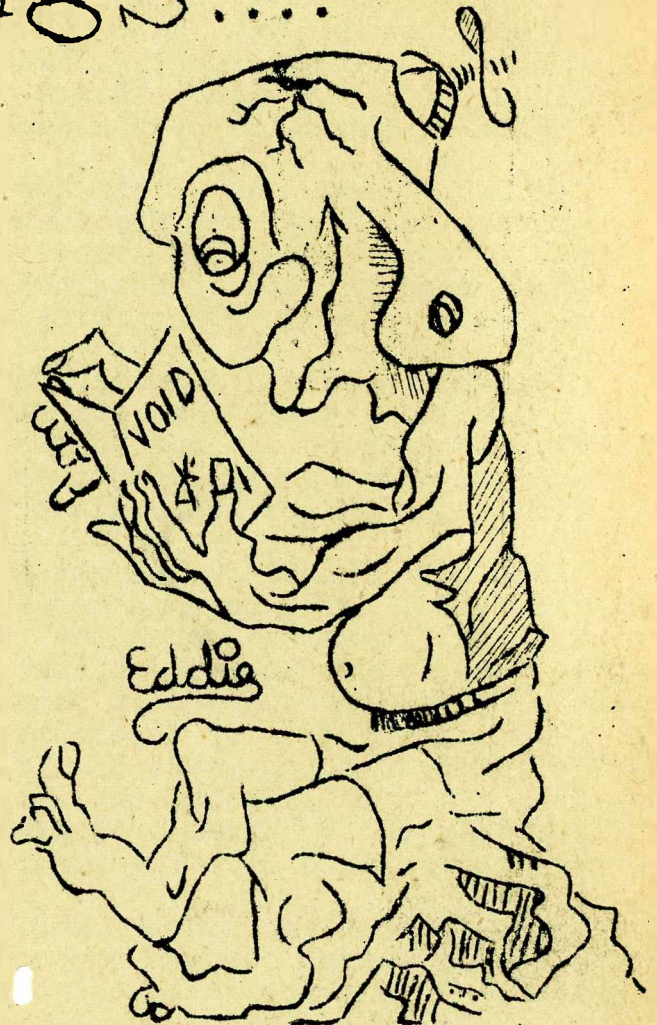


Eddie

Scrawlings.....

"AMERICA FOR AMERICANS!!" while
paging
through the latest edition of TIME
MAGAZINE, it struck me that our
Little George is not by far the
most outstanding True American
Supporter. There are some jim-
dandies in TIME's letter column
which speak well for the moron
faction. I could quote pages of
these, but the most outstanding
example of how a person can go a
bit overboard on patriotism was in
the February 11 issue:

"If the U.S. gives one cent of
economic aid to King Saud,
because his profits are being
cut by the Suez crisis, every
American taxpayer ought to
boycott the Internal Revenue
Service. The injustice of this
non-Christian King in all his
splendor coming to this Christ-
ian country and asking us poor,
hard-working American taxpayers
for economic aid makes my
blood boil!"



It has just occurred to me that my stated policy of ignoring
Wetzel might have led some of you to think that from now on VOID would
not mention Our Boy or anything connected with his base slanders. This
is not what I intended. Wetzel will receive no copies of V, anything
from him will and has been ignored. However, the mere mention of
his name I see no harm in printing. He's still a topic of conversation,
as it were.

FANDOMS AND LIKE THAT There's been a lot of talk going around lately
on the subject of fandoms -- 7th, 8th, 6th and
nth. Articles spring up in fanzines about the oncoming rush of 9th
Fandom or the decline of 8th or somesuch line. Naturally, a lot of these
writers set themselves up as little Vorzimers and dictated just who
would be the so-called "leaders" of this period and what it would be
like, etc.

I find the harpings of these self-appointed predictors very boring,
and yet in a way amusing. There is an underlying note of discord to the
entire subject of the numbered fandoms that throws the thoughts of the
authors completely off track.

The best example of this is that lull period in 6th fandom called

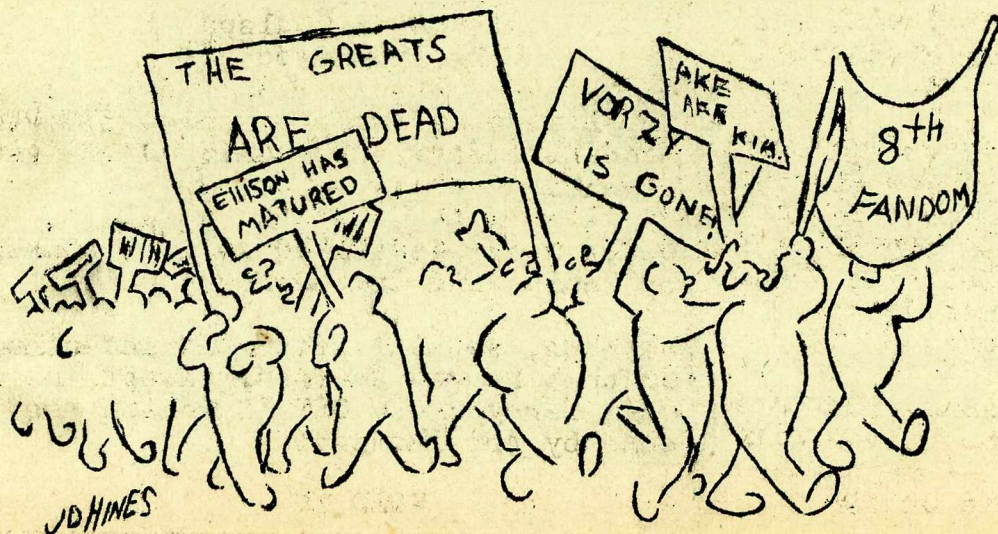
The Mighty Seventh. As everyone knows by now, the chief founders of the "movement" were Pete Vorzimer and Harlan Ellison. Vorzy, bless his soul, decided to step in during a break in production by 6th fandom and take over; so, with the "new BNFs" he created, Little Pete made a lot of noise announcing that he and the other teenage fans were Founding A New Fandom. Wow. ABSTRACT and its companion zines sprang up and died in their footsteps and 7th fandom skyrocketed through its stages. Then came cries about the 6th returning, and when it failed to show the necessary sparks of life, the voices turned to proclaiming the coming of "another even GREATER fandom!!!" by the name of 8th.

It hasn't come. No matter how much frantic gabbing the predictors give forth, the imaginary 8th fandom isn't going to come. That is, a group of hyper-active fans aren't going to suddenly appear and begin forming a huge network of fanzines. There will be no sudden neo-to-BNF change, no huge spurt of activity all over the world.

And why? Because, simply, fandom obeys social laws. Just as in history, changes don't come quickly -- and fandom, m'boy, is no different. The Egyptian Empire did not suddenly stop and the Babylonian begin. To quote a time-worn phrase, Rome wasn't built in a day. And neither will any 8th fandom be started and suddenly move into prominence.

In a lot of articles on the Where Is Eighth Fandom theme, the authors expect to awake some morning and find a new group of actifans to be there. It won't happen that way, though. Sixth fandom itself took a good bit of time to develop, while Vorzy's Seventh was merely a rapid mockery of any time period in fandom. The idea of the numbered fandoms is to indicate phases of development and growth -- and NOT somebody's idea of what is going on at the present moment. Silverberg, in his original article, stressed the fact that these stages weren't flash-in-the-pan things like Vorzimer's proved to be, but a definite time that was distinguishable from the others.

Each "fandom", in other words, was different---widely different. The greatest change between two adjacent periods was probably the 5th-6th fandom one, since, with the backing of hyper-active fans such as Willis, Calkins, Hoffman, Keasler, Boggs, Silverberg, etc., it almost destroyed entirely the element of science fiction in fandom. And therefore I feel when 8th fandom comes along, for a while it won't be noticed except by a sharp-eyed few. The change from drifting aimlessly for lack of any central fanzine or group to base fanac'on, to a unified activity (such as 6th fandom had) will be gradual, if it comes at all, and probably most won't notice it until the turnover is completed.



Void



This fanzine is edited and published irregularly by Jim and Greg Benford, at the usual address. For types in England and on the continent, it is
10 Lillencron Strasse,
Frankfurt/Main
West Germany

If you are in America or Toronto or thereabouts, you might try

% Lt. Col. J.A. Benford
G-4 Sect. Hq. V Corps
APO 79, New York, N.Y.

We are currently charging 15/- each for this zine. If the thing gets much larger, and we continue to be swamped by people-who-read-an-ad-in-a-prozine, it might be jumped to 20/- or a quarter. British coin should be sent to

Ron Bennett,
7 Southway,
Arthurs Avenue,
Harrogate, Yorkshire,
England

A shilling each.

A certain number of copies are sent out for letters of comment, but I wouldn't count on our kindness if I were you.

All monies from England go to the Buy A New School Whip For Bennett Fund, and coinage from the US piles up in the Get Kirs A New Black Leather Jacket organization.

And in closing, thanks to everyone who helped with this issue -- maybe the next will be on time.

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...AND SCRIBBLINGS.....
.....a letter column.....

The artists this issue are:

Eddie Jones
Jerry Hines
Lars Helander
Arthur Thompson
Larry Bourne
Bill Harry
Wm. Rotsler
Juanita Coulson
Terry Jeeves

Full-page artwork is by Art Thompson and Bill Harry, who have our deepest thanks.

Cover space is filled up masterfully by Eddie "Old Pro" Jones.

Layouts, special lettering and other whatnot by Jim Benford, except in John Berry's OIL GET BY, which was done by Art Thompson.

THE JOB OF



JD HINES

Vern McCain, in his column for OBLIQUE, has covered the field of fanediting from beginning to end ... or at least he will have when the series is terminated. However, Vern spoke only of the general method (treatment of the contributors, etc.) -- and it seems to me that a neo, employing these tactics, will only produce another average fmz. Soooo... with all due respect to that which has gone before and all like that, herewith a forum-type thing on fanpubbing.

Here, tho, the emphasis is not on merely reviewing various methods of grabbing material and such. The techniques of established editors might provide a hint of an idea -- an original one -- for some bright-eyed neo who plans to publish his own fmz. And new, good material is exactly what random needs.

Also might mention that next ish if any of you feel particularly inspired to comment or answer the following opinions in article form, feel free...

And while I'm at it, thanks muchly to the assembled editors, for revealing Their Secrets and all. Also, special bows to Larry Stark for mentioning the title and subject for this discussion.

-- Greg

AN EDITOR

THE FACTS OF FANNING -- Ron Bennett

"Ron," said my Uncle Vinç, as I perched on his knee, "Fandom can be a fine thing if you don't maltreat it. And it's like a good cheese; the minute you begin to ignore it, it grows stale on you. But take my advice. One of these days, just as you're going behind the bike shed for a quiet smoke before your mother calls you in to wash your knees, you'll get a request to contribute material to a symposium on the why's and wherefor's of fan-publishing, and you will know that Age is catching up on you. Just thinking about how to tackle the problem is enough to send you screaming for help through the Glades of Gafia. And look what it did to poor old George Charters. But it happens to the best of us, so it's sure to happen to someone as far down the scale as you.... It happens to every fan at some time or another. And then you'll have to make The Choice. whether to reveal your treasured secrets or whether to ignore the request with a polite 'go to ----.' Either way, you are a dead duck. Fandom will never be the same."

And my Uncle Vinç was right! It is a problem.

First and foremost, there's the raison d'etre behind fan-publishing. What turns a normal, finger-nail chewing, neurotic, tow-haired, poverty stricken human being into a crazy finger-nail chewing, tow-haired, poverty stricken fan editor? Simply one of two things:

- a) He's nuts.
- b) He's stark-raving bonkers.

These categories can be further classified as follows:

- a) He thinks it's a good way of turning leisure-time into an extra money-making activity.
- b) He thinks he's going to get some egoboo out of it.

Either way, he can't win. No faned has ever made money from his fanzine, not even Peter Vorzimer. Stuart Mackenzie went into the problem very neatly at the 1954 SupermanCon when he addressed the gathering from the official platform to answer critics who insisted he was making money hand-over-fist from publishing the ill-fated SPACE-TIMES. Egoboo does come to a faneditor in one of two ways. Either he publishes a magazine which offends everyone and he makes a lot of enemies, like a fanzine which might feature articles from Jack Michaels, Vitriol, and Redd Grayson only (to the uninitiated these were columns by Con Turner, Ted Mason and myself which were written with tounge-in-cheeks, and which appeared in CAMBER, SATELLITE and ORBIT). Or else he runs a fmz which is extremely popular and/or distributes egoboo, the popular boost of the ego, for the benefit of other fen, like RETRIBUTION.

But as I say, he can't win. Sooner or later he is going to find

RAEBURN ☆ ERIC BENTCLIFFE

mundanities crowding fandom out of his existence and his magazine's regularity will dwindle until it is non-existent. George Gibson's OKBIT is a classic example. The magazine, while not being of the highest quality was very popular among certain fan. And George was very keen. Then suddenly, snap-of-the-fingers, and poof. No George at the LSFA meetings and no OKBIT. Now poor George is called nasty names by the very fan who once praised him. Of course, the fact that they subscribed...

Once the would-be faneditor has taken the plunge, there are two problems which are outstanding:

- 1) How to get material.
- 2) How to distribute the magazine.

Material is certainly the biggest problem a neo-faneditor will meet, notwithstanding such trivialities as how to find time and especially money on preparing the magazine, i.e., stencils, ink, duplicating, a stylus (and probably a letter-guide and shading plate), envelopes, staples, stamps and paper. How does he get the material? The obvious answer appears to be to canvass for it, and ask various known names in the fanzine world to contribute to his forthcoming fanzine. This method inevitably produces results which have in the past and probably will in the future repeat themselves, resulted in the faneditor becoming embittered and renouncing any ambition in the field he may have held. Yes, the fans approached have refused to contribute. And who can blame them? Experience teaches us all that often submitted material is never used, as the would-be faneditor often is discouraged at the high cost of his newly-found hobby. The result is one which caused me to start off the PLOY series with issue number two -- hmmm -- the would-be faned has to fall back on writing his own first issue.

which in itself can put him out of business ... we're not all John Berry,

Then comes the actual production of the magazine -- the type of material to be used, its quality, the layout of the magazine, how to fit in artwork, what to do with those infuriating left-over blocks of lines at the foot of the page after completion of the article...

