp magazines seemed to make sf popular. Anyway, the bottom dropped out of the pulp market---but when Street & Smith, the biggest chain publisher, begin dropping its pulp mags it found that Astounding was paying off. The same happened when Ziff-Davis dropped all their pulps but Amazing and Fantastic. This news, among publishers, is where the postwar boom actually begin that flooded the U.S. newsstands with sf. The market was thoroughly gutted. It killed sf's popularity.

Now that the boom has gone, most sf mags are again finding that they can't show profit on a monthly schedule. And today, most of them haven't any detective, western, or love-story brethren to pay the bills. So they're going bi-monthly or quarterly. Or just going. A lot of the good prozine letter columns have vanished. New fans aren't being coaxed in from the general readership so readily, now. And Amerifandom is diminishing in size. We may get down to the hard core of 200-or-so diehards as we were before the A-bomb. Or was it the V-2?

So I would accept the belief that it may never be feasible to publish a monthly s-f promag in Europe---at least, not in the near future. But I would expect this to only slow up the growth of European fandom, not forestall it. And things may definitely change. Who can tell what effect that artificial satellite will have on public imagination? It should be fun to watch. ((And here I must admit another goof I've made. But maybe I'd better let WE tell it...))

WALT ERNSTING, Kuppichterth/Siegbkreis, Velken, Germany, sez...

Would you be so nice to inform Joe Gibson: First I want to thank him for his good advice, I'm always willing to accept. But - sorry to say - he is informed quite wrong! First: UTOPIA with its letter column is monthly, not quarterly. Second: The SFCD was announced in UTOPIA and will be ((has been, came out two weeks ago)) announced again in the UTOPIA-Sonderband, the first German sf-quarterly-magazine. Third: The letter column in UTOPIA appears with the full address of the writer. Dear Joe: what do you think I published the list of members of the SFCD so openly for? Only to start a 'worldwide' correspondence! As you advised me. I want to get the fans acquainted - but I don't want somebody to pick up 'my' addresses and start his own club. (Because of lack of own brain substance.) But - and that is the main probelm, Joe - there are two types of sf fans: the chap who is seriously interested in sf and scientific probelms, and the other chap who is interested in fannish fandom. (Who doesn't know why a bullet comes back to Earth - and doesn't care, either) but I don't understand why these two types will not unite. All the same, you call both silly - perhaps you are right. But in any case it's better than standing around waiting - for nothing to come. Believe it or not, Joe, we will make it! ((So you see now that UTOPIA is monthly, as I said before. The reason I didn't know about it is that walt and I had a trading agreement set up, which wasn't too clear, and I thought I was getting UTOPIA all the time. The truth is that I only got a few issues



DARN, I HIT that RED LIGHT AGAIN!"

walt sent me a while back. I didn't bother to look at the dates, not knowing much German at the time, and only glanced briefly at the pics from sci' movies inside. So when I was writing the editor's note last issue I merely figured back to the last copy of UTORIA I'd received and based my opinion on that. You can see it was wrong. From what I've heard, the UTORIA that comes out the most often has the worst stories. This is probably the truth, as the one that does that (once every fortnight) contains usually space opera of no great worth.

In reply to Joe's question about the reviews of YKS and ANDRO: YKS has folded after three quick issues, all within one month, I believe. Ann Steul might put out a German-language fanzine with stories and maybe a few articles, and Jim and I have been contemplating putting out a small mag called "Review" or something (put down that ax, Vern!) which does just that. Probably English-language books for the Gerfen. More in the con report, I hope.))

LEE KIDDLE, PNCA, USN, USS CASCADE (AD 16), PRO, New York, N. Y., rambles.... Joe Gibson makes a good point on the troubles continental fandom would have in getting organized, but what he fails to remember is that fans have always found a way of getting around such barriers as language and currency restrictions. With the world at so-called peace today, there aren't too many governmental restrictions within free Europe and I am sure that some of these years, German fandom will again rise. I say "again" for I believe they were strong in the past, although not known as fans.

VOID can be a good rallying point between English, American fans and the fans in Germany and surrounding points. Jan Jansen does a good job with the Dutch and Belgian fans, and you can do just as well with VOID for the German fans. If you could get a good translator and print a few reviews of American books and fanzines in German and circulate throughout the few German fans that you know, you could have a good selling point for VOID. The American fans would ask for VOID to see the German section, and the German fans would write for it to see the latest prozine and fanzine news in their native language. I don't know if you can work it out, but there's a suggestion for you. I thought the Flemish section in ALPHA was its best feature, although I couldn't read a word of it. ((Sorry, Lee, and the others who suggested something else along this line, but I can't do it. For one thing, there is actually no real reason for it. There is already one German-language fanzine, ANDRO, while Ann Steul and Jim and I are considering putting out our own. Also, Klaus Unbehaun says he might bring out more issues of YKS in the future, if he can find the time. ALPHA put translations in because it needed a selling point. I don't. VOID is the size I want it now, and any increase in circulation over, say, 25, would put us in bad. As it is now we can barely squeeze by on the paper, stencils, and ink. So I think I'll keep VOID as it is now, with maybe a gradual increase, if any at all. After all, there are 150 Gerfans, and my circulation can't handle even half of them.))

RON BENNETT, 7 Southway, Arthurs Avenue, Harrogate, Yorkshire, England, comments.... I must disagree with Joe Gibson's remarks on the beginning of fanzines, which is a broad generalization and nothing more; I'm suprised that Joe seems to consider it nicely pigeon-holed as fact. For instance -- and forgive me for speaking of only myself here, though I know it's true of many other fen I know -- I write to about 100 fen up and down England, the Continent and America. I rarely repeat myself. Why then is it easier to mimeograph 50 copies of a fanzine than it is to write 50 letters? I put out the letters and the fanzine. PLOY at least didn't start in the way described by Joe, and I don't know of a fanzine which did, considering I've been in on the beginning either directly or very very indirectly of ORBIT, THE NEW FUTURIAN, BEM, PLOY, AKTURUS and BIPED. Perhaps the nearest approach is with the Personal Column of NEW FUTURIAN, though as far as I know Michael Rosenblum

hasn't even the time to put the mag out those days (True. I saw Michael this afternoon, result being that I'm cutting the letter section for him.) never mind write letters! As for a continental fan being able to afford those high-priced American prozine subs! Ha! I was charged 25 francs in Antwerp for Galaxy (I'm not sure if it wasn't 35, but we'll let it go). This works out at 3/7d for the mag, which is around 48 cents of American money. Anyone want to work it out? On the whole though DIGGING was an interesting article and I'll look forward to seeing Joe and Mrs. Gibson in London in '57.

"Harrogate in '58." --- Ron Bennett

((I believe Joe was referring to the early fanzines, Ron. Of course nowadays we don't have to have zines that give out information. Only, back when fandom was just coming into being, the news was mostly about stf, writers, mags, and the like. Something like a newszine would be the best description of the early mags. And it is easier to mimeo 50 copies of a newszine than repeat the same stuff in 50 letters.))

ROSE EBERT, Nurnberg, Kappengasse 8, Germany, queries.....

You don't expect me to pass on these quote cards, do you? In the first place I don't know anybody I could send them to unless I just pick at random an address out of the avalanche of zines that's been hitting me lately. There's even less chance of my passing on those lucky chains. If I'm not mistaken, such stuff is forbidden in Germany (when using the mail for it, anyway) but that's not the reason. What would I do with 487 women? I could get along with even one. Seriously Greg, does one have to do things like that to be happy and gay? Is it then true, that most civilized people have lost the ability to make fun to such an extent that they have to go to extremes, go to any length to procure what they think it is?

I'll explain: This hunting for laughs in, what I consider a rather hectic matter looks to me like addiction. The simple dose doesn't work anymore, the system does not respond to it anymore. So one goes and takes a double dose and then even a stronger one, until what one takes has no resemblance any more to the natural thing (fun) one started with. It's a kind of perversity, as I see it. It's over-heated, a hot-house fun really with a vegetation that could not stand up under our climate, could not be considered fun any more except by the hot-house people. Now I take fun, whenever I run across it. There's enough, if you keep your eyes open, without having to hunt for it, artificially create it even. Theoretically I should side with walt ((Ernsting)), I also am for stf pure and simple, but knowing neither of the adversaries personally I'll have to refrain from judgement. As I feel today I don't want to meet anyone!

I expect fans don't live in harmony with each other all the time, (perhaps they do so only occasionally, even) after all, one has to have a marked individuality (or maybe crazy?) to become a fan in the first place. They couldn't be expected to live together as peacefully (?) as normal people. They all like stf, but this seems to be a precious stone to them, everyone puts into a quite different setting than the next one, so when they join hands there are scratches. I don't know.