No, Uncle Vinç was right... I couldn't begin to tell what one does in these cases. I myself merely get a firm hold of the whip-handle and put Mal Ashworth on the job. Much more experienced in these matters is Boyd Raeburn, so I'll write out a polite refusal and leave it to him....

DOIN' WHAT COMES NATURALLY -- Boyd Raeburn

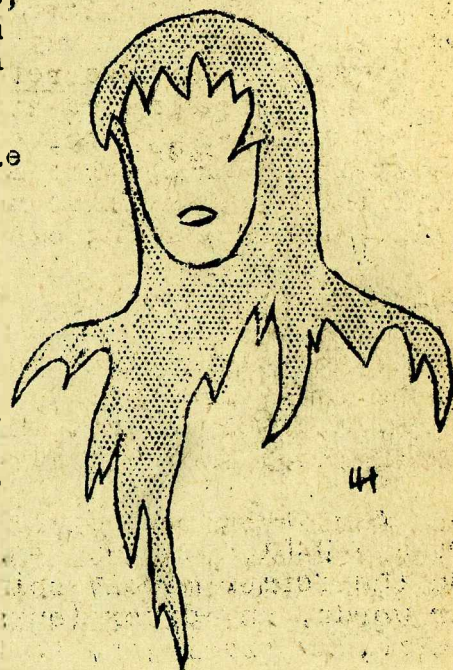
I generally don't go by a whole mass of hard and fast rules for editing ... to me it seems to be just a matter of common sense. However, seeing the mess some people make of the job, perhaps that isn't so (or else these people don't think the way I do). Maybe I just edit by instinct.

Why do some fans put out fanzines? I don't know, but I often wonder. I think that sometimes a fan sees all the fanzines coming out, and decides that he too would like to get in the swim and put out a fanzine, and reap all the egoboo that he thinks will undoubtedly come his way. So the fan decides he is going to put out a fanzine, and starts casting about for material. As soon as he has enough pieces of paper covered with words, any sort of words, he puts the whole mess on stencil or master, and another zine is born. Apparently it matters not to him whether the material he has is even tolerably well written, or whether many people will be interested in reading it, he wants to put out a fanzine, and by damn, he's going to do it. Some zines have started off this way and have turned

into very good publications, but the majority start off pretty horrible messes, and stay that way.

A DAS started as a club oneshot, but out for kicks by the members. Three issues of it came out, and that was that. I had some material on hand that I liked very much, and which I thought others would enjoy reading too, so I took over the zine and carried it on as my own. Take notice what I said there about the material in this first issue. I liked it and thought others would enjoy it too. This standard I have always used on material I have printed. I do not print anything I don't find interesting myself. Now for the second part of the standard; whether others will enjoy it also. I am not publishing a mass circulation zine for the general public, and therefore don't need to print material with a general appeal. If Joe Shmoe reads a review of the zine somewhere, and sends a quarter for a copy, he has to take a chance. I don't give two hoots in hell whether or not he likes what he gets in exchange. I'm not putting out the zine for him. I look on it as a sharing of material that amuses or interests me with others of somewhat similar tastes, and it is these particular people only that I keep in mind. To be rather redundant and sum up, I go on the basis "I like this stuff I have here. I think so-and-so and such-and-such will get a big bang out of it too, and certain other fans will flip over this item here and so on. Fine, I'll put out an issue and let them have a look at it."

Now, maybe the editors of some of the sad little crudzines work on this basis too. But I wonder how many fans are really interested in reading lists of forthcoming sf pocket-books etc. (all of which can be found in Fantasy Times if you want that sort of stuff) and the incoherent relating of plots of C grade films (under the title of movie reviews), and do many people take great joy in learning that Joe Schmuck has sold a short story titled "Glurp" to Vomitum Science Fiction? I wonder just how many readers of fanzines are fascinated by lists of stories and authors in current foreign sf zines. Oh well, maybe there actually are hordes of people panting eagerly for this sort of stuff, but you'll never catch me printing it.



Many zines are scheduled to come out monthly, or bimonthly, or quarterly, or something. Sometimes they actually do. So there you have the editor faced with a deadline, and he's got to get his zine out, and he's busy, and short of material, but the zine has to be ground out -- "Mighod why did I ever start putting out a fanzine I haven't got the time or material and I don't feel like it but the deadline's coming up and I gotta get the zine out...." Why. why has he got to get the zine out? because he has to keep the zine on schedule? why? Why set a schedule? why try to put the zine out at regular intervals? A fanzine is not a commercial publication. It is a hobby, and should be worked on in whatever spare time the editor has and feels like devoting to it. A fanzine should not be a chore. If you don't feel like putting out an issue, wait until you do. If you don't have enough material which you consider worth printing, wait until you have, or put out a smaller issue. A DAS comes out irregularly, and I intend to keep it that way. I only work on an issue when I really feel like doing so. I consider, maybe erroneously, that if I were putting out an issue because I felt I should, and while working on it was considering the whole thing a grind, somehow the feeling would show itself in that issue. I don't know how much

atmosphere or personality there is in my zine, if any, but I feel I have to be in the mood, and enthusiastic, when I'm working on an issue.

I won't go into the editing of material -- there has been enough said on that already. However, one field where faneds fall flat on their faces is the editing of readers' letters. Most letters of comment are interesting to the editor -- he is perhaps interested in knowing that Joe Fan liked this and didn't like that, period, depending of course on whom this particular Joe Fan happens to be. But a letter column filled with badly stated likes and dislikes regarding the previous issue can be pretty dull fare for the fanzine reader. Often people write letters of comment containing comments of interest on the material in the zine, and/or other material of interest. Fine. Print the interesting stuff and junk the rest.

Frankly, I am appalled at the stuff found in some letter columns. Some editors seem to lose all sense of reason and print gobs of personal correspondence from fans, correspondence which may be fascinating to the editor, but most unlikely to enthrall the reader. "Well, Joe came round last night and we went down town to show. It was a pretty crummy show, but we met old Putzi. He's visiting relatives here for a couple of weeks and...." I'm sure you've come across enough examples of this. And then there's the "Got a new typer the other day. Well actually it's pretty old, but it doesn't work too bad. One of the shifts was broken but I took a piece of wire and wrapped it round one part and it worked o.k. and the keys are pretty worn but..." The editor who prints this sort of stuff in his letter column is often also the sort who prints twenty or more pages of excerpts from letters, stating meanwhile that he had planned much much more in the way of a letter column, but that he was short of space. So if he's so short of space, why doesn't he print the interesting parts of the letters he has received? Of course, I am placing a purely subjective interpretation on "interesting". Maybe this sort of stuff does interest a lot of people. The type of editor I have just mentioned, the type who is oh so short of space for all his interesting letters is also likely to do the following: he does some particular thing with regard to, say, his layout. Twenty readers write and tell him they don't like it. But does he, as a possible matter of general interest, remark somewhere in the next issue that a lot of people didn't like this thing he did, and that he will (or will not) discontinue it? No. He blithely goes ahead and prints the comments of all twenty on this one thing. This, remember, is the guy who doesn't have space for all his "interesting" letters.



THE PROUD AND THE PRO VEIN -- Eric Bentcliffe

Taking our collective heads out of the ostrich-sand of fandom for a moment, let's consider the greater scheme of things, the wide, wide, furshlugginer world. In general, a professional editor's job is to cater both for his public and his employers, the latter being the most important, and the former merely coincidental...except in the letter section. In other words, an editor (outside of fandom) holds down a job -- a sort of romantic, mystical job, to those on the outside, but a job just the same.

Our editor is usually a person with a fair command of English, a better command of invective, ulcer prone, and a little cross-eyed from reading poorly typed manuscripts.

The fan-editor, on the other hand, is a being of ghod-like bearing whose head is quite frequently snow-capped all year round. He has an even worse command of English but a far better command of invective than the pro-editor. In only one way are the two breeds alike -- the faned, also, is ulcer-prone.

As regards the job he does, this is a highly divergent chore from that of the poor benighted pro-ed who has to please both his master and the masses. The faned has only to please himself. That at times this is more difficult than pleasing the public is merely coincidental and can be cast aside until deeper thoughts than I have at the moment regarding the topic, surface.

A fan editor puts out a magazine for his own personal satisfaction... there are other words around for it, egoboo, etc...although it must be admitted that he hasn't always had this viewpoint. Originally, he was going to put out a magazine which would cause other fans (this includes readers) to bow down each sunset in the general direction of his domicile. He was going to 'start out in a small way and end up with a magazine which would sell like hot cakes on each and every newsstand.' These latter two sentences are dedicated to the neofaned, R.I.P.

As a fanzine is put out more for personal satisfaction than any other reason, and as every person has a slightly (?) different idea of what is best in fanzine styling and material, it follows that there can be no point in continuing with this discussion. Having reached this conclusion I shall proceed to ignore it, as although it's true, it is also most unfannish. However, before I completely abandon this train of thought I would like to define a successful faned as one whose taste is similar to than of the majority of other fans.

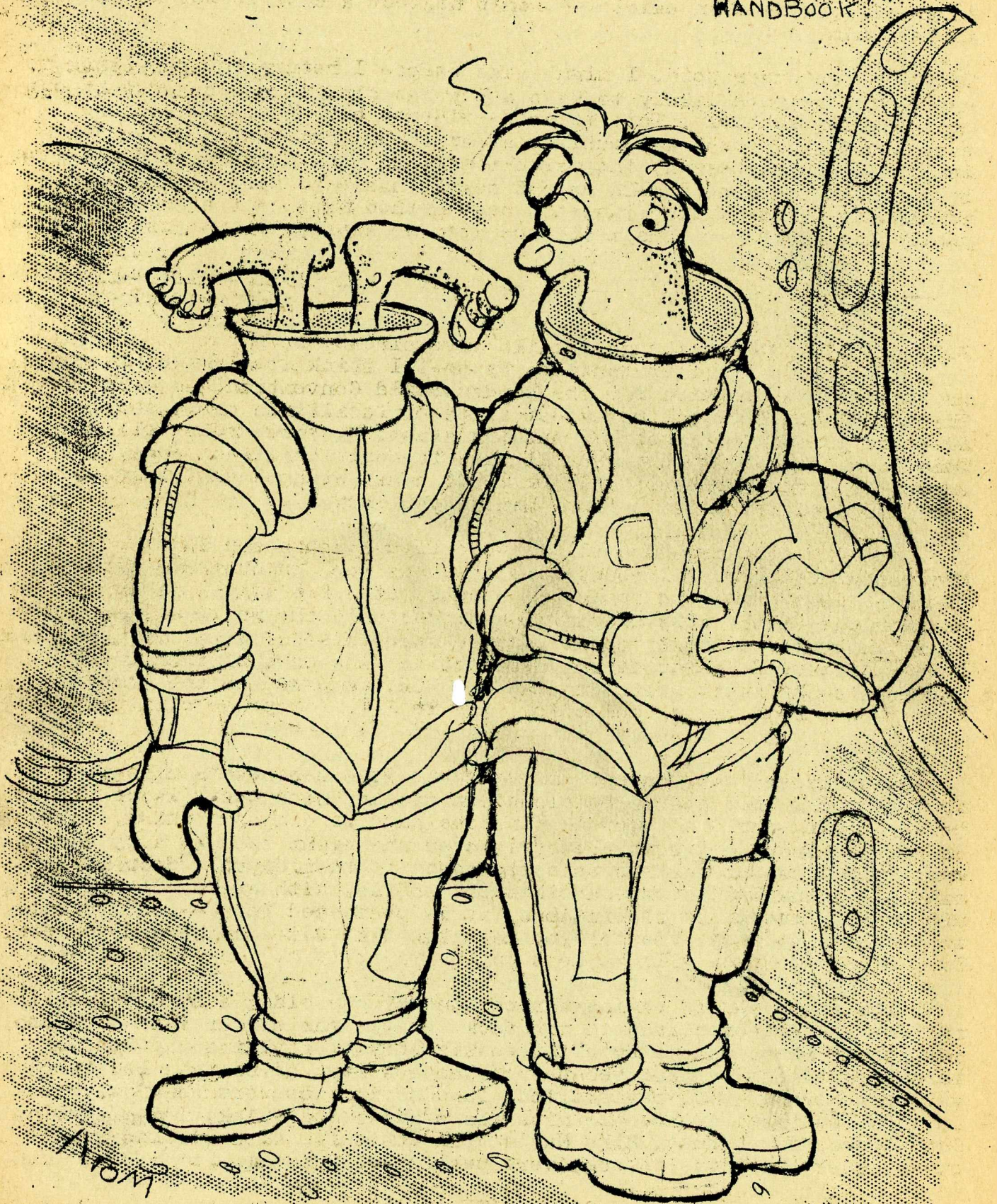
The faned has far more 'free will' than his professional brethren; he doesn't have to conform to standards set down by his employers. He can decide for himself what is and what is not pornography, what is controversy and what is merely mud-slinging, what is Good Taste ... and sundry other inponderables. A successful faned can also then be defined as one whose sense of ethics, etcetra, conforms to than of the majority of fan.

That majority word is rather important if you intend to criticise this outpouring. I don't intend to infer that the successful faned will please every fan -- there will always be those who have a different viewpoint than him and will have no reluctance in expressing their views.

The faned also has far more control over what goes into his zine and how it is laid out than the proed, though it must be said that this is far less important to the success of the zine than his own 'personality'. A pure typeface and a feeling for layout is needed if his zine is going to join the top ten, but it's not as essential as 'Good Taste' et al.

Almost all the material for TRIODE is written by invitation and this cuts out a great deal of the need for cutting because I naturally invite stuff only from those whom I consider to be capable writers. As far as cutting is concerned, I do as little as possible. This applies to re-writing as well. On occasion I've changed a few paragraphs or eliminated a sentence or two. But the fact that so far I've had no complaints from the writers involved illustrates more, I think, that I've managed to capture the writer's mood rather than that I'm a particularly good faned. Where possible, I get the writer himself to rewrite rather than do it myself. You can't chop and change an article too much without losing the style it was written in, as intended by the author. One part of the zine where I maintain no corrections should be made, other than those of punctuation and typos, is the letter section.