Quite suddenly it dawned on me what's wrong with fannish fans. You're extroverts, all of you, bloody extroverts. You're turned inside out like the corpses in a left-handed league, and when I get around to putting that into a story you'll get it. Another question. What do you get out of these quote cards? Is sending them a sign of your affection? (!!)) I'd like to get hip to the ways of fans and there's no better way than asking. Anyway, it did me good to write, even though you probably can't make head or tail of this letter. ((To be honestly truthful and stuff, I'd better say that Rose has been informed that we aren't extroverts and don't go in for too much fun. Before you write insulting letters for me to print, maybe I ought to also mention that Rose understands quote cards now, and I think understands what fannish fandom is. And don't look at me, 'cause I only sent some quote cards and a chain letter I received from Ann Steul. But there's more....))

ROSE EBERT (con'd)... You know, I got the hang of those quote cards. Will try them myself sometime.

I feel proudly honored ((??)) by your answering that swiftly - or was it just that you felt stung by the expression extrovert? After all, roughly all people are - or better - can be classified as either extroverts or introverts. It doesn't necessarily have to reach the stage where it rightly should be called perversity or madness. EVERY NORMAL BEING IS NORMAL ONLY BECAUSE THE ABNORMAL THREATENS HIM TO REEL HIS BALANCE. Mental illness never is something frighteningly new in a person's make up, but just the loss of balance.

Did you ever - not even once - doubt your sanity? Then you never looked into yourself objectively. But then, perhaps you are too young for that. If one would treat all psychopaths, the whole thing would be reversed and there would be more sick people than sound ones and that of course would mean that mental illness in "normal" as normality means majority. Don't take it hard, for - after all - who is to define what still is sound? We would have to have a demi-god to do that. Anyway, the American school of psychology sets the equation:

maximal adaptation = optimal development

I protest. Adaptation, is necessary, yes, even vital - it may be, always makes for mediocrity. A person is not ill, because he has difficulties in adapting. So why be shocked at expressions like that? The first time a person looks into himself he is shocked.

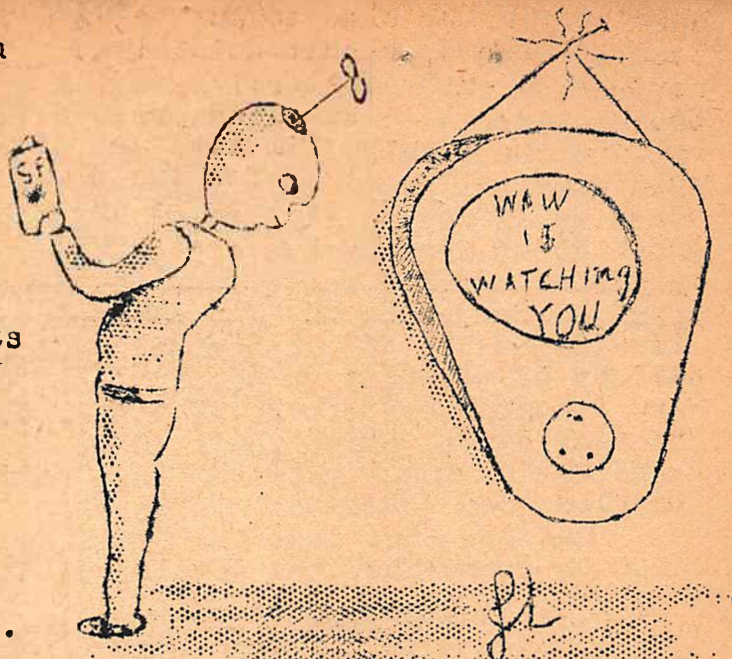
I don't know whether you follow my line of thought, but anyway, thinking of such matters always ends up with two quotations, which hold everything there is to be said about it. One is from Lord Byron out of "Manfred" and one from an unknown science fiction writer, whose name I have forgotten:

"Who knows the most
must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal truth
for the tree of knowledge
is not that of life"

and

"To know this and still do the job, that means being human."
((This is almost the same viewpoint presented by David Riesman in The Lonely Crowd, a book on the changing type of the world. There is a tendency today toward conforming, and this doesn't look good from any viewpoint. Rose and I have been trading viewpoints back and forth on this for a while now, and I was wondering what you think. Comment?))

ROSE EBERT, again.... Stf is meat to me, and you just serve gravy. Now I'm all for a hearty diet, I'll keep VOID until I'm toothless, I might enjoy the gravy then.. Possibly the word gravy has a second meaning in American slang, I don't know, but almost suspect it because of words like "gravy train". I want to state that I mean no second meaning. Sf is the main course, fans and their activities are additional - well, say salad and the like. I like gravy, and I like salad, but not without meat. If there's not meat in the gravy, I always suspect it comes out of a tin, it's not the real thing at all, and I'm of a suspicious nature concerning people's shabby motives so I've got to ask you.



(cross your heart and hope to die) Is it sf you're talking about or just a part of fandom who happen to be your friends besides - possibly - being readers of sf literature? ((This is what I meant a while back about screen opposition, tho Rose isn't of the same opinion now as she was when she wrote this letter. The Gerfans are mainly interested in sf. Just as it was in the States about 25 years ago, the fans don't care much about fannishness. Only a few, usually the ones who have had contact with the outside world (off the Continent) are the people interested in fandom. But as to why I don't print more sf: In Germany there's already UTOPIA and all the pocketbooks you want. The normal reader has a large amount of material to choose from, as translations and original novels are printed very often. If I were to print any sf I would have to take amateur stuff, which you'll have to admit isn't very good, and I can find more entertaining material that doesn't pertain directly to science fiction. Get your meat elsewhere....

And now that Rose has finished for this issue, we will skip to another femme-fan, the Wetzlar witch...))

ANN STEUL, 17 Falkenstrasse, Wetzlar/Lahn., babbles.....

UPON READING VOID

upon reading Void I could not help noticing how much better this duplicating business is, how nearly perfect the make-up and how lousy the comments of its editors are.

upon reading Void I could not help wondering why I should receive such a nice build-up in that story about our meetings and I pondered on the idea of presenting my side of the story - which I might do at some later date.

upon reading Void I was amazed at the multitude of ideas I managed to hatch out of the eggs laid within its pages - and now grateful should the old hen be to the editors, who cannot help being what they are.

upon reading Void I immensely enjoyed several argumentative statements that might crop up at some later date, I'd rather postpone the intended murder till the victims are unaware of things to come - and from time to time would I not have liked to turn the tender delicate necks of certain twins, much beloved?

upon reading Void did I enjoy the letter column??? You bet your sweet doggone life I did!!! Especially several santimonious references to a certain personality who takes everything personal.

upon reading Void I once more took deep pity on a certain Mrs. Benford who was most certainly not aware of things to come on a certain cold day in January. Poor dear lady indeed. Those monstrous brats!

upon reading Void I wondered what their Father felt when he came home tired and weary?

upon reading Void I wondered what a certain he-goat might be up to, for only a he-goat could judge whether certain persons belonged to the goat family and if they were of the same or opposite sex. Ah he-goatie! How was the Irish grass this summer?

upon reading Void I thought that another number of F might be more important than anything else, nobody could take that lying down!

upon reading Void I seemed to remember that I said something about subs to fanzines - not on no more reading, which should take care of a certain he-goat bloating around. ((Sometimes I wish I weren't so close to Wetzlar, and then maybe I wouldn't get letters like this.))

RAY SCHAFFER, JR., 4541 Third St. N.W., Pleasant Hills, Canton, Ohio, disillusioned.... Sorry to disillusion you, Julian Farr, and all connected with German fandom, but VOID is not the first fanzine to be pubbed in Germany. In 1953, Claude Hall, published a small mag that was distributed primarily to British and American fans; thus, it could not, of course, be termed an actual German fanzine as only a couple of German fans at the time were on his mailing list due to the dormant state of Gerfandom at the time. For the likes of me I can't remember the name

of Claude's mag (I have a couple copies around the house somewhere but my efforts have been futile to locate them) as it was rather an insignificant mag, consisting primarily of editorial ramblings. You know, one of those mags that one must stumble through, short in disgust, and heave it against the bedroom wall in a mad effort to forget the unfortunate experience. Thus, my reason for forgetting the title. But I do recall it was published in Germany while Claude was stationed there in the service of the U.S. Army - - the only reason I recall the editor's name is that Claude is extremely well-known for his tremendous output of crud. Anyway, it was the first fanzine to come from Germany (Hamburg), but in as much as it didn't contain any material by members of Gerfandom, I suppose we can cross it off the record because of its insignificance and complete disregard for Gerfandom. Furthermore, VOID is a long sight better and more so deserves the honor of being Germany's first true fanzine. Hope you two lads continue with VOID for many more issues and I say this for two reasons; (1) I always enjoy reading foreign mags as to learn and understand the opinions, thoughts, etc. of fans in other lands - - not only in reference to stf, but also on political, religious, social, etc. matters. (2) As much as I enjoy foreign mags, on occasions I grow tired of the many British mags that reach my mailbox, as the majority of them possess a similar atmosphere that makes one British mag hardly distinguishable from the rest, with the result that a change in atmosphere and approach is desired - - VOID is the change and a delightfully welcome one, believe me.