HOW'S ABOUT TRYING IT THE WAY IT SAYS
IN THE
HANDBOOK!



FROM

As regards special arrangements with contributors, as mine vary with the person involved I can throw little light on the topic. As a general rule, I try to always acknowledge material by return and also to say which issue of TRIODE it will appear in; this, tho, I'm not always able to do. If you need an edict --- Don't neglect a contributor if you want to keep him.

There is one other point I might make before I return to appraising my navel. You're more likely to have a popular zine if you can put it out on a regular schedule. This is self-evident, but it still seems to escape certain faneds who publish at anything from one to six-month intervals and wonder why they aren't getting many letters. I don't mean to say that the zine should be put out in haste to meet a deadline -- it shouldn't. But I find that the best method is to not announce any publication schedule at all ... and keep to a private one just the same.

— — — — —

PLUGS AND THINGS Although details have already been run in several other fanzines by now, I think it might be in order to say that the consite for the London World Convention has been chosen. 'Tis KINGS COURT HOTEL, with just gangs of facilities and a cost of 20/- per person per night bed and breakfast. My slide rule tells me this is about \$3.00, which you'll have to admit is a good deal. I suppose one could subsist well on \$5.00 a day without extra expenses, and in my opinion this is fine. Money, you know.

I might also urge you all to vote Boyd Raeburn for TAFF. Boyd has been an actifan for a loooong time now, has been to numerous conventions -- both World and regional -- puts out A BAS (which is in my opinion one of the best zines being produced in the world and possibly even the best), belongs to the Toronto Derelicts and is a very prolific letter writer. He's one of the most active fans on the North American continent, an expert writer and a fine wit. Compared to the other candidates, Boyd is my choice for TAFr in '57. I hope he will be yours also.

Last issue I mentioned, in regard to Pete Reischer's derogation, that he and I felt that a continuation of the thing every issue might become tiring and dull. You'll find one page of dialogue thish, but it is not a dero of any sort. Pete was over one night a month ago, and we were talking about the response his last effort gleaned. "Hooah!" he said. "I think I'll create another..." And so, with great effort, he did. With a few minor alterations, it is presented here -- and my only regret is that only a few of you know the Mike Gates concerned therein. It's Hidden Meaning will be lost on the majority of the readers. Sob.

The other, while paging through one of our old PLANET STORIES, I noticed the letter column in the back. It was the Winter 1954-1955 ish, and caused me to wonder over the possibility of reviving the mag, or another one like it. Not because of the quality, of course, but it's value in seducing stf-readers into fandom might be worth saving. For in this one issue alone, the missives of Warren F. Link, Ted E. White, Don Wegars, Jim Harmon, Mike May & John Courtois, with evidence of other names the issue before, were published. Oh well....

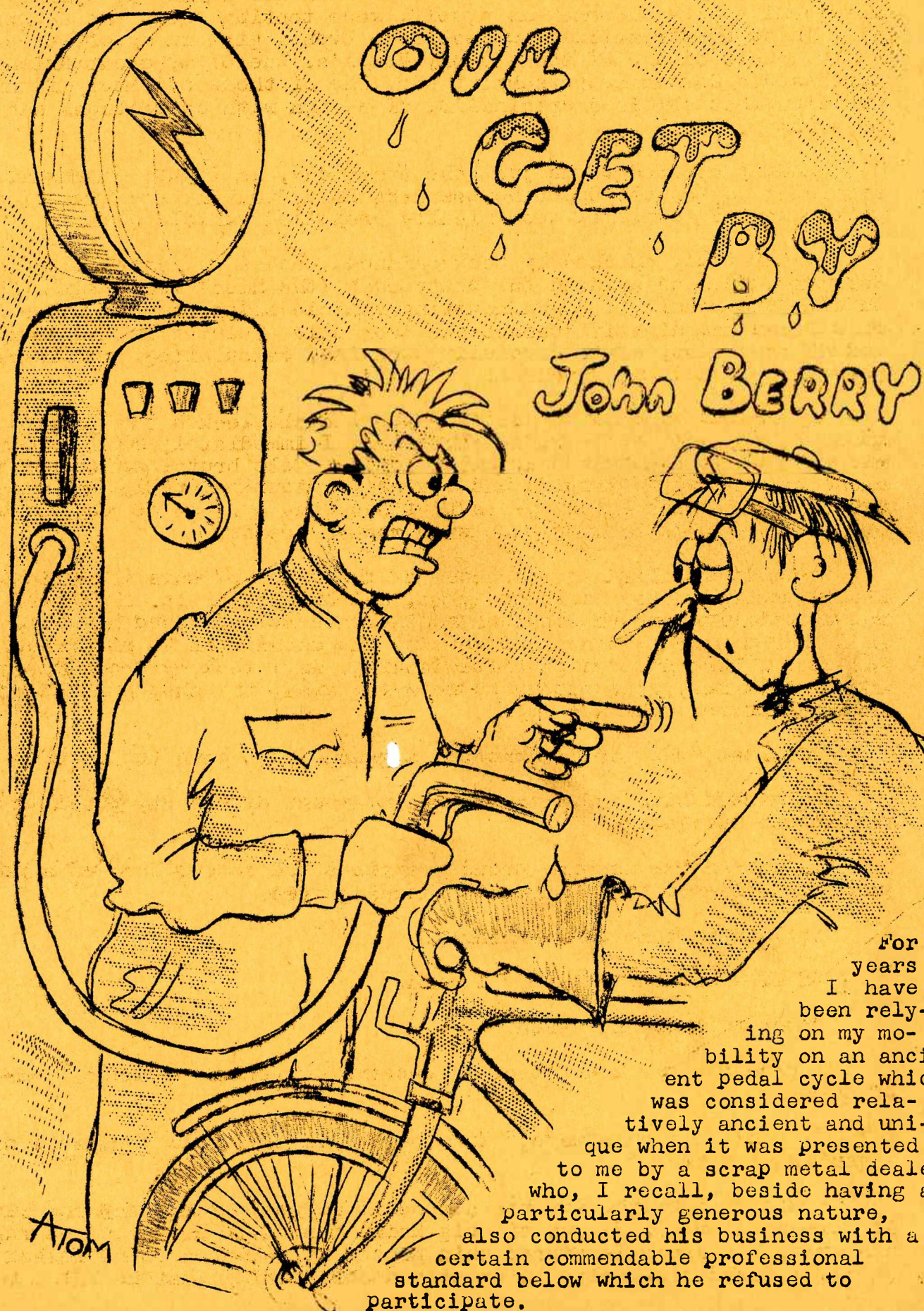
SOUTH GATE IN '58
and
BOYD RAEburn FOR TAFF!

BOO

GET

BY

John BERRY



For years I have been relying on my mobility on an ancient pedal cycle which was considered relatively ancient and unique when it was presented to me by a scrap metal dealer who, I recall, beside having a particularly generous nature, also conducted his business with a certain commendable professional standard below which he refused to participate.

Recently, however, I began to notice the methods of conveyance of my contemporaries. I discovered that men not as old as myself, and not earning as much money as myself, were tooting about the countryside in super-streamlined automobiles. Even a girl in my office screeched to a halt on one of those dinky Vespa's. One of my great friends purchased a German Messerschmitt car, one of those extremely fannish vehicles that combines originality of design with compactness and durability.

And it occurred to me just the other day, as I puffed my chain-straining way up the Upper Newtownards Road, that it was time I moved up the social circle of mechanically propelled vehicle owners.

I carefully checked my bank balance, cashed my National Saving Certificates, and counted the petty cash (the kids' money box). Satisfied with the result, I began haunting vehicle salesrooms in the center of Belfast and nightly scanned the 'For Sale' columns in the newspapers. And at long last, after carefully perusing, calculating, considering, pondering, I made my purchase.

My fourth hand motor assisted pedal cycle looked too good to be true. So good did it look, in fact, that I immediately relegated my old machine to the back bedroom. I admit I felt brutal doing so, because the trusty velocipede had borne me stout-heartedly for so many thousands of miles in the years that had gone by. But no one can deny that I do my best to keep pace with modern trends.

Proudly I called at the house of the owner of this magnificent highly powered motor assisted cycle, all 30 c.c. of it. He showed it to me, pointing out the various refinements he had added himself, and so I handed over my money and wheeled the machine on to the road. It was clean, vibrant, and powerful-looking. As I took my preliminary mounting stance, preparatory to whizzing away, the chap pointed out that the petrol tank was empty.

"....but," he added, "there's a garage just down the road."

I thanked him, and with a certain amount of effort, pedalled the machine to the garage.

I propped the machine proudly against the cement base of a petrol pump, and flashed the attendant a knowing grin.

He looked at me questioningly.

"Half a gallon, please," I said.

"Four to one?" he asked.

I gave him the benefit of my specially cultivated 'haughty' expression.

"I don't bet on horses," I announced firmly, "all I want is half a gallon of petrol."

I didn't like the way the attendant ripped off his cap and flung it across the road. He put his big hairy hand over his face and rubbed his eyes. His stubble-covered chin grazed my forehead as he looked at me. I found difficulty in exactly understanding what he said, be-

cause his teeth seemed so unnaturally clamped together.

"On these two-stroke machines," he said slowly, "you use a mixture of petrol and oil for fuel, at a certain ratio. Now then. DO YOU WANT FOUR TO ONE?"

The blast from his last shouted sentence whistled through my moustache.

"Yes," I said meekly. I started to unscrew the cap of my petrol tank, but he brushed my hand away. He seemed to think I was trying to slow him down. I would have expected that he would have been grateful for the profit he was getting from my half gallon. I suspected that the big improtant looking chap with the red face sitting inside the Rolls Royce behind me, waiting to get served, started on a pedal cycle years ago. There was even something wrong with his car, too. The horn needed to be fixed. There was probably a short curcuit somewhere, and it caused his horn to keep permanently blasting.

No wonder he looked a bit annoyed.

Now, before I go any further, I want to impress upon you that I have no practical mechanical knowledge at all. I can draw, paint, make model aeroplanes, etc. etc. But I know absolutely nothing about engines. This will become abundantly clear as you continue this enthralling narrative, but I don't want anyone to be laboring under a misapprehension.

Once clear of the garage, I moved the little handle that caused the friction drive to contact the wheel, and pressed the petrol switch. All was now ready for my first ride on this sepeerb machine.

There was a bus stop on the opposite side of the road, and I didn't want the small queue to think I was inexperienced. I brought into action my long ingrained pedal-cycle mounting technique ... you know ... the three smart paces forward, the superior smirk, the quick leap onto the saddle and away in a flurry of pedals.

I'm sorry to say that in this instance, I didn't even manage the three smart paces forward.

This is what happened.

I gripped the handlebars, grinned at the queue, and leapt forward. The machine remained perfectly still, because the friction drive was gripping the tire, and I performed what I heard later described as being... 'A beautiful parabolic movement, executed with superb finesse, finally culminating in a delightfully artistic back-flip, spoiled only by the manner in which the backbone hit the concrete road surface.'

Fortunately, the route homewards consisted of several loooong downward slopes, and I was able to free-wheel to my house after laboriously loading myself onto the saddle and leading on the corssbar.

After a brisk rub-down with 'Wintergreen Ointment', and three days in bed, I felt prepared to commence driving once more.

Many hours later I felt I had at last mastered the machine. There were no gears to worry about, just the accelorator and decompressor on

the right handlebar, turned according to your fancy. So accomplished did I become, in fact, that I rode to work on my machine to show my co-workers and demonstrate my prowess.

But on the way home last night, the blasted engine just wouldn't start and I had to pedal the damn thing up the Upper Newtownards Road once more, and this time I had the weight of the engine to carry too.

My brother-in-law, who has had a motor cycle for about fifteen years, came to my house in answer to my urgent 'phone call, and he produced a large bag of spanners and oily cloths and sparking plugs and bits of wire. He gave me what he said was a very important job, namely sitting hunched up over a roaring fire with a length of wire in my hand, on the other end of which a (to quote him) 'badly oiled up sparking plug' was attached, and dangling the plug in the fire. That night he said he hadn't finished, and he came back the next night, and the following night, and the one after. By this time the threads on my sparking plug had formed into one big blob, but he told me night after night that I was doing a good job. And yet periodically I would hear him push the bike out the back door, and he would come back half an hour later, puffing and panting, and start throwing things around the kitchen again. Eventually, on the eighth night, when my wire was only about three inches long and the plug was a chunk of redhot coke, and he still said it was doing fine, I began to imagine he preferred to work on the machine by himself.

On the ninth night he called me to a secluded corner of the house and gave me a mysterious message.

"I have never had contact with an engine like that. I have stripped my 500 c.c. engine many times, and yet your 39c.c. thing has me completely baffled, yet it is simplicity itself. It can't be the sparking plug, because that works in my machine, and it can't be the carburettor because the mixture is getting to the cylinder, and it can't be the compression because I've cleaned the cylinder and put in a new gasket, and it can't be...."

And so he carried on for half an hour without repeating himself twice, using all sorts of quaint expressions such as 'points' and 'timing' and 'choke' (this worried me) and 'jet needle', etc. Then he leapt through the open window and hasn't been seen since.

I thought that maybe I had taken too big a step forward, but it seems there is nothing less than 39c.c. obtainable according to the chap who runs the big garage nearby. He's got my machine at the moment and he says it looks like a long job to try and get it in working order. In fact, he went so far as to say that with labor the way it is today it would probably be cheaper in the long run to buy a new motor assisted pedal cycle. But I get a certain kick out of telling folks that ... "My machine is in the garage for a major overhaul." ... and I have discovered that my social status has risen considerably since the word has gotten around that I now travel to work on an omnibus. The fare to town is sure expensive. The dark nights are coming soon though, and then I can venture out on my old reliable bicycle again. I admit it's a retrograde step, but I feel more at home on my fateful friend.

And if I do happen to get the two-stroke machine working again this year, I shall not go to the same garage again for fuel.

I still think it should have been four parts of petrol and one of oil, and not the other way round.

DIALOGUE....

by Pete Reischer

Ellington: Say, did you know Wetzel has returned?