In regards the movie, 'The Conquest of Space'. I likewise saw this and thought it stank. I beg to differ with you, Jim, for it definitely was not factual. In fact, it was a farce. Of course, I have an extensive college background in the physical sciences and the errors in the movie probably weren't quite so obvious to the majority of its viewers. This is not meant to be an insult to your intelligence, Jim; merely a suggestion that you be more leary of the Hollywood efforts in the future, as Hollywood has never made a 100% factual stf movie, and probably never will. Take the space station in the movie (who in Ghod's name I ask you, wants it - - did I hear a bid from Vargo Statten) - - it did not conform to the basic laws of mechanics for a large number of reasons, of which there are so darn many that I won't even bother to go into detail else I run this letter into a boresome technical article. But the space station wasn't the only thing that sickened me, as the rocket was also plagued with scientific errors, such as the 'space speed indicator' that read both zero on earth and Mars. The same speed indicator being used on both planets is an utter impossibility due to the difference in size and mass of earth and Mars; the speed at which the two planets travel through their orbits also makes the use of one indicator a farce due to the differences in orbital speed of the two planets. And then there was the rockets' encounter with the asteriod, it moving at relatively the same speed as the rocket, which means a mighty slow asteriod - - a tried ast, so to speak. And when the rocket blasted away from the asteriod there was no acceleration to speak of. When they reached Mars, our Space Cadets go around without pressure suits, a risky business, I'd say! Then, to top off the whole lousy mess, our Cadets insist on righting the rocket for takeoff, disregarding the well-known fact that rockets do not have to be pointed in an absolute vertical position in order to achieve a danger-free takeoff. The characters in the movie were absolutely fabulous. I received the impression that possibly they were the 'Bowery Boys' cast in new roles. I suppose our friends from Hollywood figured that they'd best present 'adverage Joe's' to counter-attack the public's conception that scientific-minded people are queer ducks. Bosh ! ! ! ((Maybe this is why Jim changed his column; at least it's safer.))



came as a pleasant surprise, although, it is sent to me because I am a 'Wrong Door', I may possibly be getting the mag under false pretences...

What is a Wrong Door? I know that if you happen to be a female the one marked 'Gents' doesn't offer much hospitality...and I know what a Door is when it's not a Door, but this one has me.

Is it some subtle, esoteric phrase born of Ger-fandom to baffle the minds of other fandoms? ((I'm afraid Door Eric doesn't have his glasses with him, or he would have recognized that word. Or maybe this typer doesn't cut too well. But I a-Door this machine and ain't gonna part with it. And I Door you to make me change. I is unmoveable.))

WALT WILLIS, 170 Upper Newtownards Road., Belfast, N. Ireland, comments... VOID is coming along like a

house on fire, isn't it? ((Well, Archie Mercer burned his copy, if that's what you mean.)) / Thank ghoddness there's only one flaming story, but even that was comparatively innocuous and I enjoyed all the articles. Part of the interest of Joe Gibson's piece was trying to find out what he meant in certain passages, if anything. The last sentence, for instance; does he imply that no one here would wish to get acquainted with him unless he brought his pretty wife along? I hope not. Honestly, fellow Europeans, Joe isn't that bad. I spent a day and night with him in a bus with the temperature in the 90's and he was still able to make me laugh with his Texas drolleries.

Ernsting's piece was fascinating in its way. I didn't think anyone except Forry Ackerman still believed in science fiction that way. I sympathise with him in his struggles, but I can't help wondering if bad science fiction isn't a worse enemy of science fiction than no science fiction at all.

First and Second Encounter I found very interesting indeed, and I was awed at your optimism in planning a Convention in Germany. We've had fandom in Ireland for eight years now and we still go white with fear whenever anyone suggests a Convention in Belfast. Why don't you hire one of those Rhine pleasureboats and come and pick us all up? ((And spend all our bheer money? That wouldn't work at all. I don't think Courtney would rent us even a leaky skiff for \$15.))

DICK ELLINGTON, 299 Riverside Dr. Apt. 11A, New York 25,

N.Y., remarks... Was due for some remarks myself on how much continental fandom resembles early American fandom but it seems the old Maestro Gibson beat me to it. Not that I was around either during first fandom, but I have read quite a bit about it and know quite a few of these fossils. Saha is one of the donizens of this Slan Shack affair I'm inhabiting right now. Not that first fandom sounded particularly interesting. Like somebody remarked someplace else, (I forget where) just lately, there wasn't much in fandom until the advent of sixth fandom, at least, not for happy go foofnick people like me.

Ernsting's bit. This is definitely what I mean by resemblances to early fandom. Sob in throat, eyes turned skyward and very starry and a very definite sense of wonder present. Heckon us pore jaded fen are too old to really get this spirit any more. (Come to think of it I don't even remember having it.) But it is familiar and not at all undesirable, despite the sneers of the cynifen.

And it's most handy, us having you over there I mean. How would we find out so much about all these doings over there otherwise? I mean of course from the personal end that is. FT comments and second hand tales via Jansen are all very well and good but this gives us a look we wouldn't otherwise have had. "This" being VOID of course.

Re Trimble. Six ishes and such is all well and good but FOR GOD'S SAKE DON'T PUT OUT AN ANNISH!!!!!!

Ah, but the printing has improved. Could it be that decrepit machine or no you're learning more about its little idiosyncrasies? Dave Mason could take the most decrepit, bedraggled, coughing and sputtering machine made, work with it for awhile and when the spirit moved him turn out little works of art on it.

We used to have another one to the tune of the Notre Dame song that went:

Bheer, bheer for old O'Dea high,
You bring the whiskey, I'll bring the rye.
Send the freshmen out for gin,
Don't let a sober soph'more in.

We never stagger, we never fall,
We sober up on wood alcohol,
While the drunken faculty,
Goes staggering down the hall.

Went down to see the Bulmers off a couple of weeks ago. (Now there was a brawl.) By now they're either home in Tresco or off visiting Oblique house recounting fannish adventures in the States to WAW. ((well, that song is a little old, Dick, about 30 years, to be vague. Maybe when I asked you about the old songs, I should have said 'no old rhymes aloud.'))

TERRY CARR, 134 Cambridge St., San Fransisco 24, Calif., mutters.... VOID, by the way, has been used before as a title.. I think two or three years ago. The mag saw only one issue, as far as I know, and achieved no prominence, but it still got to the title before you. And possibly it was used before that. The title "Out Of the Void" has been used for editorials, too... Ian Macauley's COSMAG, circa 1950-1952. ((Hmmm. Now that I have the mag going, somebody tells me it's been used before. When we decided on the title I looked it up in The Immortal Storm and also asked around fandom for two months. Nobody told me. But as to Ian's title, I WAS IN THE ASFO BEFORE COMING OVER HERE! But the title fit so well I asked Ian for it and since he didn't object I went ahead with it.))

JIM LINWOOD, 10, Meadow Cotts, Netherfield, Notts, England, informs.... Two main things are happening in England now: (1) a sudden boom in war stories (ranther has devoted its whole printing programme to it) and (2) interest in stf.

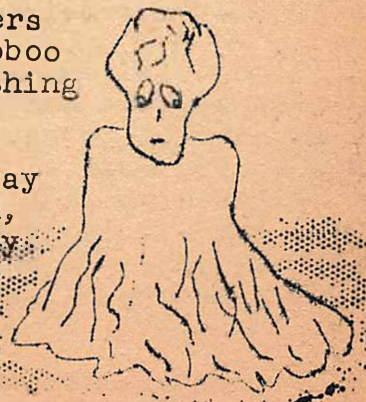
TV has dragged Prof. Quatermars from the depths of Terooma Rocket Range to do a sequel to "Quartermars Experiment", which you'll see as a film. The plot wasn't original, usual stuff, alien parasite invasion. Rather like Burke's "Twilight of Reason", but far more horrifying.

All leading book companies in Britian have started printing 'S.F. series', mainly US stuff, but a few British authors are represented.

Well, that ends this letter column. Sorry for the length, but there wasn't much to print besides the letters and (I hope) the conrep. Sorry also for the hunks of egoboo I let slip through. But then, everybody has to get something out of life. To each his own, etc.

Before you start blasting me for it, I want to say that I temporarily went out of control (the nice way to say it) and used all those puns. But then they aren't so bad, if you take into consideration the awful puns Jawn Berry had in the Willis Christmas card....ech.

Some of those would make the most fearless a-moung us wreath in pain.



OUT OF THE

VOID

COMES YE ED

Please excuse the hurried appearance of this issue, but it has to be that way. Actually, tho, the last part of the mag, ie, the conrep, is the only rushed part. This is due to the delay we will have to go through in order to attend the con, write the report, stencil and mimeo it. The aim of this, of course, is to get the news out as soon as possible, in other words, scoop everybody. I have a sneaking suspicion that Jan Jansen is going to try to get out ALHA soon after the con, but I may be wrong.

The reason Jim and Julian have their review columns after the letter-col is sort of complicated. First Jim wasn't going to do any column at all because the shipment of books from the States hadn't gotten in yet. Then, when the books came in a short while ago, he still couldn't because it would take too long to read them. But he got to work (a very disgusting habit), and the result is the column, tho it had to be held over to the last (can't read that many books in a few days, you know) and is short. Julian's column was held up because we didn't get ANDRO out till two days after Xmas, the November ish, at that. I don't even know if Julian is going to have a review yet, even, as this is typed on the 30th of December, and it hasn't arrived.

I suppose I must apologize for the horrible repro in the first of this issue, too, because it's just that. About $\frac{2}{3}$ of the copies either had small under or over-linked sections (or large, for that matter) in them. We had trouble with the ink screen and the blamed things wouldn't work right; ink smeared and stencils wrinkled. Fortunately, however, we managed to get the wrinkles out by a long process of stretching the stencil and coating our hands with ink. Some of the stuff hasn't come out yet, and it's been four days. I hope it's not too hard to read, and we vow to do better next time. Also I've shoved the margins out as far as they'll go, and unless the staples get in the way I think you'll be able to read it. Won't you? But ONE thing I don't think I'll get any gripes over is the green paper. Not so???

At long last we've gotten another artist, Jim Linwood, to scrawl for us. And good scrawlings they appear to be, too. No comments?

In order to maintain our schedule we're going to have to get out an issue a month after this one. About early, early, Feb, I'd estimate. So if you want your letter printed and your material published (hint...hint....) get it in as soon as this reaches you. On second thought, it will be late Feb, not early. If you get this around, say the 10th to the 20th (or even up to the 25th), please air mail your comments or whathaveyou. I'm going to need material quick, and any contributions, no matter how small, will be greatly appreciated. But please make it pertain to the Continent....

I honestly never thought anyone would take this chola thing seriously. When it started out in the third issue, it was splashed all over the mag in an attempt to copy the 'Let's Clean Up Fandom' movements. Perhaps weaped it too well. I thought it was obviously a satire. But no one else did, so we tried another, toned-down, attempt. Still no one caught on. Andy Young said he thought it might be a satire, but he wanted to head off a possible sorcon movement. Ha! A likely excuse. But it's gone a little further than we expected, and now the time has come to reveal the truth.

CHOLA IN NONSENSE!!! Hear? No, I didn't mean all those things about 'cleaning up fandom'. No. Bheer is Ghod, Ghod is Bheer. Not to mention Bloch and Willis.

Honestly, tho, can you imagine (as Sonny Sodek pointed out) anyone in Germany not liking bheer, or just plain old beer? See how obvious it is? why didn't you guess before?

Really, I thought everybody would get it.....

Please note the new address on the contents page, for English, Holland, Belgium, and Gerfen. we have moved at last. Also, we have a few one-shots left over from back in '55, so if any of you want a copy, feel free....

Sorry to say, YKS, the German fanzine, folded shortly after the last issue went out. The reason was given, as I can translate it, but isn't too clear. Seems Klaus had too little time for his movies, and since they were his first love, YKS went to the dogs. He put out three issues before the announcement about it came out, and I think I can say that they were the best any Gerfan has ever put out. The third was really a whopper, being 33 one third size pages, and containing a lot of material, mostly fiction. Klaus says he might bring YKS back in the future sometime, though, and Ann Steul will probably start her zine sometime soon. As it looks now, tho, we aren't going to publish a zine, but make a special review section in a German fanmag for the Gerfen to learn about stf inside and out of Germany. But that's the way it looks now, and might very well change soon.

Since I may have something to say about the con that wouldn't fit into a report, possibly it would do some good to leave a little space to gab in (that's a pun, son). Below this everything is written after the con, and probably while I'm dead tired.



No, not exactly dead tired, but almost. This is the Friday after the con, in case you want to know, and the conrep has just been finished. Please excuse the hurried appearance of it, but it is hurried, and nothing can cure that except time, and that I ain't got right now. And for the next issue, what about your opinions of the con, Gerfen? we'd like to have your ideas, too.

Before I forget it, Julain wants me to ask all of you fans outside Germany (not you, JJ) just who among you would like to correspond with a Gerfan (or Gerfen, if you want). If you would, write me, and please state which language you wish to write in. There's only German or English, but you do have a choice.... I will give you the addresses and, if you wish, get someone with the same interests as you. This is all for an increased amount of letters between Germany and the outside world, which will help a lot.

Julain's review is a little long, I know. But this is a strange type of review to write, too. In this case the reader doesn't have a chance of knowing what the content of the mag is, as he can't read German. So JP has to go over every point, since no one would know what he was talking about if he didn't. In itself, it is a review of the SFOD, which composes about five sixths of Gerfandom, and I feel that this is the sort of material VOID is intended for.

I hope we can get this issue out soon, at least before feb sets in, 'cause there are stacks of letters to answer right now, and I hate to leave them be. All you people to whom I owe letters, please forgive me for being late. If you receive this in place of a letter, please don't stop writing, because I will answer as soon as possible.

Well, the wetzCon stencils have to be typed and run off, and then Julain's review hasn't arrived yet. Please forgive the rushed issue, and DON'T YOU DARE NOT WRITE!!!

--- gab

the

VERDICT

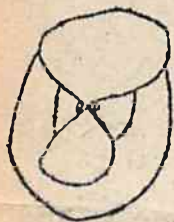
Jim

benford

I've been pretty busy lately, therefore these reviews aren't nearly as complete as they should be, for which I am sorry. We seem to get quite a few of these Ace Double-Novels over here and not enough of the other titles.

THE STARS ARE OURS by Andre Norton is another of these Ace things. It's a reprint of the juvenile edition from the States. However, Norton seems to let a little adult writing (if there is such a thing) creep in which adds a believable vein to an otherwise blood and thunder hack job. The book is divided into two parts, the first being Terra and the usual escape from a crushing yarn that has been written and rewritten. Though Norton can't be blamed for this, since she makes it very enjoyable. The second part, Astra, is the after escape story, and perhaps just a little bit better than the first part. As I said before, an entertaining blood and thunder tale peped up with some adult writing.

The other side of this is 3 FACES OF TIME by Sam Merwin, Jr. I started into this with hopes of finding a novel of the same level as its partner, but was thoroughly disappointed. I will say no more.



The next Ace Novel is a reprint of ONE IN THREE HUNDRED which I recommend and Dwight V. Swain's THE TRANSPOSED MAN. Since I haven't had the time to read Swain's novel, I can't give any review of it.

gal
DOME AROUND AMERICA by Jack Williamson is the other half of an Ace. The book is about just what the title suggests. The blurb reads: "were they the last oasis on an airless Earth?" This itself is the entire story of the book. Briefly the plot centers around the hero, one Barry Thane, King Guard, who single-handedly does almost all the action in the entire book. The ring he guards is something like a force field to hold in the life of America from the outside world, which was destroyed by a cosmic halocast. Eventually Barry, in true style, saves the world and brings everything back to a beautiful peace. Verdict: Enjoyable hack.

The other side of DAA is Charles L. Harness' FLIGHT INTO YESTERDAY in reprint form. Again I haven't had enough time to read it, but I think it would be a fairly readable book.

DEEP SPACE is Eric Frank Russell's contribution to Bantam. This is a thoroughly enjoyable book; it's somehow different from other anthologies because Russell does not employ the shock ending as much as other authors. This is a welcome change, to be able to sit back and read just for the pleasure of reading, not having to expect one big SURPRISE! at the end. Get this.

From the hardbound field comes THE FITTEST by J.T. McIntosh. In this one McIntosh brings up a very welcome plot idea. Not exactly new, but a good job of writing. He has a great use of action and horribly real fear, and makes an entertaining novel and quite an experience. You'll remember ragot's rets for quite a while. Very Good.

--- jnb

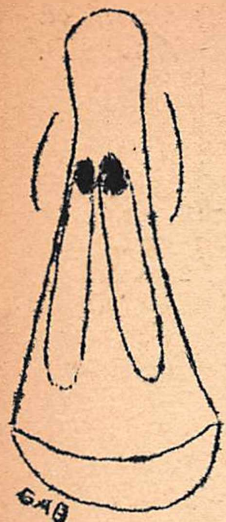
WETZLAR



Today was the day. And a feverish one, at that. My semester geography assignment had to be finished, some letters written, the place put into some kind of order, and then there was a little job of packing to do. The geography passed the way of all homework (no, I finished it this time), Jim took to throwing clothes in a suitcase, John Hitchcock got part of a reply, and I stuffed junk into a closet. No work a'tall.

A week before we had managed to run off a batch of quote cards on the school mimeo, of course using a school stencil, paper and ink. We might have made a few more than we needed, since we had a large box half full of the things. About 60 copies of each. I stuck some of these, along with an interlineation book which was to become the carrier of the first correspondence between ISr'CC members at a con, into my vest pocket and hoped they wouldn't fall out. Jim insisted on bringing along ten copies of VOID to sell (ha-ha) and some food in the form of two candy bars and a box of pretzels.