G Benford: Another fugghead coming back? My.

Reischer: Well, not all of them. It seems Clod Hall joined OMRA and plans to retire from our fake-fandom.

J Benford: I hear Vorzimer is back.

S. Ellik: I think it's time for a change in fannish outlook. Shouldn't we start 8th fandom about now? There aren't any fanzines of worth from the standpoint of letters and generality. The others either limit their circulation drastically or print nothing but sercon and non-fannish stuff like articles about sports cars and homosexual tendencies.

Raeburn: Did you say Vorzimer had returned?

G Benford: No, it's just Squirrel again.

Reischer: I feel a bit sorry for the fuggheads. They're so pitiful.

J Benford: Does Clod Hall look pitiful?

Kirs: Maybe I have a few pictures here....

GM Carr: I'll have no discussion of sex around here! Keep Fandom Clean!

Mike Gates: Oh yes, my mother told me never to print anything about sex in my fanzine. It will be all full of F**A*N*N*I*S*H material.

Raeburn: None of this crappy sercon stuff -- he's going to be a Trufan.

Gates: Yeah, all like that. Good things like articles on "Green Door" and people telling the plots of Elvis Presley comic books and derogations on teenagers.

Kirs: Who is this nattering mongoose of a boy?

J Benford: This is Mike Gates, local fringe-fan, who...

Gates: Dammit Benford, stop calling me a fringe-fan! If you call me that once more I'll...I'll have a RUMBLE with you!! I'll BEAT YOU UP!!

G Benford: Shades of Vorzy.

Raeburn: And why is he so pre-occupied with teenagers and rumbles and other such mundane things?

Gates: Teenagers? Don't mention that word to me! Teenagers are stupid and dumb and alla time acting like hoods and being tough...

Kirs: Apparently he is too busy being fannish to be a teenager.

Reischer: Uh... I hate to kill things off, but we've run out of page. Shall we repair?

(and so they did)

CONTINENTAL

SIRIUS No. 3, November 1956 (Editor: Walter Wegmann, Postfach 88, Wald/ZH, Switzerland. Irregular. Free to Swiss members of the SFCD. 10 pages.)

The lead article "Time Travel Made Possible!" by Walter Ernsting, postulates the dilation of time in a space-ship approaching the speed of light, thus permitting (non-return) trips into the future. To WE a machine in which one could travel in both directions in time seems impossible. (Tsk, tsk! That naughty word!). Jürgen Grasmück, 16-year-old chronic invalid, contributes a piously hopeful item about robot rockets which will explore other galaxies, homing back to earth generations later with their warheads full of exposed microfilm and taped records of their expeditions. Then Ulrich Salvisberg brings a summary of an article in "Ici Paris" on space stations, and also a two-page short "All in Vain!" with the usual unhappy end; excellent book reviews by Rainer Eisfeld and Heinz-Jürgen Galle, and finally news of the first Swiss SF Con, scheduled for the 30th December in Zürich. Walter Ernsting will attend.

ANDROMEDA No. 7, October/November 1956. (Editor: Walter Ernsting, Irschenberg/Oberbayern, Germany. Bimonthly; DM 0,50 (10d or 12¢ each, free to SFCD members. 30 pp. This edition; 550 copies)

A striking break with tradition: no Spicco cover, but a simple rocket-ship take-off scene drawn by Mario Kwiat, Berlin fan. Terrible. This issue has obviously been slung together in a hurry to meet the deadline -- one of the after-effects of the September "Zwischen-Con". There is no interior artwork, and little attempt at layout. Duplication is only adequate -- but with an edition of 550 copies one can't grumble. The SFCD continues to grow at such a rate that there is talk of using Pabel facilities to produce a printed ANDRO next year.

The latest incentive scheme, aimed at promoting native German SF, is announced: a German "Hugo" donated by Gernsback is to be awarded on the results of reader polls to the author of the best German story published each year. It was obvious from the start (and votes coming in now confirm) that Clark Darlton would win both in 1955 and 1956; he is far and away the most popular German author; but the SFCD hopes the award will encourage rival and budding authors in future years. The actual presentation of the awards and diplomas will take place on the second weekend in September at the Big German Con, to be held in Bad Homburg near Frankfurt. 4e Ackerman doing the honors!

Then comes Walter Ernsting's report on the Interim Con, with its familiar round of arrivals (57 attended), introductions (in every imaginable German dialect), auction (in which film stills proved more popular than original mss!), special film show ("The Day The Earth Stood Still"), experiment with ESP cards (my own contribution), sketches (including a futuristic dentist), amateur films (with contributions by Klaus Unbehauen) and a three-hour climb to

PARR

the observatory on the nearby Wendelstein (visibility at the peak: zero).

Odd items: "Red Dust," a mediocre short by Klaus Unbehauen; another space-time theory, this time by Hardy Kosa; unconscious humor in Mario Kwiatt's "...Has Jazz Anything to do with SF?" (Yes, of course.). The SFCBerlin report includes a portentous ad: "Wanted! A cheap duplicator -- even a museum piece acceptable." Hein Bingenheimer announces an SFCD Christmas present: a new SF book, translation of a British novel, specially published for and dedicated to SFCD members. Hein also reports the formation of a Sociedad de Amigos de los Visitantes del Espacio -- a Society of Friends of the Visitors from Space, who meet every Monday in a Madrid pub...

The highlight of this is an intelligent, well-written article by Jesco, Baron von Puttkamer, translator of American SF for UTOPIA and now also author of short story SF. "Rudiments and Recipe for SF Authors in spe" deals with a German literary critic's recent description of SF as "American Fairy Tales." To start with the Baron deplores the term "American;" for him there is no American nor (and with this defying Anne Steul) is there German SF. He goes on to define the difference between SF and science-fantasy; for him SF must contain "Science (or pseudo-science, see below!); Logic (in all aspects of the story) and fantasy (ideas!)" In the scientific ingredient he distinguishes three main trends:

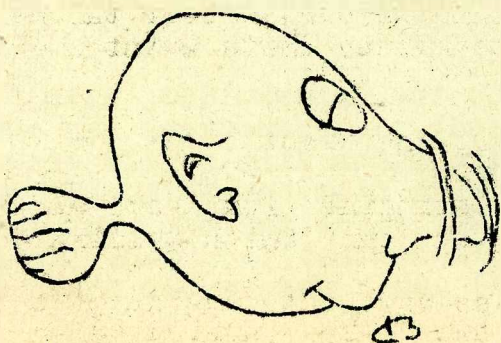
"1) stories based on the present or clearly foreseeable future state of science and constructed strictly on the basis of today's picture of the physical world (LUKEWARM SF, which is quite possible. E.g. Siodmak's "Riders to the Stars;" various Heinlein stories.).

2) stories in which a known scientific trend is extrapolated but today's picture of the physical nature of the universe is retained. (WARM SF, which could become possible under certain circumstances. E.g. robot stories, Wilson Tucker's "Wild Talent" almost all Heinlein and most other SF authors.)

3) stories in which the author shapes a radically new science -- so-to-say a trans-classic science, which is (as seen today) a pseudo-science, for no evidence can be produced. (HOT SF, events quite impossible from today's viewpoint and also from that of any foreseeable future -- but this does not mean that one can categorically deny that they might not move into the sphere of "reliability" some (very distant) day. E.g. van Vogt's "Weapon Shop" series, Campbell's "The Incredible Planet" and (a few) others..."

Although style and content have suffered much in my translation, I hope it serves to illustrate serious German thought.

- JULIAN PARR



CAUGHT OFF

BASS

RON BENNETT

"You can wake up now," said Joan. "The picture's finished."

"I said, you can wake up now dear. The picture has ended. The coyboys have stopped chasing the Indians and the frontier scout has got his medal."

I groaned. Opened my eyes. Groaned again and stretched.

I apologised and bent down to pick up the hat of the little old lady sitting next to me and looked up at the multi-colored screen. An ice-cream girl with a smile right out of THE SEVEN YEAR ITCH bore down at me relentlessly. I neatly side-stepped -- which is hard to do when you're sitting down -- and apologised again and bent down to pick up the now sadly crumpled hat.

The dear little old lady smiled sweetly and said, "...mumble mumble.. Teddy boys who stay up all night and have to catch up with their sleep in public places of entertainment and disturb old people who can't fend for themselves and if I was forty years younger I'd show you a thing or two young man blah blah..." so I dropped her hat on the floor and kicked it a couple of seats along and then I turned to Joan.

"Move a couple of rows away," I said. "This old chatterbox next to me won't let me concentrate on the adverts."

We moved and before settling I went down the aisle to the ice-cream girl for a couple of This Month's Flavors. A little boy was choosing for sixpence whether he was going to mess up his suit with a choc-ice or an orange iced-lolly. I waited until he'd finished, and had just gotten my hands round the tubs of ice-cream I bought when the lights went off except for a bright yellow spot. The curtains rolled back and the manager -- at least he wore evening dress -- stepped onto the stage.

"Lad-ies and... Gentlemen," he announced in his best Lesson Three to Cinema Managers manner, "we of Incorporated British Picture Houses hope that you are enjoying the best in the world of cinema entertainment. Tonight we are holding the first round in our amateur talent competition which last year was won by the Johnny Smith Quintet which is now so popular in television circles."

Loud cheers from five blokes sitting at the front.

"....And our first contestants this evening are four boys who have been practising hard, and here they are, the Tommy Smith Skiffle Group!"

Loud cheers all round, as a double bass came onto the stage carried by two blokes who also had guitars. Then two blokes carried on an oversize washboard. They sat these up on the stage and sat around them,

except for the bass player, who had to stand, of course.

The cheering stopped, and the Manager said, "And their first number tonight is the ever popular, 'Rock Island Line'."

The group sallied forth into a version of the number which was so much their own that even Lonnie Donegan wouldn't have recognized as being the one he's made so popular. They continued with "The Midnight Special" and trooped off to more applause and cheering.

The manager came back on and announced a small pop combination who came up and set up their drum kit and double bass with great precision, meticulous care and impeccable showmanship.

"And now," said the Manager, "The Tony Zombie Sextet will play the.."

Which was as far as he got, because the bass player suddenly grabbed hold of his stomach and slid forward onto his knees and then onto his face, which I thought was quite a novel and original way of introducing the act, but a moment later a couple of blokes rushed on with a stretcher and carted him off moaning something about the ice cream and the rest of the group looked a little shaken. The saxophonist jumped up and tapped the Manager on the shoulder and whispered something in his ear.

"Well, ladies and gentlemen," said said Manager, "despite that ... er haha ... untimely interruption the Sextet are still going to play for your further enjoyment...."

More loud cheers.

"...But they require the assistance of a member of the audience to play the double bass... Will any gentleman...? ... Ah yes, I see a gentleman there standing in the gangway... Could we have the spotlight over there please....?"

I looked around to see who the chap was. Gee, I thought, he's got guts. Volunteering to play before a large audience like that...

Then the spotlight hit me between the eyes.

He was pointing at me!

I was still in the aisle with the ice-creams looking for Joan.

"This way, sir," said the Manager. There was nothing else to do. I went up onto the stage. After all, anyone who calls you "sir"...

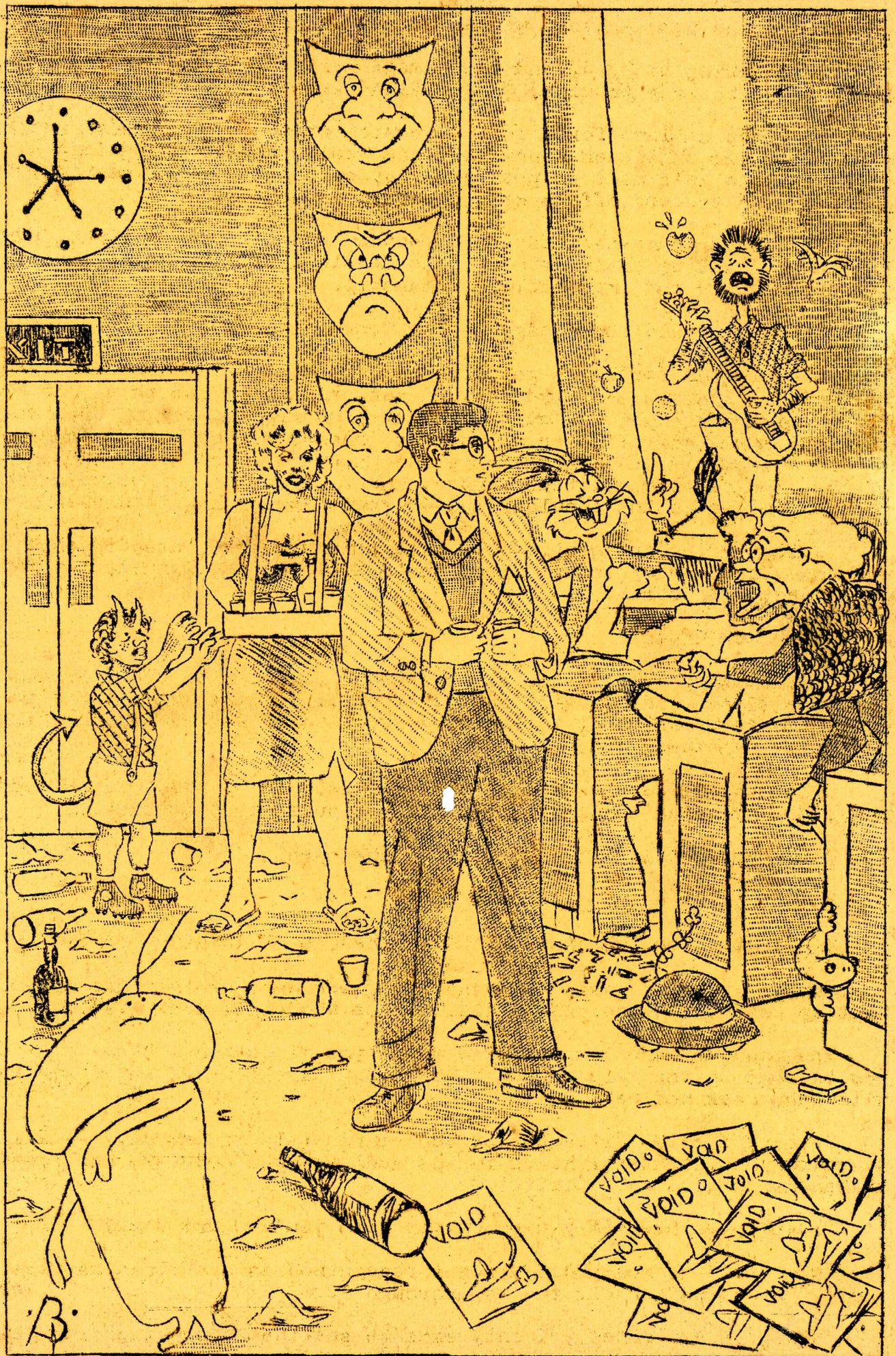
The Manager came over and led me to the microphone. "Very nice of you to come up and help us out," he said. "Have you had any experience with band work before?"

"Well," I said, "I've played the clarinet in Liverpool." -- I like to think the laughter I heard in the audience was Joan -- "And I've shaken hands with Pete Daniels."

"Hu-hu, and how did you enjoy the film you've just seen?"

"What, 'im?" screamed a voice I recognized as a certain hatless old lady, "'E was asleep all the way through it."

"Well," I explained, "I only came to see the International Rugby Match on the news-reel."



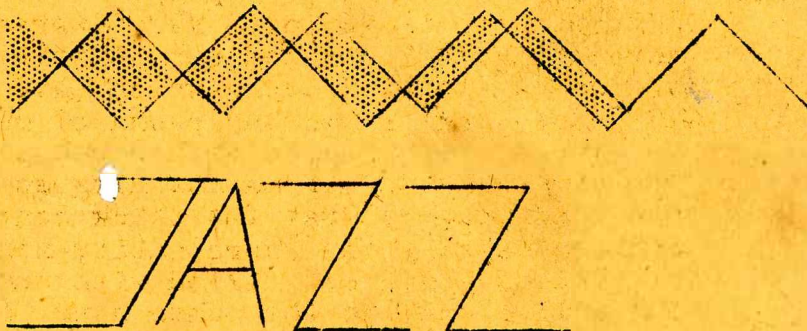
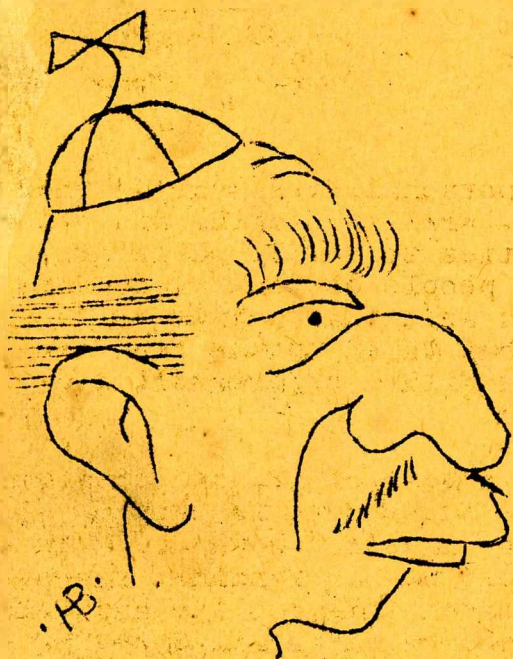
The Manager coughed loudly and I felt something wet drooling down my arm and nestling around my elbow. Surely, I thought, he can't have shot me with his cough? And then I noticed that the ice-cream I was still carrying was melting and running down my arm. I gave these to the Manager to hold and took my place at the double bass.

I tried to think how I'd seen it done when Ronnie Hylton and Johnny Adelstone's Band used to come up to College and I soon got the hang of it. Keeping time was easy; the difficult part was choosing where about on the string to pluck and I knew when I was going wrong by the dirty looks the drummer kept giving me.

But the loss of their regular bass-player and the acquisition of me had definitely affected the band's playing. We finished one number and the saxophonist said, "Right, lads, now we'll play 'The Way You Look Tonight'," and we all looked at him because that's what we'd just played and it seems he'd been playing "Let's Do It", so you can see that they weren't at their best.

I went back to my seat and Joan gave me a scorching look, so I gave her the melting ice-cream to cool her down and we saw the news reel and were just going out when the result of the contest was announced.

Needless to say, the skiffle group won.



a spot of

Jim and I recently procured a few jazz records, mainly tunes by Lawson-Haggart. For some reason, I have never heard the slightest mention of this group around fandom, in the various articles and things on jazz. This seems odd to me, since from what I've heard, the band is much better than about 90% of the contemporary trad artists. Since I have limited experience, of course, I can't be sure of this ... but still, Lawson blows a mean trumpet.

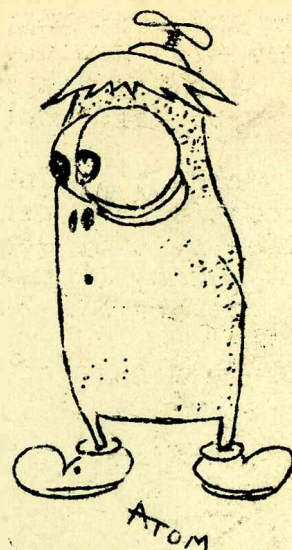
The arrangements, for the most part, are original and yet contain the old atmosphere of the early dixie days, when such greats as Jelly Roll Morton (there, Bennett!) and King Oliver were playing at their best. When the group gets swinging, the improvisations on the melody are excellent.

If any of you jazz addicts have ever dug this bunch, and have albums by them we don't own, I'm willing to open negotiations any time. And if you've never had the chance to hear them, I would suggest you do so at once.

Greg

EDITORIAL

MORE DISSERTATION It sometimes amazes me to see how many fans worship at the altar of "Personality." It becomes quite interesting to watch them running around frantically writing long, boring editorials hashing and re-hashing worn subjects, eagerly typing their fanzine reviews in hopes of impressing the readers with their charm and ability, and answering letters in what they think are new and original ways.



I suppose all this faunting of personalities started back in 6th fandom, when Hoffman, Calkins, Willis, Keasler and others wrote columns based upon their abilities to ramble pleasantly. But that was 6th fandom. Most of the people of that bygone era have faded away, and those who remain aren't as active as they used to be. So a new strain of fans has taken up the cry, and they seem to believe they can imitate Willis or Grennell and, when they wish, be Real Personalities.

But it just ain't so. They make a mess of it, and then can't figure why. A fact many people ignore these days is that an editor's job is to edit, NOT "express himself." However, I am not advocating that a fan cut himself out of his fanzine. There are a few zines, though, which have taken this too far and printed nothing but reams and reams of mediocre material. There is a tendency to swing to either one side or the other on this matter -- instead of maintaining an even balance between editor and contributor, most fmz stick consistently to one type of policy (usually the "personality-zine"). Thus we find a number of efforts which are filled with nothing but the babblings of the editor, and on the other hand, a slightly smaller group which contains a lot of rather shoddy material and practically nothing of the editor himself. I wonder where this craze for widely different publications (none of which are of any particular merit) will end?

* * * * *

I received a letter recently from a fan who, in connection with the various things I wrote in the last VOID, seemed to feel that I was over-criticising. To quote a few lines from his letter: "You act just a wee bit too superior for me. I just don't go for the fan who considers himself big enough to laugh at one and all." →

Some readers might feel that I am being too harsh, and throwing my weight around, in my editorials and the letter column. However, before anyone starts blasting me for this reason, I would like to say that the things I say in VOID are meant merely for discussion-prodding. I don't consider myself "superior" to the rest of fandom, and any criticising I do is not meant as an "attack" on any one person. And as for laughing at fandom -- is it so sacred that one can't risk a slightly amused titter over some of its members? Gad ... I thought faaaans were broad-minded.

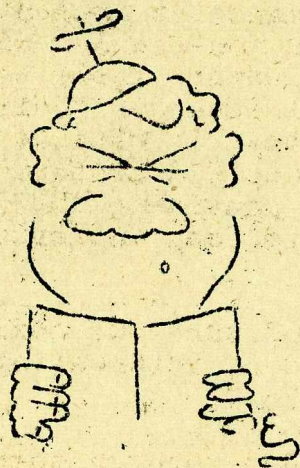
LOWINGS

IN
THE

FIELD

KENT

MOOMAW



Glancing back through the pages of a large stack of fanzines, I suddenly realize that American fandom is currently coming in for quite a bit of criticism. Not all of fandom particularly, not certain organizations or circles, but American fandom as a distinct entity. Being an American fan myself, my natural reaction shows up in the form of a question: "Howcum?"

well, it seems that we Statesiders have fallen into a doldrums, and like the crew of a becalmed sailboat, we're consuming all our supplies and starting to waste away as our vessel goes ~~na~~ merrily nowhere. Fanzines are 90% crud; the only fen worth remembering are those left over from 6th and early 7th fandoms; and even the apae are going to the dogs. We're disintergrating in jig time, and appear on our way to total oblivion.

The wailing and bemoaning of the lack of "quality" fmzs has reached a new creshendo. Fen look in their mailboxes for a SPACESHIP or a QUANDRY and come up with a MUZZY or an ALICE instead. The bewildered neos walk in expecting to find articles on John Campbell's editorial policy and whether or not Paul Fairman will ever replace Ray Palmer, and they run into A BAS and the like. "Splinter groups are sucking out our life blood!" shrieks the chorus. "Unite or die! Together we stand, divided we fall! 54-40 or right!"

In one respect these town criers are correct: stf, perhaps more than

ever before, plays a very minor part in actifandom: Diversified interests are invading fannish hearts and/or minds, and the situation is now such that, upon picking up and fanzine, you can expect to find articles on anything from folk music to hunting and fishing.

But this in itself, the retreat from stf, is not the underlying cause of our troubles. And a return to science fiction will not restore us to the glorious 1950-1953 fandom, like a quack medico's snake oil cure-all. It would most likely be the final crusher, and there's a very good and very profound reason why this is true: Science fiction isn't all it's cracked up to be.

Only a small percentage of today's stf is the thoughtful and perceptive extrapolation that we once thought it all was. There's just too much hack work in the field to devote all of your spare time to it, which one soon realizes after struggling through the initial discovery period. It would be nice to have every new story written by Bob Heinlein or Ted Sturgeon or Bradbury, but all too often they're by Milton Lesser or Ivar Jorgensen or some other refugee from the western or detective pulps. To spend time on this drivel merely because it's in the same literary field as "slan" and "The Green Hills of Earth" isn't showing good sense. A fandom devoted entirely to stf, indiscriminately good and bad, would be most disgusting, I'm sure.

So ... we have the material on sports cars, cool sounds, square dancing, "popular" music, ad infinitum, as performed by the Derelicts, Dan Adkins, the brothers Benford, etc. We have A BAS, we have the apazines with material on you-name-it, and we have doom spielers.

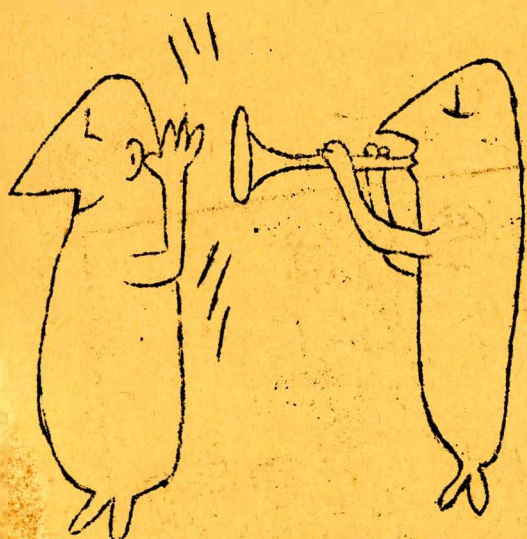
And we have the question: why? Is it a vicious circle? Will the diversity mean the end of general fandom, while a return to stf, stagnation?

Uh-uh. The trouble doesn't come from the wide range of subjects as handled by the above mentioned gentlemen. These people fill their mags with non-stf and non-fannish material, but they do it well. They do it so well that they become BNFs and their mags hit the top.

The often-voiced theory is that fans are generally smarter than the average truck. But we've got just as many hangers-on and imitators as the next social group, and they're in prominence at present. Since some fen have skyrocketed to sudden heights via non-fannish material, the young social climbers whose sole aim is to nuture their egos by mingling with the "elite", but have no original ideas of their own, mimic this manner of writing/editing in hopes that it will do as much for them. Some are so desperate they'd follow any fad if they thought it would give them a boost. And it just might, providing they could do as good a job of it as those who instigated said fad, whatever it might be.

But they can't. They botch it horribly, and turn our boring, lifeless and totally insignificant material instead of interesting off-trail reading. You could name names and so could I.

Never in my three years of looking at fandom through most every viewpoint have there been so many of these social climbers. Fandom reeks with them. They choose their opinions on the basis of how much influence it will gain them with who, and are quick to be swayed when



a big name chooses to disagree with them. They bang on the oaken doors of various cliques, and treat admittance not as a new set of friends to enjoy associating with, but as a personal coup.

It isn't Raeburn and those of his calibre who are turning fandom into a degenerated mire ... it's their many untalented imitators. The reams of nothingness they hack out in their pseudo-BNF disguise has just about wrecked the American generalzines, and is working toward that end in the apae. No wonder you hear screams of protest!

What's the antidote to this slow-acting poison? Well, it's impossible to deal with personalities, so direct counteraction is out of the question. Ron Ellik, although half in jest, gave us the answer in the last issue of VOID: it's way past time for 8th fandom. Without an active young nucleus of energetic fen to shift the central emphasis of fandom from the mimics, we'll just be adding grease to the big slide.

Stagnation has set in since the end of 7th fandom, not with it. With a couple talented figures to begin a new movement, a really enthusiastic yet not hopelessly sercon movement, 8th fandom wouldn't have the slightest difficulty in taking hold. The apas would be swept into the wings, obscured in new ideas, a commodity they seemingly know little about.