After a quick lunch we piled into the car and drove over to Wetzlar, a scant 13 miles away. Usually we can find Ann's place very easily, but for some reason we managed to lose the way and wander around for an extra ten minutes. At last, tho, Jim noticed the (in)famous Falkenstrasse hiding behind a building and we had arrived. The directions as to where everyone would be weren't too clear, and for that reason I jumped out and followed the path to the front door. No noise could be heard from within, so I rang the doorbell and hoped. Jim followed me up with the luggage as Ann answered the door, and I walked in. After the customary greeting with Ann, we entered the study (her workshop) and there, sitting on the couch, were Jan Janson and Ellis Mills, The New German. Ann introduced Ellis (I'd already met JJ; see VOID 3) and I found myself liking him almost at once. He's what I would call the "typical Amerifan", though it's doubtful that there is such a thing, stands about 5'9", wears glasses, says he's 25 years old, and cracks puns every now and then. Ellis impressed me as a quiet sort of person who occasionally raised his voice to either laugh or shout across a smoke-filled conroom.



Jan was the same as ever, and his accent as London Circleish (sp?) as it was six months ago. The parents came in for a short while to meet Ellis and speak to JJ and Ann. They left soon, and for a while we sat around getting generally acquainted and tossing insults back and forth. Ann hauled out her new fanmag, FANTUM (German for "fandom"), and I paged through it, noted the egoboo, and set it aside until later. Ellis had come up from Frankfurt Friday after- "If you ever published a personality-zine it would be filled with blank pages."

noon so they would have time to translate the tapes he was going to play, something on fuels by Willy Ley. It took several hours for Ann to translate the thing and type up some copies with Ellis standing by and stopping the tape every five seconds. Jan had arrived that morning after riding all the way from Antwerp on a night train. JJ was quite tired from the ride, and I, knowing trains, don't blame him.

Being all Trufen we made for the prozine collection on the wall and soon Ann was yelling at us about "Tearing down the house". But the only thing that came close to tearing down the place was a collection of jazz by Ellis. He insisted on playing the tapes while Jan stood around and listened. Personally, I thought the rhythm was a bit hackeyed, and the "Did you ever play Russian roulette with a knife?" --- Ellis Mills whole set of tunes didn't sound right. But I'm more of the "smooth" class, and wouldn't appreciate any of the off-on-the-wrong-foot stuff. Ellis told me all about the ISFCC, which I later joined, and all about the EARLORER and the fact that Racey Higgs never cuts a letter. Shortly afterward we picked out Ann's collection of "Captain Marvel" comics. Among other things, she collects "Donald Duck", "Superboy", "Super Kat" (don't look at me) and a bunch of others I've forgotten. Anyway, we were sitting around looking at fanzines, promags and the forementioned comics and every now and then Ellis would pop up with a quote such as: "Whew! I'm bushed!" said the world." or "Holy Moley, my spaceship is out of whack!" These amused me to no end, since I love verbal satires. Especially such nonsense as this.

Ellis entertained us a bit further with a story about Ellison and the test tube, a tale which has probably been repeated many times before. However, none of us had heard it, and got a good chuckle out of it. Also he imitated the "Tucker Public House" speech at (I think) the '52 world con. Really good, if you hadn't heard it.

Around six o'clock we ate supper and collected a few more quotes. JJ "well, it's food, anyway." --- Jan and Ellis had an argument about what the Germans and Flemish call berries, and Ann laughed all through the meal.

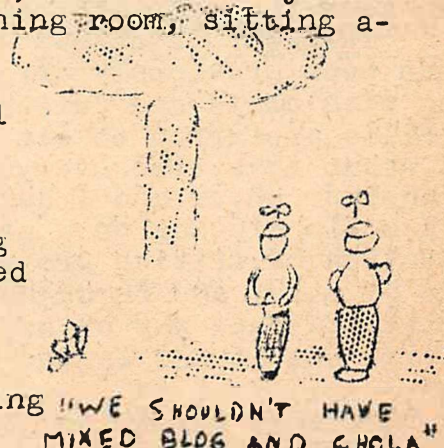
Soon it became time to leave; Julain Parr called and informed us that everyone was down at the hotel, and hadn't come over to her place because they didn't know the way. So we packed up and Ann went looking for the person who was to drive us over to the hotel. She had a huge suitcase that would have passed for a midget tank in the dark, and the rest of us had about seven bags altogether. After a short time she and the car, an Opel, came along the road together. This zine goes to many fans who have never seen an Opel. It's one of the smallest cars made in Germany for the family, and judging from the size of it, Germans are either very small or have few children. We debated the possibility of taking the baggage over in the car with one of us (to unload it) and the rest walking, without even trying to fit into it, Jim and I flipped a coin (we were the smallest) to

decide who would walk and who would ride. I wanted to walk, mostly because of a fear of Ann's huge bag. But luck was nil, and I had to ride. After loading the luggage I climbed into the back seat, and then noticed that there was some room left. Misery loves company, so I called for someone to come along with me. To this day I still believe there was room for just one more in that car. And I'm probably right. Ellis piled in, called to Jan, he came, and Ann got in front beside the chap who was to drive us over. But this didn't work too well, because Jim was left standing outside. No problem at all. He simply crawled over JJ, Ellis, and stretched out over the three of us. There were a few efforts to strangle him as he lay there, but Ellis soon gave up when he found his arm pinned beneath someones leg. No one suffered much, tho, or at least there were no broken ribs.

The car jerked to a halt and JJ started moving, so I came to the natural conclusion that we were there. we were. Only I couldn't tell because there was a solid wall of arms, legs and what appeared to be a head next to me and the suitcases blocking the window on the other side. But I managed to get out after everybody else and found JJ brushing off his pants (which received a good brush with a mud-coated shoe, and the rest of them looking around. For some reason which wasn't explained I was chosen to haul out the bags. With Ann's "tank" full of prozines out of the way it was fairly easy---but what a stack of mags! Everyone sorted out their bags and we looked at the hotel. It was one of the chain "Altes Deutsches Haus" type, a good chain, too, and looked very respectable. My heart went out for it, thinking of the things it had unknowingly committed itself to.....

As a body we shuffled in. The desk was a bar for some reason, and lucky for us, 'cause we had Jansen. By agreement we checked in first and got our room numbers. Or I should say Jim and I did, for Ellis and Jan were staying at Ann's house. We all felt it would be better to get squared away with the conroom and our suitcases inside before we met any fen. It seems everyone but I heard a low buzzing of conversation coming from the dining room, and everyone knew it was Julian and crew. Everyone but I. we got the key to our reserved room and Jim and I went up to put our bags away. For some reason we had room 6, on the third floor. It was a good room, I think---there wasn't much chance to see it---but it held our bags, anyway.

Jim and I walked back to the second floor, where the bookstall stood deserted (no books) and then found the conroom. It was located halfway up the stairs from the first floor, and only about ten steps (stairs steps of course) from the bookstall. Jan, Ellis and Ann had their coats off and were getting out the prozines while waiting for us, and then we joined forces to hunt out any fen in the area. In the dining room, sitting around a large circular table, were Julian Parr, Walt Ernsting, E. Richter (a pro author), their wives and a few others I can't remember. The usual handshaking all around and we settled down at another table. Julian came over and talked for a short while until his supper arrived. Jr is exactly the type of person I thought Walt Ernsting would be, and when I mentioned this later he wanted to know if it was a compliment. I wonder. Like many British fen he wears a mustache along with glasses and a conservative suit. An interesting and humorous personality comes along with it, making quite a bargain. Walt Ernsting is quite a nice guy all around, tho I didn't get much of a chance to



Speak to him during the entire con.

The group at the table (the Wetzlar Circle?) finished supper while we talked and drank chola. Julian, Walt and the others came over and sat around the table we were at, as it was the largest one there. Julian, who was sitting next to me, handed over a manuscript which proved to be the review of ANDRO. I read it a little and gave it to Jim to look over. For some reason he passed it around the front end of the table and the thing drew such comments as: "He should pay for the advertising." and "The end paragraph is good." After glancing at it for the second time I noticed a few things that should have been cut out, and mentioned them to him. He

"Don't get bheer all over my manuscript." --- JP

noted them and asked me to mark out what I didn't want and give it to him later. Never a minute wasted on this fanzine.

Talking went on for a while on various subjects until Walt Spiegl and another fan (whom I didn't know) arrived. Ellis pointed out Walt as

"Help me burn these quote cards." --- Ann

soon as he was inside the door and I was the first...no....second person to shake his hand. Julian is quick on the draw. The Frankfurt Fan is around 21 years old, about the same height as Ellis---5'9", and has a constantly-working sense of humor. If you want a sly remark, Walt's your man.