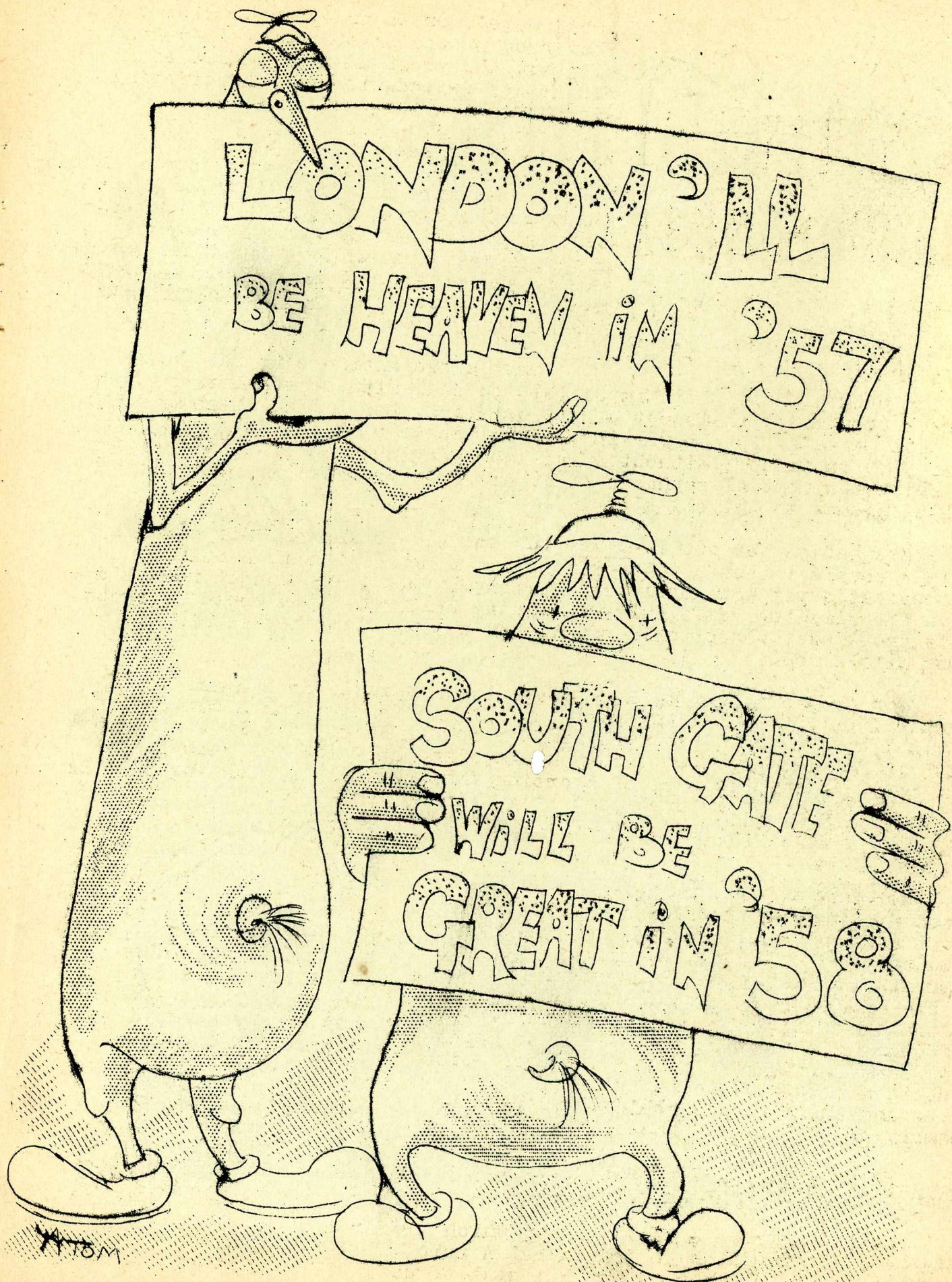
But Greg's answer to Ronel is, alas, typical. He laughs. Why should I do it? What's in it for me? If 8th fandom took a dive, where would I be? No, no, it's much simpler to sit back and wait for someone else to do the job, then latch on after the organization part, after the really difficult part of starting fmzs and calling fen together is over. It's eaiser for Greg, and it's eaiser for me; I'm no different from the rest of you, dammit.

So here we are. We have a few very good fanzines at the negative effect and cost of many, many bad ones ... and of general fandom itself. We have a few individuals who make fandom interesting, and a big crowd who stick out their feet for extra drag. Their presence reminds me of watching the cheering section of an opposing team ... they're making a lot of noise but in a couple of hours it'll all be over and there'll be nothing left but the memory of that sea of faces.

We have us ... you and me ... too damn lazy to do anything about it.

Matt Dennis once wrote a song which started, "Where do we go from here? A trip to Mars would be exciting..." But most of us have already been there. Where do we go from here?

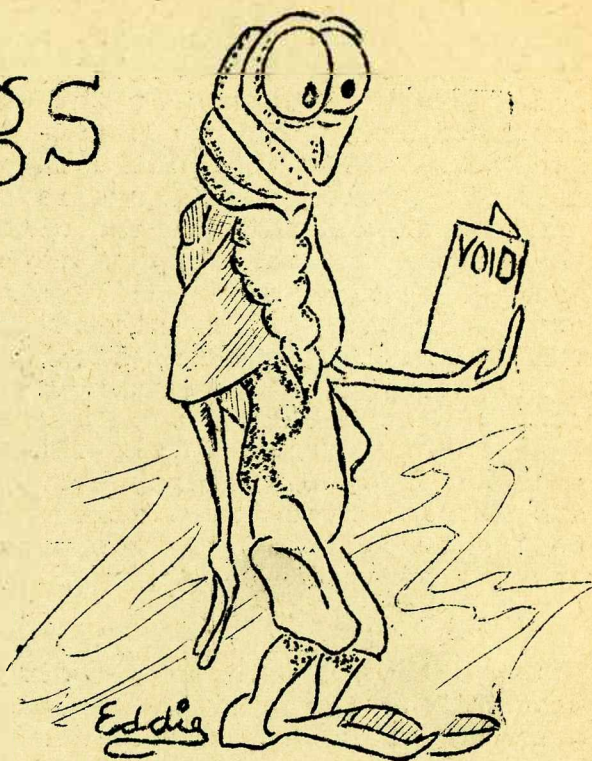




...and scribblings

RON BENNETT

remarks... Jim is to be congratulated on the fresh-looking layout of this issue. But once more I must grumble at something. I shuddered when I saw it. I rolled in agony. Cecil rolled in agony. As he was rolling on me you can understand why I was rolling in agony. Ronny indeed. ~~ru~~leez...if you're not using Ron, I've no objection to the expansion of the name by a further syllable. I'm called konnie around the house here. Yes, Konnie, with an 'i' and an 'e' not a 'y'... Personally I prefer Ron anyway.



And why didn't you tell me Ray was on the radio. ArN Frankfurt? When is the Groucho Show on? Berry and Thompson -- VERY GOOD. After hearing John and others moan that he's overdoing it and is off form, it's very pleasing to see him back in top standard.

Must agree with Eric the Bent. For its size, Great Britain, as we call it (silly of us), shows more variety in geographic types than any other country in the world. This means climate, agriculture, industry and other occupations, people -- the lot. Only to be expected as they're interwoven and dependent on the weather and climate. Take a London business man, a Scottish sheep farmer, a Lancastrian cotton spinner, a West Riding woollen weaver, a Sheffield steelworker, and East Anglian farmer -- oh, you can go on and on. We've not even touched coal and mining, quarrying or shipbuilding.

BOYD RAE BURN

comments on VOID 8 ... Hey, don't you go putting any immigrants on to me. Cut it out, nuh, Benford? Tell this George that he can hear jazz in Toronto until it runs out of his ears, without anybody showing him around. And I don't just mean local musicians, although we have plenty of good ones here. All the big names come here sooner or later. He'll hear a damn sight more big name jazz here than he will in a lot of US cities.

Your Kenton review shows by some of your remarks that you are rather new to jazz, but your comments show that you listen to the music and you can express your opinions about it well. Why don't you try to make your fanzine reviews of the same quality? I am looking forward to seeing more of this type of writing from you.

It has just occurred to me that your merely writing about Kenton is likely to bring on some comments from certain English fans. As you no

doubt know, jazz is divided into schools of different periods. Very roughly though, you can make two major distinctions, "traditional" and "modern". Not too long ago, there was a tendency for the modernists to sneer at the traditionalists (I am speaking of fans rather than musicians). In this continent the whole thing has boiled down to a live & let live attitude. While some people may prefer one type of jazz, they generally allow that while they may not care too much for the other fellow's preference, there is something in the jazz he happens to like, and there is nothing wrong with his liking it. However, it would seem that among English fans there are some traditionalists (I don't know whether this is a general attitude among all English traditionalists, but it is possibly symptomatic) who hold to the weird belief that THEIR jazz is the ONLY jazz, that nothing happened after 1930 (or some other early date) and that any development in jazz after that time is only eldritch cacophony. Ignore any carping you may hear from these intolerant fossils. Their attitude is very narrow and intolerant. Myself, I enjoy Dixieland, but prefer modern on the whole. Same with Ron and Gerald. Lyons also digs the whole field, but leans a little more to the traditional. On the whole we enjoy most jazz, and respect each other's individual leanings. The narrow minded yawpings of the bigots I find rather pitiful.

((I too tend to dig more modern, but trad also is rather enjoyable. Have a few albums of dixie and like them, but still modern is more pleasing. The fans around here lean toward modern too, with an occasional trad. Haven't heard too much from the "Jazz stopped with Bix Beiderbecke." element -- maybe they've calmed down.))

JEAN YOUNG

meanders... I see that you too are one of the Elite, the Accepted. You have an ATOM cover. Somehow, we feel we have not made it to the Inner Circle without having ATOM drawings. You could say who wants to get to the Inner Circle, and you'd be right, I suppose. But having ATOM drawings is a mighty desirable goal all in itself, you know...

I dunno about Terry Carr on 6th Fandom. We weren't there, so we don't reminisce happily about it. We've seen some of the fmz from back then, and have liked a lot of them. We have seen ONE issue of SPACE-SHIP, and liked it; some Keasler things -- oh, bits of this and that. It seemed like a very enjoyable time. The Seventh Fandom business seemed very silly to us; Jack Harness (who has later denied it) was much embroiled in the mess, and tried to drag us into fandom at its height -- the 7th Fandom height, that is. This did not appeal to us, and we firmly resisted being drug. Ehwell. I dunno, like I said.

I'm not particularly excited about Gerfandom, I find. On the other hand, I like Lars Helander's writing -- and drawings for that matter. He has a nice light and generally unforced style which is rather tricky to obtain in one's own language, to say nothing of another.

Oh, this stuff on Cliques -- foosh. People talk too much about the cliquishness of fandom, and how we're all coming apart at the seams and so on. Fie. People worry too much about Our microcosm. Hell, we're nothing more than a bunch of individuals, anyway; do you think our personal friendships are likely to break up because we don't talk enough about Science Fiction and other weighty matters of general interest? I LIKE personalzines, when they're by someone who can write well and is an interesting person.



((You have a point there. But then too, nowadays many faneditors seem to think pubbing a "personality" zine is simply mouthing their inane chatter at the readers. This trend is mercifully dying out, but there still remain the usual hangers-on who persist in "entertaining" fandom with their oh-so-charming selves.))

ARCHIE MERCER

rambles...

Funny thing about Kent Moomaw and his cock-eyed record is it isn't the only one. Vic Curtis, North Hykeham's ORIGINAL fan, has just got a disc -- two sides also -- on the London label (which is really the American branch of the British Decca, but the stuff they record Stateside they issue here on the London label too.) Done by some man I've never heard of before and can't remember, and Sara Berner. Disc entitled "Out of this World with Flying Saucers." Just how the flying saucers got into the title I fail altogether to comprehend -- it's got nothing whatsoever to do with crockery of any kind. It's supposed to be a public broadcast of a commentator ("Edward R. Sparrow") trying to get into contact with the planet Mars -- but with the same sort of rock-and-roll background allusions that Kent mentions. "Can you hear me Mars?" he calls. Comes the cry of "I hear you knocking -- but you caaan't come in!" "Oh," he says. "I see it now -- it isn't Mars at all, it's just another planet pretending to be Mars." Noises off: "Oh-h-h yessss -- I'm the Great Pretender!" Into the middle of his Mars-summoning bursts a sudden racket:

"One two three o'clock, four o'clock rock
Five six seven o'clock, eight o'clock rock
Nine ten 'leven o'clock, twelve o'clock rock
We're gonna rock --"

"I'm sorry folks, we seem to be getting interference from the Comets."
"Hello, is that Mars?" "Mars? What d' you want Mars for? This is Television Persia bringing you your favorite program -- Persian to Persian." A word from our sponsor -- "Bald men, are you worried when your head slips off the pillow at night. Hear what one of our Texas customers has to say." "Waal, ah bin rubbin' fluffo on mah scalp for nigh on forty year -- an' ah'm tellin' you, ah have the hairiest fingertips you ever saw." And so on. Finishing "we interrupt this special news bulletin to bring you a program." And return to the "concert by the Philharmonic Orchestra" playing a rock-and-roll riff -- the same one they'd been playing at the beginning of the record. Hilarious.

And six hundredweight of readers' letters, for which many, many thanks. I can understand (re Boyd Raeburn's letter) who some Transatlantic fen think all Anglozines look the same -- I tend to get the same impression with many US zines. GRUE's the most outstanding I think, of those I'm familiar with -- and from every conceivable angle too. Others seem to pattern themselves as much as possible on OOPSLA!, or like some other sourcezine whose exact identity is unknown to me.

Yes, rock-and-roll has Britain in its grip. We've got rock-and-roll combos springing up all over, all the teenage element is wildly in favor; it's the thing all right. We've had riots (caused mainly by the press putting it into the heads of the teenagers that it's the thing to do); I'm sympathetic towards the movement, of course.

And why SHOULDN'T Elvis Presley be President if he wants to be? Just so long as he can get people to vote for him. Be a nice change.

from having a politician or a general or something. Not that I have anything against Ike or Truman or Roosevelt (which is as far back as my memory runs) -- in fact, I'm in favor of them all rather than otherwise. But mightn't an entertainment figure just possibly be more interested in keeping the world at peace than the average general or politician might be?