Shooting the bull was the main pastime for another half hour or so until two obviously neofannish German boys walked in and sat down at a nearby table. One could tell at a glance they were there for the convention, and Ann was too engrossed in her conversation to get up and greet them. Being a member of the committee I got Julian to come with me to start introducing them. Jr got them started off into a conversation and they fitted in perfectly.

Ann motioned to Jim and I and we noticed it was about time for the official program to start. I remained downstairs in a conversation for about five more minutes while Jim went up to the room for our case of pro mags and books. After dragging Jan away from the table we walked upstairs and met Jim coming down with the mags. Setting them up didn't take long, and a good thing, too, for the rest of the fan were at our backs as soon as they were up. A bookseller from Wetzlar had a display ready and I'll bet he cleaned up, 'cause everyone there had a sizeable stack of books. Jim, who keeps track of our collection, found a few items we didn't have and had them paid for before anyone else could get their paws on them.

Jim helped me gather up the zines I had to use in my speech on stf in America and Julian came staggering in under the load of his own. After dumping them on the table for the concommittee all of us went back to the piano near the door and watched Ellis get his tape recorder ready. Tho --- "TWILIGHT OF REASON -- the story of Ellis Mills." --- jnb it had been previously arranged to have the con committee sit in front along with Ellis and Julian---since each was on the program---Ann, Jim and Ellis preferred to sit off with the others. In other words, chicken out. About this time everyone was settling down and ordering drinks. JP got another bheer and I asked for chola. My drink never arrived, tho I did see Jim sipping on a coke which I know he hadn't ordered. Julian's collection of British pro and fan mags for his speech was resting on the table by mine, and throughout the speech he kept holding up the Amazing. I'd like to know why he had to display that so much, and even more what he said, but it was in the Deutsche sprache and consequently Greek to me.

Time came for me to give my speech, and as Ann made the introduction I unscrambled the prozines I was to use. Julian had left the table covered with rubble in the form of mags, books, cards and all sorts of stuff and

it's a minor-miracle I even found my speech. But then the introduction ended, and I rose to pronounce the pear-shaped tones. Not exactly pear-shaped, as any student of the German language will tell you, but tones, nevertheless. One paragraph into the thing I had to stop and ask Ann to stipulate that the TIME TRAVLER wasn't the first fanzine, but the first true fanzine. Three pharas found me floundering around in foreign tones and disconnected sentences. Walt Spiegl had agreed beforehand to take over at about this point, so I let him, and Walt finished it without a single hitch. Three cheers for my friend.

The speech ended, I thanked Walt, and passed out the zines to be looked over. The main interest after the speech for a short while was a bunch of movie stills WE had brought along with him, so the pros efforts remained untouched for a while. Ellis and his tape were all set, and Willy Ley started his speel on fuels. I caught the first ten words of it and gave up, not because of a bad tape, but it was far more interesting to talk to each other. Ann, in the rush to get to the hotel, had for-

"That's waht I meant, I just spelled it wrong."

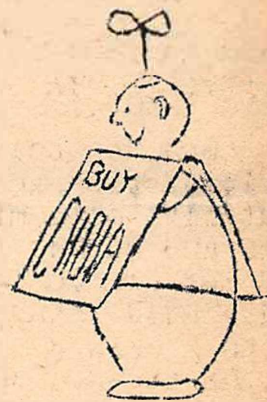
gotten to bring the translations of the speech, and since most of the people there who couldn't understand English started conversations. Ellis apparently thought the same way, as he was soon sitting around our group, too. I remember speaking with Jan, Ellis, Julian, Jim and someone who is a little hazy--can't remember his name--about FANTUM, Ann's new fanzine. Ellis and Jan decided to to rewrite the ISFCC constitution by putting up a platform from the continent. JJ is supposed to be running for secretary, the point of power in the organization, Ellis for vice-president, and I drew president, a doubtful honor. Ellis told me about the club organ, the EXPLORER, and Kacey Higgs, who never cuts a letter.

After about two hours I got tired of this and started walking around and talking to anyone I happened to run into. Walt Spiegl was wandering around the same as I and we both walked out to the bookstand, since neither of us had bought the items we wanted. While standing around looking at mags Walt told me a few things about UTOPIA and the plans for a new German promag sometime this year, possibly this summer. I picked up a few copies of TWS I didn't

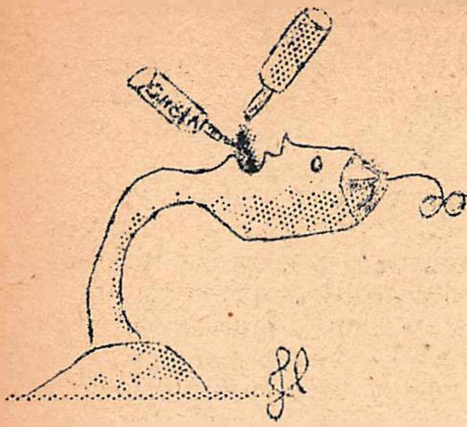
"One of your parents is the mother of a fool."

have and decided to leave them there while I checked downstairs to see if any other fen had shown. We were expecting the Eberts, but unfortunately they couldn't come at the last minute. To me it was a great loss, for Rose was one of the people I wanted to meet and speak to. No one who looked like a fan was sitting downstairs, so I returned once more to the stand. Walt found some pbs he wanted but they belonged to Ann, so he tried to borrow them. I waited while he arranged it and found Ann long enough to discover that the THRILLINGS were hers. Walt and I talked for a while longer and then I returned to the group around the committee table.

By this time it was late and Julian was trying to get somebody to sample his cognac he had hidden in his room. Since Jan and Ellis had to leave soon for Ann's hauso, they both decided to take a sip (?). Jim went on to see what would turn up (something was bound to) and I stayed behind to speak with Walter Ernsting. But Ernsting was engaged in displaying prozines, so there was nothing to do but find Julian's room. This is where I got mixed (a sturring word) up. It seems I remembered Julian's room number and not my own. And besides that, I thought his was mine. In other words, I was under the impression that Julian's room, 2, was mine and the probelm was to find his. So I walked out into the hall and stood in front of what I thought was my room. Faint voices were to be heard



saying things like: "Huummmmm. Very good." and "How much is there left?" The voices came from my room. well, I thought, something is up, and opened the door.



When I saw Ellis, JJ, Jim and Julian standing there it dawned on me that 2 might not be mine, after all. mine was 6. Having thus thought it out in two seconds---plenty of time ---I walked in and acted like nothing was wrong at all. They never suspected a thing. Jan wanted a smoke with his drink but didn't have any matches, and no one else did, either. Julian had a lighter, but it was out of fluid and there was no filler available. After a few moments of

meditation Ellis came up with the idea of lighting it with cognac. entirely innocent of the fact that cognac isn't alcohol, Julian attempted it --- "I hear he was driven out of fandom by your puns." -- EM -- several times and got nothing but a burnt smell for his efforts. Jan went looking for a match, finally, and we followed him down to the program room.

Ellis asked me to keep his tape recorder in his room for the night to which I consented. A few minutes later he told me that Walt Spiegl would do it, since we were going to have to carry in to the movie, and Walt didn't have any bags, as we would. Jan, Ellis and Ann had to pack up and leave at twelve, so Julian and I started collecting the prozines we had handed around earlier. Having found them, we mapped plans for the following day and got everything arranged. Ann, Ellis and JJ left, we said good night, spoke for a while with Julian, and went up to the room.

I tried reading for a while and managed to finish Julian's review before paging through FANTUM and a few other things. At about 1:30 we quit and went to sleep. Around six in the morning someone falling down a flight of stairs woke me up. Probably a non-fan, I thot, and went back to sleep.

//////////

My eyes opened. The light was strong. I closed them. Presently Jim elbowed me in the side and I opened up again. "Time to get up," he said.

Jim would give me no rest, so there was nothing else to do but get up and get dressed. This was accomplished in short order and the bags were packed except for some prozines I wanted to glance at before leaving. All squared away, I went out in search of fannish activity. This turned out to be not more than twenty feet away in the form of Walt Spiegl, who informed me that Julian was about ready to have breakfast. About that time JP himself came up the stairs and confirmed the information. we made plans as to when to meet and I went back to pack the remaining promags.

About five minutes later Walt met us in the hall and we walked down to Julian's room. He was packing, too, so we had a fine time making comments on his stf material. The poor chap invited us to look for anything of interest in his briefcase, so we all started sorting out stuff. For some reason he was carrying a translation of a novel with him which ran to about 100 pages, a file full of correspondence and old fanzines, promags, and a few old manuscripts. Julian told Walt about the cognac and the lighter, so he wanted to see all the equipment and the bottle. Strangely, tho, the bottle had only a little left in the bottom, while it had been almost entirely full when we left last night....

By this time Julian was through packing, so we went downstairs to have breakfast. Ernsting and some others were already eating, so we took

"Let's preserve Bloch in chola." --- gab

a table nearby. WE told us he poured water on some non-fans who were yelling or something around the early hours of the morning, which of course drew comment in the form of "minor incidents". During breakfast there was an argument on pros which I mostly agreed with, except for the types of pros.