CLIFF GOULD

comments.... Your derogation is quite good. The only criticism that I might be able to make is the fact that it lacks a Central Theme...no continuity. However, despite the missing "plot" I did find it amusing in spots, etc.

Your characterization of Bill Grant is quite good, Bill Grant is a good man, then.

This fellow Berry who writes for you reminds me of another fan writer with a very similar name...at any rate this fellow does have definite possibilities...encourage him.

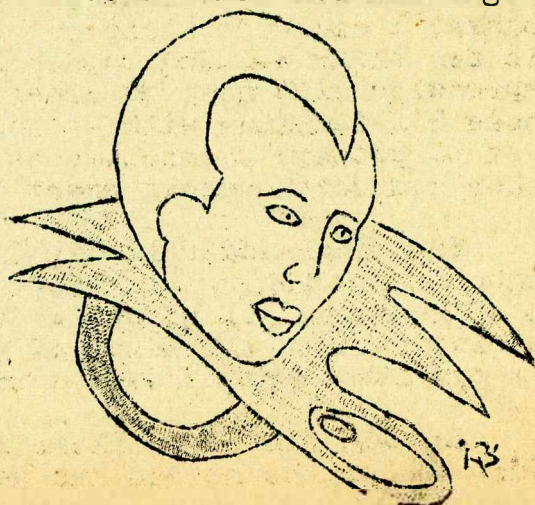
Carr says: "Eighth fandom cracked its egg and stuck its head out, but nobody paid it much attention so it never came out. People just weren't interested..." "They were too busy heaping dirt on seventh fandom..." So am I to deduce from this that both seventh and eighth fandoms are dead? I hardly think so. I prefer to think of what Terry calls seventh fandom as sort of a false start, and worst of all a conscious start. You don't start a fandom like Vorzimer tried to start eighth fandom! You say you don't know how Vorzy tried to start an eighth fandom? He merely stepped forth from the mob and said "You, you, you... will publish the Leading Fmz...and you will be 8F's first Bnf...." Argh!

At the present time fandom has no "direction", it has no Number One Fanzine such as Q or the old PSY for everyone to gather about and glee. Nearly every fan has his own special little group of people he likes and who like him. There are few huge correspondents (I've heard it rumored -- ie Ellik told me -- that Vorzy had about 200 correspondents.) All in all fandom is coming to be more and more a personal thing, with personal contact between a few fans being the keynote. This trend is further illustrated by the popularity of tapersponding.

Your letter column is very good. In fact it is the strong point of VOID.

I'll thank you not to print any more letters from Dick Ellington or at least if you do relegate him the place of dishonor right next to Clod Hall's or Squirrel's or someplace like that. This Ellington character has got to go. Here I am having innocent 3-way conversation with Raeburn and Ellington, and here is Ellington making all manner of snide remarks about me sounding like a New York Fairy. The fact that I come from California seems to have left no impression on him. Ah well, back to Bixel Street...or shall I go to Pershing today?

Here is Ellik making like Vorzy



(ie, "don't you think it's time for Eighth Fandom..."). On your mark, get ready, get set, goooooooo.... Pardon me while I pause to look up to the top shelf of my bookcase onto which is pinned a genuine HE ribbon on which is printed in blue ink (it's a white ribbon) 7TH FANDOM. I guess Ellison distributed these at the SFCON. Oh well, and like that.

I alla time keep getting these German, and Swiss, and Norweigen fmz, and so on. And I tell thee true; these things are nearly as hard to decipher as an Ellick letter, I mean I really am not a linguist and all....oh well, I guess somebody has to support the post office...

How much does a Mercedes-Benz 300SL cost in Germany? This information I'd like very much. I've heard all sorts of lewd rumors to the effect that if You went To The Right Place you could pick up one for \$4,500. It might be worth swimming if this is true. They sell for around \$8,000 here in the States. I drool when I look at one....but to put it mildly, the price is prohibitive.



If I ever steal a car,
that's the one I'm gonna steal.
Bet they never catch me I do,
I do.

((Weell...couple weeks back-I
was downtown faunching through
the window of a Mercedes-Benz
place and making noises through
the glass and happened to notice
pricetag on latest model ...
\$6,000 ... so I guess they aren't
so cheap over here after all.
Oh woe.
Is there no justice?))

RICH ENEY

mumbles... That's a
fine idea about submitting a

few of Lying George's letters to the Post Office department, but the trouble is he rarely signs his slanderous ones. Of course, there's a method of tracing typewriters, too, but they're not so personalized as handwriting and the procedure is too complicated to bother with except in really serious matters -- more serious, that is, than ordinary defamation. If only bombs weren't barred from the mail...

We -- the Acolytes of Tucker -- plan to run Bob for Ghod at the next election. No nominations for Bloch have been received yet. Serious constructiveness, anyone?

((Speaking of Dear Fugghead, I'm wondering how many people got his crudsheet, THE CONSERVATIVE. I would like to know because Wetzel even sent me a copy, which probably means he has fandom flooded with the thing. Horrid thought, isn't it?))

TERRY JEEVES

rambles.... I liked
the cover by ATOM, but then who doesn't like his work. He
must be the most consistent artist ever to nit fandom. His heading to
Berry's article was magnificent; it even manages to overshadow John's
piece, which is a rare feat.

Terry Carr's ravings about Nth fandom leave me cold. I'm one of those characters who never even knew we'd had different eras of fandom, and I still think far too much paper is wasted on such trivia. In case you want to know why I speak thusly, might I add that I've been reading s-f for 24 years (since age 10, when I laid maulers on my first Gernsback Wonder), and became an in-actifan around '38 by subbing to ASF, and Wally Gilling's Scientifiction which came out a little later. My actifan days began immediately after the war, in '46, so I suppose I can claim to have been a member of quite a few of these x.y.z. fandoms. Only snag is, I never noticed any changes beyond a gradual swing from the s & c straight s-f-and science line to the present day system of 'anything goes'. Personally, I prefer a mixture.

The letter column was one of the best that I have come across lately. The more you have of this, the better I will like it...only one plea, please arrange to have VOID published during a lull in the fanzine season, so that I can really settle down to read it in peace, rather than knock off to scan through the various other zines which keep thudding through the mailbox.

((Matter of fact, that's one of the reasons I might use to explain why this issue of V was held over...don't wanna get in one of them rushes, y'know. Now that I think of it, we just might hold the issue until a dry spell comes along and then mail it out. It makes a good excuse, anyway. At least we don't have to admit we're just lazy...))

DICK ELLINGTON

informs....

Lunatic fringe of NYfandom, including fanarchists and self, went on a picnic last night (Xmas eve -- "Keep the X in Xmas") under George Washington Bridge complete with roaring bonfire, toasted weenies, marshmallows etc and liquid warmers for the inner man -- also known as Xmas spirits. Went fine until sudden rain and wind storm drove us away to apartment where we partied until all odd hours.

Wetzel has leaped on Hickman with cries of long-lost-buddy bit which Hickman does not like a-tall. Hickman, in spite of being states-rightist rebel moron, is damn nice guy and I like him. What he wants to do is air the argument in JD and let the fur fly where it may. He's perfectly willing to print other side of argument too as believes in free expression of ideas. So to get Wetzel off his back he told him to write long study of cartoonist who draws Okey Doakes and who is mystery man of some sort. He figures this will keep Wetzel off his back for a few months.

I dunno, I like New York but can't quite figure out why. Can't really take the suburbs at all -- too much Exurbanitizing out there. Rows and rows of the little catchers-of-the-8:14 and such, armies of characters in the same suits and overcoats, kissing the same wives good-morning and marching in lockstep down to the East Meadow station and trooping aboard their little trains with the same edition of the same paper and the same canasta and pinochle games going on in the same four seats. Ad.infinitum. Manhattan is a brawling madhouse admittedly but people here are somewhat more willing to live and let live. Your life is your own here. Nobody worries too much about what status his neighbor has or what he does or is. It is something of a jungle but once you learn the unwritten laws and the trails to follow plus the recognition codes, you aren't bothered much. Don't think I've ever been really gypped in New York by anyone. You get so you can recognize the tourist traps, gyp joints, con men, crap-shooters, et al with very little trouble and one thing nice about this place is that everything

you want is here, no matter what it may be. The only alternative to me for this town would be the ultimate in out-in-the-country living -- awaaaaaay out -- off the beaten track and I don't mean a small town either.

Course I got VOID. You will be interested to note that the authorities took enough note of it to stamp it -- for the first time incidentally -- PASSED FREE BY U.S. CUSTOMS which means they looked at it. Int'resting.

Parr does a damn fine job on the German reviews. I'd normally skip this sort of thing but he makes it interesting enough to keep me reading all the way through. Helander follows through in good style and makes both reports quite interesting as a pair.



The Cliques article is rather pointlessly done but there is a rather interesting subject-idea-what have you there. Far as I'm concerned let people have their cliques if they want -- it's their business, after all. This deal of trying to "guide" fandom into the "correct channels" of activities shows me nothing. Fandom is as fandom is and a rose is a rose is a etc. and nothing any single person can do or say is going to make a damn bit of difference to its development.

Richards: Makes some sense but not too much -- can't agree with him completely. On the other hand have mild disagreement with your answer. British may as a rule have more of a conformist habit but it is a more gentle, harmless way of conformity and, to my way of thinking, infinitely preferable (as long as one must suffer with conformity) to the gregarious, push-it-in-your-face American variety. As to their fans -- noooo, I don't think so. Try meeting a large crowd of them.-- I'll bet anything you'll find just as many wild ones among them on a ratio basis as you do among Amerifen. And the Lonely Crowd hardly pertains here.

You mean to say Spencer never before compared the bandleader with the editor? This was the first reaction of me and mine when heard of him. I think was also part of what provoked the thing-thing Steward did on non-existant Boyd. I tee-hee at the Squirrel too. Incidentally, notice that Gould's nickname has not only stuck but been accepted by Ellik with due modesty. Says he never had a nickname before and sort of enjoys it.

FILLER 2 -- now there's a subject. Which reminds me that your using backs of left-over pages of fanzines for letters immediately brought to mind my several months of seven-pages-a-week correspondence with the late, squirrely Norm Browne who I understand, now resides in upcountry Canada. Was in town some months ago but I didn't see him -- luckily. Son of a bitch was going to edit FILLER 2 you know. So collected material like mad including pages and pages from yours truly -- even put some on stencil -- then completely gafiated due to insults from the

Insurgents. Neglected (natch) to pass on any of material or anything -- that is to say he acted in true Seventh Fandom fashion. Grrrrr! I dislike him.

Disagree sort of with Moomaw about what should appear in fanzines. F'heavens sake if Boyd can discuss jazz and sports cars and Grennell photography and old non-sf mags and Enever gardening etc., why should Thompson not talk about traffic accidents and such. For that matter, leave us not forget that Cowbell Jr. hisself, after losing son in auto accident undertook editorial and research into hiway hypnotism and performed quite a fine analysis of same in ASTOUNDING!

I like Moomaw's sentiments incidentally re the fugghead South but would hesitate again about claiming British more conformist or "same" -- might qualify and say that they are not as much conformist considering the area they occupy and communications and such as comparable area in the US. Ever hear a north countryman or a Welshman or discuss finer points of life in different parts of England and then compare same with comparable American experiences?

Which reminds me that the only real news around here is that the One and Only Harlan Ellison has been requisitioned by Uncle Sam for a little time on Governor's Island. Not being familiar with this sort of thing I can only speculate that he is being what I believe is known as drafted.

((This thing about the customs opening V I do not like a-tall. I suspect I am being censored. They are prolly cutting off my mail...opening my fanzines... De-cum! Anyone for revolution?))

WALT WILLIS

contemplates.... This

Moomaw bloke seems a right promising fan writer and I'd like to have seen more from him. More here I mean -- I've already seen quite a lot of his stuff in other fmz. I seem to have seen the name Berry before too. I must say I prefer him writing about fans because his powers of observation and gifts for allusion have more scope then, and you have a much better idea where fact is trampled underfoot and the Berrymagination takes over, but these little autobiographical mundane pieces are very readable too.

I think what John was born for and what he has been subconsciously waiting and training himself for, is a convention. A convention reported by Berry would be quite a thing. Incidentally, I'd like to reassure Moomaw (see his letter) that I'm not a sadist. The only connection that particular piece had with sordid reality is that I do have my radio wired up to a bellpush and that I have a separate loudspeaker.

Terry Carr makes some good points. I suppose it is true that Sixth Fandom was less 'fannish' than some modern fanzines in that even Q featured material about sf (and against that, let's remember that Max Keasler never had any interest in sf at all) but I don't know that any of us ever claimed otherwise. What distinguished Sixth Fandom from Seventh, to me anyway, was its degree of intergration. You felt that fandom consisted of a congenial group of people who knew one another and who all read the same fanzines. It made the



creation of fannish mythology a much easier and rewarding occupation than in present times, when it sometimes seems that fandom consists of lots of ephemeral fmz, each with its own following of fringe-fans. I suppose the trouble is basically that since 1952 fandom has got too diffuse for a reasonably active fan to keep up with it all and few people even attempt it. The common cultural matrix has to a large extent disappeared and this in turn makes fandom's attraction less compelling so that people tend to reduce their fanac even further or retreat into Apas. Sometimes I think what'll happen is that fandom will wither away until there's only a few dozen of us again, and then the whole process will start over again.

One question of objective fact Terry is wrong about is that remark of his that Q was printed on dull gray paper. This is not true. Q was printed on paper of variegated hues.

" Dunno where Richards gets the idea that BNFs look down on neofans. Many of them spend so much time encouraging them and answering questions that they haven't time to write to their friends. It's the neofan who thinks he isn't one that's the really arrogant type.

I can't see that British fmz are any more uniform than US ones, but that's a matter of opinion. I do disagree though with your suggested reasons for this alleged phenomenon, that the British "conform more" than Americans. Eccentricity is still tolerated, even admired, in Britain, whereas in the States, as far as one hears, the urge to conformity is so strong as to amount to a neurosis. It seems, according to Vernon McCain that you can't even ride a bicycle there, and Juanita Coulson lost her job for publishing a fanzine.