As the room had to be signed out by twelve, we decided to take our luggage to the movie and from there to Ann's house. Jim ran up and got the bags while I checked out and we all set out for the movie. A few pictures were taken in front of the hotel and Julian asked someone for directions. Walking through Wetzlar reminded me of a British convention because of the narrow streets and the general atmosphere. Jr said it looked a lot like his home, but Wetzlar couldn't compare because "they let monsters walk the street."

Soon we crossed the Lahn river and got lost. But Jim found the way again because he had been over this territory before, and as we neared the center of town I spotted the familiar trench coat of Ann Steul and recognized the others beside her. Both groups were late, so none could blame the other for not getting there on time. There was quite a crowd in the lobby, so we just stood around and I tried to get rid of some of the quote cards I had. Ellis thought it would be a daring stunt to give the ticket man a real faaaaaanish quote card instead of the fake fan things sold by the management. His hopes were dampened somewhat when Ann came

"Chola and crottled greeps, please." -- Ann

around collecting money to buy all our tickets at once, but Ellis persisted in giving one to the guy, and Jim, Jan and I decided to do the same. The time approached for us to pass by and one by one we filed by. Ellis hid his under his coat. JJ dropped his. I crumbled mine up in my hand. Jim put his in his pocket. We're all cowards.

Ann had gotten the movie "War of the Worlds" for the theatre, so the con group got the special balcony which was raised above the floor. We

"I hate crottled greeps." -- Julian

had just settled down when the film started, so the usual fannish wisecracks lingered on through the travel film. Most of us had already seen the movie, but came along just for kicks.

When it was over and right had won out, I got up to leave since I didn't remember the discussion to be held later. Ann made the announcement and 31 people stayed behind, most of them teenagers. Walt Ernsting and a few pros whose names I've unfortunately forgotten stood up and put in the plug for good ole UTOrIA and then started a free discussion, which by all appearances was fairly successful. Shortly after it started Jan and Ann started passing notes back and forth about future plans. And they used my notebook, too!

The people who stayed, a more than adverage percentage, kept the discussion going for about thirty minutes until it was decided to break up and leave. Another film was to be shown afterwards, so we had to vacate the movie soon. Outside we paused for a few minutes to use the movie's poster to pose in front of for pictures and then split up, Jim and I re-
turning with Ann's group. A few blocks from the picture house I happened
to notice a lamp post that looked exactly like the martian ray gun, and everybody started to run in mock terror. Ann screamed and Ellis made slobbering noises, while the rest of us just ran. Of course, every corner we rounded had another one, but Ann, with her clever knowledge of the back-alleys of Wetzlar, soon eluded the deadly aliens and we were safe. 29

Somebody mentioned the cost of the movie in relationship to the other German movies and it seems it didn't cost too much after all. But I'll bet ArtScope would have lowered the price, not to mention give a bigger and better picture.

As we slogged down Falkenstrasse with its mud holes, a car came slowly down from the other end of the street. Ann, knowing full well what would happen, warned us that the auto would probably coat us with water from one of the many pits which dotted the road. Jim, Jan and I went into a dead run for the house, and Ellis started jogging along, too. We reached the safety of the drive just in time, but by this time the car was moving so slowly it didn't even splash any water. Ellis hadn't made it, but he didn't get splashed, either. Ann came along with a smug look on her face. huh.

We all enjoyed a hearty meal at Ann's and left quickly for the hotel. Ellis had a very heavy suitcase to carry, and I was quite happy to let him lug it all the way, but after a mere block he shoved it into my hands and bade me luck. The Bag weighed at least 50 lbs, or seemed so, and I had one heckuva time carrying it a few blocks. We crossed the Lahn river again and

"Sharks DO bother one, you know."

Jan tossed over a cigarette to see if it would return with the natural backwash. To everyone's amazement it did, and soon the air was filled with scraps of paper, quote cards, bits of handkerchiefs and other material which returned in the current. Everyone acted like they had discovered a new scientific wonder and talked about it for some time afterward.

Ellis had the suitcase back by the time we reached the hotel, since both Jim, Jan and I were tired from carrying the thing. Everyone was there, plus a few who had come over from the movie, and soon our party was spread to the four winds (or is it five?). A few of us got over at one end of the table and started a bull session concerning mostly gravitation and logic. There was supposed to be some sort of conducted public discussion that afternoon, but most of us were content to talk among ourselves and not bother with group order. However, Ann thought we ought to maintain something that looked like a program, and wanted to start the discussion. She wouldn't do it herself, and since Jim and I don't know German, we asked Walt Ernsting. He started a small one in the middle of the table, while on both ends we formed private groups. Ellis told us a few facts about center of gravity and from then on the talk went from books to fandom and on down the line. Near the end of it Ellis once again, and for the last time, told me that Racey Higgs never cuts a letter.

Around 4:30 everyone started to leave, and Jim and I cornered Walt "Would it be permissible to call the quarters where the overnight guests for the wetzCon stay BedWetz?" -- Peter Kranold
Spiegl for a short talk before he left. Ellis, Julian, both walts and the rest got their stuff together and we all walked out to the street. Julian was riding back with, I believe, Walt Ernsting and some other fen, while Ellis was returning to Frankfurt with Walt Spiegl. I shook hands all around, said goodbye, and left them standing on the sidewalk, waiting for their cars.

walking back to Ann's house with JJ and Ann, we compared the Twerpcon with the one we were at. As Jan said, as a convention the wetzCon had the Antwerp meeting beaten, and as a party the Twerps had it. Jan was to stay one more day with Ann to discuss her further publishing ventures, and then on Tuesday leave for home, stopping to see Julian for a while. Our parents were to come by about 6:00 and pick us up, so we had a little time to read fanzines and talk. I had barely started on an old HY-PHEN when the car drove up and it was time to leave. It was an abrupt ending, much to my sorrow. We both said goodbye and left.

The con was over.

GERMAN

REVIEW

ANDROmeda Nr. 2, December 1955. (Walter Ernsting, Kupferberg/Siegbach, Velken; bimonthly; price DM 0,50 (10d or 12¢); free to SFCD members)

The second issue of ANDROmeda is in effect a detailed survey of this strange new land which has appeared on the horizon: Gerfandom. A review of ANDRO 2 must therefore become a review of Gerfandom itself. It is with no apologies, therefore, that I set out to examine this fanzine at some length. Since it is in German, you may even welcome this review as an 'ersatz' for the original.

In comparison with ANDRO 1, the present issue shows maturity and self-confidence. The approach is no longer apologetic (although there was good reason for this atmosphere in the first issue, which had the appearance of a rush "one-shot"). In this fanzine, which proudly bears the banner headline: "Germany's first science-fiction fanzine," definite editorial policy is evident, and distinct signposts towards future development have appeared.

The format is orthodox: 30 off-white pages in DIN A4 (a large quarto or small foolscap, as you will). The layout is still disappointingly primitive: pages are not numbered, and in two places there are large gaps of blank paper. This wasteful practice should stop; it would be easy enough for the editor or the duper-operator (Hose Ebert) to lay in a small store of "fillers." Art-work is good; most of it is by "SRICEO," whose work is obviously that of a professional. The cover: a cosmic-size "man" wearing more hints at clothing and bearing the familiar flaming torch of knowledge, is seen leaping away from the planet Earth, breaking the symbolic chain of gravity, while reaching out for something which the whirling emblem of the atom is supposed to symbolise. In the background, in order to make quite clear what is meant, is the usual space ship. Inside the fanzine only two of the items have illustrated headings, but both are expertly done; otherwise all the titles are typewritten, and this gives the mag a makeshift appearance. In addition the two centre pages are full of supposedly humorous cartoons. The only one worth reproducing was cribbed from True Magazine the others were by SRICEO, presumably from ideas submitted by SFCD members. The space and effort expended on these could be much better used for script titles for the main items in the issue. Duplicating was very clear and sharp, but ink was used most sparingly, so that the resulting "gray on gray" was hard on the eyes.

The SFCD honorary president, 4sj Ackerman's contribution to the issue is a short report on the CleveCon, in which he made particular mention of Ken Bulmer autographing copies of the German "Utopia" prozine issue which contained Walt Spiegl's translation of his "The Stars Are Ours."

Ernst H. Richter, member of the SFCD executive and head of the "Literary Department" (he is a pro-author of three or four space operas) contributed an "open letter" addressed to the film critic of the Cologne daily "Stadtanzeiger". This erring reviewer had committed the unforgivable

JULIAN PARR

sin of damning the film "Conquest of Space" with faint praise and irony, and had asserted in fact that "Braun's space station still lies far off in the future." In one sentence he delved deeper: "What is remarkable in this film, which surely aims at sensationalism, is the attempt to demonstrate the helplessness of man in the gigantic strangeness of space... However the human factor, the soul's inadequacies, which will present immeasurable difficulties to space travel, is often almost suppressed by the technical element - the "free fall game", the encounter with a planetoid, the earthquake on Mars; furthermore the dialogue is dominated by an American "Galgenhumor" which makes one think the crew "were members of a rugby team."