((There seems to be a sort of American trait nowadays to drag everyone into the group and force them to go through the motions of Belonging To Polite Society. As Ellington said, tho, the British see the value of not following every whim of the mass. I just wish we had more of that sort of thing in America.))

LARRY STARK

criticises.... Have you ever had the feeling that a magazine is maybe, well, trying a little too hard? Bluntly, you give me the impression that you've never rejected anything, for ANY reason. Despite my feelings as a free-lancer in fan-writing, I don't call that a good sign. For one thing, it makes VOID a very choppy reading experience. For another, the short items you present look like the un-matured ideas of the writer, sent to VOID simply BECAUSE it rejects nothing, and the writer felt he didn't want to waste even an unfinished or a hollow and unimportant "article".

VOID lacks absolutely nothing besides editorship to be a pleasure to receive and a satisfaction to read. I have no trouble reading every page, and I think the artists are good, and are given excellent treatment. "Layout" is something I've never really understood, but I must find no quarrel with it, or I'd have vague dissatisfactions which I couldn't pin down...I have with other magazines, and I suppose that was the reason. With VOID it isn't a vague problem; you seem to like your magazine and your contributors far too much ever to clamp your teeth and do a little of the OTHER work of an editor ... not cutting stencils, but EDITING.

I don't hate the magazine, but one thing I never could stand is waste ... and you're wasting what could be a damn good magazine. For



one thing, you have an eight issue beachhead on contributors; you can get Berry and Bennett and other more-respected names ... they have little fear of being left with a gaffiating editor on their hands. Also, what artists you have used can adapt themselves to situations fairly well. Eddie Jones and Dave Rike have enough imagination to ADD to what they illustrate.

I might also say that I'm sorry to see "The Deluge" shrink so much ... but you might have made a compromise. For instance, in the NEW Psychotic, Dick Geis discussed some four or five fan-magazines at considerable length, pointing out faults not in individual issues, but in general policies; he seemed to pick out the only fan titles which he COULD discuss at length; then he threw all the rest into a one-sentence-apiece resume. The result is that Dick talks about what excites interest in him ... and nothing else; and also that even being REVIEWED in "The Observation Ward" is a compliment to a fan-magazine. You might try the same system, if reviews have ruined your stomach. I personally prefer VOID with some kind of a review-column ... though I agree with you in cutting the mere enumerating of contents.

((This impression of yours that V "accepts anything, for ANY reason" worries me. I printed the short items BECAUSE they were both short and, in my opinion, of good quality. I do not take too much trouble to insure each issue that there are so many items of a certain length, but instead depend on the relative quality of the thing. We prefer short and sweet articles rather than lengthy crud.))

MAL ASHWORTH

explains.... I note that

you are worrying over my use of the expression 'file' in relation to my fanzines, and I feel duty-bound to relieve your pangs. You refer to it as stacking them away in a cabinet. I refer to it as 'filing' them. This sounds very impressive, don't you think? What it actually means is simply that I put them from where they have been, where I could find them (to comment on and so forth) ((I don't like the sound of that "so forth", Ashworth!)) to somewhere where I can't find them and probably shall never be able to find them again. This is my 'filing' of fanzines. Currently they are filed in a large tin trunk under my bed. Part of them are anyway. Another part of them are in envelopes on top of my cupboard with books piled on top of them. Still more are piled on top of my books on top of my other fanzines (these are the more recent ones). If I wanted to get any of them down I should have to stand on the bed to do it. I am judging this by the fact that I have to stand on the bed to put them up there.

((Do you mean to say you actually let your fmz lay around the house?? Man, don't you make photostats of the covers of "-" and hang them in frames on your wall?? Don't you even so much as have a bust (very fitting description, at that) of Bloch on your desk?! Blasphemy!!!))

SQUIRREL/SQUWAK ELLIK

rants... Ho, I see you swallowed my line about you being the leader of Eighth Fandom. No, Greg, that was just a sort of baited hook. My correspondence was getting dull, so I figured I'd liven it up by arousing some of the teenage fans into some sort of revolution or

something. Gee, you weren't half as laughable as I'd thot you would be-- took it with a bloody straight face, almost. I guess I wasn't subtle enough -- I was trying to make it obvious to a Straight Thinker, a person with a Sensitive Fannish Face and Broad Mental Horizons, what I was doing... Overdid that part of it, I suppose. Never was any good at being subtle. I tried to be subtle with Raeburn, to beat him at his own gag, and it didn't work -- he sees right through me. Great person...

I think I will ask Dick Ellington to found eighth fandom with me. I'll tell him Greg Benford turned on me and insulted me publicly and I need his support, because CONTACT is obviously HIS magazine, not Jansen's, and it should be made the focal point for eighth fandom and we NEED a leader like him, & I can guarantee him my support in TARR' this year...

BOB BLOCH

see VOID, and hasten to second what I consider to be some excellent advice -- Bill Kotsler's suggestion that you print only what you really like. comments ... Glad to

During the course of a given year I read an awful lot of fanzines -- and a lot of awful fanzines. And the common denominator of the latter is their attempt to become common denominators; to try to be all things to all fen. Whereas the best efforts are the distinctive ones: those that reflect genuine editorial preference.

Neo-editors seem to be, on the whole, a self-conscious lot. They are anxious to please everybody, and in an effort to do so they attempt to include all sorts of disparate material. As a result, in many cases, their early issues are patchwork jobs, without distinct, discernable flavor.

Terry Carr's remarks about Sixth Fandom are pertinent, but one thing is indisputable; a Hoffman magazine was a Hoffman magazine, and recognizable as such ... no body would ever mistake it for the output of another. It had personality and reflected the editorial viewpoint throughout.

Of course, if you do publish a distinctive fanzine, you are apt to find yourself surrounded by a group of regular writers and a steady readership. And then somebody will come along (like the Anonymous Actifan who writes in your current issue) and label you and your group as members of a "clique".

Well, believe me, there are worse fates. I'm inclined to disagree with the Anonymous Actifan who feels that "cliques" are bad for fandom -- at least, in fanzine publishing. Referring to people like Lee and Tucker, he says ... "and ALL of them have one thing in common -- they do not participate in actifandom to any great extent."

I don't know who this Anonymous Actifan is, but he certainly couldn't have been active **very long**. Where was he when Lee published her FANHISTORY series ... or when she helped spearhead the effort to bring Wait Willis to America? Where was he when Tucker was an officer in the APAs, or when he circulated his famous SURVEY, or issued his NEO-FAN'S GUIDE?

These efforts certainly constituted participation in actifandom ... helped to further the welfare of the field as a whole and bring information and benefits to the entire group rather than a "clique".

In fact, most of the people who do things in fandom, for fandom, are cliqueish by definition. They're the clubmembers who actually put on the conventions; the groups who organize and get behind fannish projects. If there were a few more "cliques" today, we might have a new edition of the FANCYCLOPEDIA, for instance: this is the sort of job which is too big for one individual to tackle without help and the kind of encouragement which only a "clique" seems prepared to give.

To me, the best fanzines are usually "clique" efforts. If they -- as Kotsler suggests and I second -- actually represent a strong editorial viewpoint, they're bound to attract a like-minded readership and this readership automatically forms a new "clique". Point is, these "cliques" get something done. All too often, the self-styled individual "actifan" merely criticizes.

((And then too, possibly the largest factor in the criticising of the actifan (individual, non-cliqueish type) is that he wishes to become a member of some clique, but is rejected. Then he turns with bitter snarls upon the very group which he wanted to join, and heaps dirt on the subject of cliques-and-why-they-should-not-be.))

"Ake Ake Hak Kof." -- GE

BOYD RAE BURN

again... I thought little of Kent Moomaw's item. Seeing I had already heard the record, this rather limping running commentary has small fascination for me. Reischer has obviously read a lot of fanzines, judging by the material used in the Imitation Derogation. Your treatment of the Ray Thompson speech is very good. In fact, the whole thing is very well done. Very much enjoyed the John Berry item. You are getting some excellent material from him these days. Terry Carr's rewrite job on his 6th Fandom article is fine. Wish he had sent it to me originally in this form.

The "Cliques" item uses a lot of words but says little. If the writer had used a few examples, he may have made clearer what he was getting at, but all his vague generalizations just add up to nothing. If he were to spell out exactly what he considers the current situation to be, and what he thinks it should be, then perhaps one would know precisely what he was trying to say. And I wonder what he means by "the whole of fandom"? Damn, I wish I hadn't been so vague myself in my statement which you printed that I found some English zines lacking in personality. Now it is quite likely that some English fans who put out zines brimming with personality will think my remarks apply to them, and will be all hurt, and this I do not wish.

Can't agree with Dick Ellington regarding the convention reactions. Myself and a whole stack of fans thought that as far as we were concerned it was a complete gas. (English translation: jolly good show) (but of course we cared little about the program)

BOB COULSON

argues... I disagree with Terry Carr on the quality of Sixth Fandom. Not very sharply; in fact, I pretty well agree up to the point where he says "Sixth Fandom ... couldn't boast so many good fanmags" (as we have today, that is). Never having seen an issue of QUANDRY, I can't vouch for it, but I'll take people's word that it was good, and I don't think you could find 6 fanzines today which would compare in quality with QUANDRY, SPACESHIP, DESTINY, FANTASTIC WORLDS, SKYHOOK and RHODO-

MAGNETIC DIGEST. ((What about A BAS, "-", OBLIQUE, GRUF, RET, etc?))

I still haven't noticed so much emphasis on "cliques" as Anonymous Actifan implies. As far as the "old fan" group is concerned, there have always been old fans -- or at least, ever since the first group of Gernsback followers were replaced by a younger generation. That's what makes the divisions into Fourth, Fifth, etc. Fandoms. The fact is that the present-day veteran fans are simply more active than their predecessors -- instead of dropping entirely out of fandom, they've retired to FAPA. You can't expect them to be interested in the younger fans -- they have nothing in common, except a liking for stf (and not even that, in some cases). Irish Fandom seems to be growing apart from the general run, also; but again, Willis & Co. have been around for a long time, as fans reckon time. To them, the actifan editor who is hailed by fandom as the new sensation is simply old stuff. They've heard it all before.

Speaking of Steve Schultheis' letter (and he's not being original there -- somebody, possibly Bloch, though I don't recall for sure, said about the same thing first), fans must not only be able to communicate easily; they must enjoy communicating. The average person hates writing letters, is indifferent to the reception of letters, and isn't interested in the opinions of people he's never met, unless they happen to be celebrities. Most fans, while they may not enjoy writing letters, certainly enjoy receiving them, and are never happier than when discussing something.

HARRY WARNER, JR.

Battle Of The BBC... I'm glad to see than someone else will defend the BBC, for which I've been fighting a desperate, unaided paragon action in my FAPA publication for several years. Eric Bentcliffe errs in one way, though. American broadcasting, as you undoubtedly know, doesn't offer the variety of programming that the BBC provides consistently. The BBC makes it possible to hear radio programs on the high-brow, low-brow or comfortable in-between level, any time you please. In this country, despite the competitive aspect of radio, it's all middle-brow or low-brow, about ninety per cent of the time, plus the silly spectacle of almost exclusive emphasis on one type of program at certain times -- football on Saturday afternoons in season, news for the first five minutes after the start of a new hour, religious programs Sunday morning, dance bands in the hour or two just before midnight, and so on. I don't see why the United States government should refuse to provide consistent programming of other sorts supported by a tax on radio sets, as the BBC does it; this country doesn't hesitate to use taxpayers' money to publish educational pamphlets and books or to bring art collections into circulation or to back the cultural program of the UN.

((A very good point... and one which should bring all sorts of cries from the Let The Majority Rule Everything And Have All faction -- or does this zine go to them?

All the letters of comment on this issue were, of course, greatly appreciated, even if all of them weren't printed. Thanks to the people who didn't appear -- Len Moffatt, Paul Enever, Gary Labowitz, Jerry Greene, Des Emery, Dan Adkins, Ray Thompson, Rich Alex Kirs, Larry Bourne, Joe Sanders, Kent Moomaw -- and probably many more I've forgotten at the moment. Your comments are really appreciated, I assure you; there's just not enough space to print them all. This issue is horribly late, and it should be a little larger than the usual size. Perhaps. I haven't counted the pages yet, and the total could be anywhere from 30 to 50. (You see what happens towards the end of an issue?) And that is all. There remains the mimeo, the stapling, and of course the mailing out. I must go. The hour is late.))

1956 POLL

Except for Len Moffatt's SF PARADE poll, there haven't been any census type things done in fandom for quite a long time. Since SF PARADE asked its questions in a who-is-best manner, I feel a wholly fannish poll is in order. Some notice should be made of the newcomers and fast-rising stars, and I hope the recognition given the winners will be appreciated. There are few honors in this fandom of ours, and they should go to the deserving ones.

There's no need to answer every question -- only the categories in which you feel you are certain. Thanks for your help, and I'd appreciate speed in returning them.

TOP TEN FANZINES

NO 1 _ _ _ _ _
NO 2 _ _ _ _ _
NO 3 _ _ _ _ _
NO 4 _ _ _ _ _
NO 5 _ _ _ _ _

NO 6 _ _ _ _ _
NO 7 _ _ _ _ _
NO 8 _ _ _ _ _
NO 9 _ _ _ _ _
NO 10 _ _ _ _ _

Best Fan Fiction Writer _ _ _ _ _ Best Cartoonist _ _ _ _ _
Most Upcoming Fanzine _ _ _ _ _ Best General Fanwriter _ _ _ _ _
Best Single Fanzine Issue _ _ _ _ _ Best Poet _ _ _ _ _
Best Fanzine (Series of issues) _ _ _ _ _ Best Fanartist _ _ _ _ _
Most Promising New Fan _ _ _ _ _ Best Fan Column _ _ _ _ _
Best Humorist _ _ _ _ _ Most Outstanding American Fan _ _ _ _ _
Most Outstanding Anglo Fan _ _ _ _ _ Most Promising Fanwriter
_ _ _ _ _ Most Promising Fan Artist _ _ _ _ _

"...Please don't forget ABSTRACT in the poll..."