I've quoted at such length because this comparatively gentle review led an indignant Walter Ernsting to write a stinging and violent reply, accusing the critic of retreating behind slogans because the film was above his mental level, beyond his primitive and naive standpoint; only an "idiotic ignoramus" could maintain that space travel lay far in the future: Braun's space station would circle the earth in ten years time. He ended by referring to his intention to have his comments published as an "open letter"; the critic promptly obtained a court order forbidding publication under pain of an unspecified fine and imprisonment up to six months! Costs of this judgment to be paid by Walter Ernsting!

Thus Ernst Richter's open letter is couched in more moderate terms. After quoting the errant reviewer in full, he proceeds to tackle every slur, real and imagined, on the film. He is able to cite the favorable reception given to it by the German Interplanetary Society (of which he and his wife are members), and claims that every scene and incident in the film is based on a scientific foundation "100% guaranteed by the technical advisors."

An enterprising young SFCD member had written direct to George Adamski and received confirmation straight from the horse's mouth that "The Flying Saucers Have Landed!" Adamski's letter is published here; in it he casually mentions that since the appearance of his book (a translation of which has been published in Germany) Adamski has spoken to "many men and women who have come from various planets of our solar system." His experiences will be described in a forthcoming book; for the moment we must be content with his assurance that these people are our friends and bear goodwill towards us: "As long as we too are peaceful." Walter Ernsting published the letter because, "After all, Adamski is somebody; as to what he is you can decide for yourselves."

Another member, Manfred Schulz of Berlin, brings a item of fan-fiction which is well-written, although in the end the plot fizzles out like a damp squib. In an effort to discover how the solar system originated a space "skooter" flies off away from the Earth, gradually increasing speed. When it is travelling at a hundred times the speed of light the occupants switch on a "tyrograph" and "read" the light rays they have overtaken, the light rays which left the solar system at the time of its creation. The tension mounts as the skooter's velocity increases; the pointer approaches the "98x" notch on the dial, only two notches further and they can switch on! Now read on: "His voice had dropped to a whisper, his body began to swell. Blood spurted from his mouth and his ears. His eyes protruded from their sockets, staring at the number "98." Ninety-eight times the speed of light! His companion bellowed out, screaming loudly for help... With constant speed, maintaining the course laid down for it, the silver globe raced through space. Two burst bodies - human bodies - floated within it..."

It is with a feeling of relief that I wipe the sweat from my forehead and turn the page to the fanzine reviews: LOCO, ALPHA, VOID, FANTASY
32 TIMES, the Australian SF NEWS, and a gentle dig at Anno Steul's

FanANNia: "Very amusing, even though no SF. A good beginning."

There follow letters from readers: Hans Jürgen Meier and Karl-Ernst Raech (the latter is a solicitor, incidentally) discuss the question: where does the atmosphere end and space begin? Heinz Bittner wields a striking pen in his criticism of Linklater's "A World Below" (Utopia 23) as little more than a middling Africa adventure novel. Three Duisburg fans aim a broadside at the recently-started Utopia series "Detective Stories of the Future;" (to which Ernsting explains that from the beginning of 1956 these "Utopia Krimi's" would be completely separated from Utopia SF, and SFCD members would no longer have to receive them against their subscriptions). Rudolf Hetsch theorises that the moon is a captured planet. Klaus Unbehauen (editor of the ill-fated YKS and producer of amateur SF films) lists a number of astronomical distances and orbit velocities. Dieter Horn also dips into his stores of plifered knowledge and tells us something of the lethal radiation given off by radioactive substances. Winfried Koch ("non-member") asks where he can buy a model of Braun's three-stage rocket. Kurt ----- ("A Fan in the East Zone") sends greetings to "Mr German Science-Fiction" -- fawning which Walt Ernsting only half-rejects in his comment. And Paul Blaisdell and Julian Farr have short paragraphs in English: you see, you too can send in your comments!



Here follows verse: the title is something like "Master of the Great Emptiness" by K. Keese. My German fails me here - or is it my sense of poetry - or my normally quite bovine tolerance? To me the verse is rubbish; but whatever the quality of the verse, Ernsting has destroyed its effect by publishing with it the writer's own PS: "Give the writer a chance and allow him some poetic licence: e.g. "deep beneath us..." in verse 5 - remember that the space ship is flying within the field of attraction of the planet... and allow a poet his poetical pathos."

"Exitus Terrae" by Clark Darlton is fan-fiction, I suppose, by reason of its low quality, even though Darlton is a pro-author (I'll bide by the fiction that Darlton is his real name). His one-page short on the invasion of Earth by beings which occupy men's bodies like invisible puppet-masters attempts the usual "short-short" snappy ending with the double-take, but the plot was very crudely handled, although the writing itself was slick and professional enough.

In "The SF Bookworm" we have a department run by Hein Bingenheimer, deputy chairman of the SFCD and head of its "Book Club". Hein deals with queries on the French "Galaxie", on SF serials, and on the American SF Book Club, and goes on to review Germany's top SF item, the Rauch anthology of ASF stories, "Überwindung von Raum und Zeit," (1952). A couple of months ago the SFCD issued a checklist of German SF, containing over 600 titles. Bingenheimer, who is a bookseller, has now listed the items which are still available, together with prices. SFCD members will receive a 20% discount from him: British and American traders please copy!

Now we come to Ernsting's "Club News" and an announcement of a third class of membership, whereby one can pay DM 2 (3/4d or 50¢) per quarter and receive ANDRO and all other facilities without having to take UTOPIA; other announcements that members can get back numbers of Utopia at reduced prices; a list of eleven members who have donated cash or books to the SFCD; "Uranus," head of the science department, will answer queries on scientific subjects; Waltraud ("Trude") Ernsting is now SFCD cashier and thus holds the purse-strings! Only communications bearing the SFCD rubber-stamp are official; Walter Spiegl, secretary of the SFCD, has opened

the Club Leading Library; in response to a query the SFCD announces that has no, repeat, no political aims! "The Literary Department Recommends", a book which will appear shortly in the Dörner publishing house, Düsseldorf - the SFCD seal will appear on the dust jacket as part of the publicity blurb! Finally, members are advised of a "purely private" meeting of friends of SF at Wetzlar. Although all members of the SFCD executive plan to attend, this has nothing to do with the BigGermanCon planned by the SFCD in summer 1957.

The last item, in my opinion, is the high spot of the fanzine: a further list of members, bringing the total up to 167. This indicates the rapid growth of organized fandom in German; it also includes members in the Saar, Switzerland, Austria and other countries (I recently received a letter from a Utopia reader in Venezuela!).

Why do I attach so much importance to all these details? Why this long rigmarole? Because the development described here does much to dispel my doubts about an embryo fanclub developing under the auspices of a pro-editor. The SFCD is now open to fans who do not wish to read Utopia; the SFCD is lending its seal to rival publishing houses and is publicising all German SF; and its membership lists are open for all to see and use. Already the publishing firm Gebr. Weiss has sent all members listed a copy of a new printed newsletter on SF (with the emphasis on its own publications, of course). Any independent (and in fact rival) promag, fanclub, fanzine or SFCD member can now approach a large number of German SF readers at any time without being dependent on Utopia or Andro as a vehicle. Anne Steul, Ernsting's severest and most unrelenting critic, has her WetzCon publicized by Andro: this reassuring announcement leads me to hope that the more personal aspects of the Steul-Ernsting feud can be banished; the basic disagreement on Utopia and SFCD policy will remain, and in fact should prove fruitful for German fandom.

To sum up, Walter Ernsting has cleared himself (in my mind) of any suspicion that he might place the interests of Utopia before those of German science fiction as a whole; I am not given to hero-worship, but for me the new issue of Andro has added much to his considerable service to German fandom. Yet we may still experience the day when the fans he has brought together with the Utopia readers department and the SFCD may rise and throw off the confines of these two organs, leaving them and Walter Ernsting behind in fandom's progress!

--- Julian Rarr

☐ you've contributed, thanks. ☐ your money is wasted---you've subbed.
☐ member of the SFCD, ISFCC, OMFA or a genuine certified swamp critter.
☒ would you care to trade? ☐ we already trade. ☒ would you please review this? Pretty please? ☒ where's your mag? ☐ Your sub has gone and expired. ☐ This is the last copy you get. ☐ Could you possibly reply by air mail in a rush, 'cause the next issue comes out in one month.
☐ You are a BNF. ☐ You are () Ghod and/or () Willis. ☒ Will you please comment; 20% is not enuf. ☒ You are a wrong doer (notice Eric?).
☒ I like you... ☐ Just for kicks. ☒ I owe you a letter. Be patient.
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"quitting fannishness to become a proed is going from the ridiculous to the sub line." -- me

page 34, in case you're interested