

ZIMRI



zimri

JAN - FEB 1972

Edited and produced by Lisa I. Conesa and Philip Muldowney at
indecent intervals, and is available for: Letter of Comment,
Trade, Contribution or 10p.

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editrix.

Duplicated by same,
courtesy of Kazi-
mierz Minkiewicz
and his duplicator;
a scholar and a gent-
leman! Thankx also
to Antoni Maniak;
my very patient
step father.

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who contributed
here and there - in.
Our sincere thanx
to one and all.

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editrix...

Having started with 'HURRAHS' in the first issue it was inevitable that I'd be reporting for 'BOOBS' in the next - and boos there were, but all of them softened with an encouraging and in most cases helpful word. First off then, I must apologise for the 'boo-boos', then we can get on with more fascinating things...

Humble-on-me-knees I go to George White, who's illoes on pages 11,15, 22, and 30 were credited to some one called lisa conesa - who she? I'll put the blame of this particular 'B' on the distance between your editors. Manchester and Plymouth being almost poles (?) apart, communication mostly done via tape or the written word... Oh, let's blame the GPO for yet another faux pas.

There were lots of other things in our first issue which deserve an apology, and sure enough you yourselves tell me about them, so I'll bow my head in shame or something as we go along. Duplicating was poor, mainly due to our inexperience, as I hope will be proved by this and the subsequent issues. We've been unable to get any more American Quarto size paper, so (as you see) its got to be the British A4, pity but there you are.

ZIMRI ONE was rich in typos, wasn't it.. these too should have disappeared because now I have a proof-reader on the spot! An Apostole from HELL, name of Brian Robinson, who will no doubt demand our very souls eventually, but who are we to argue, it is after all in the interest of science fiction and ZIMRI, not to mention the bewildered reader...

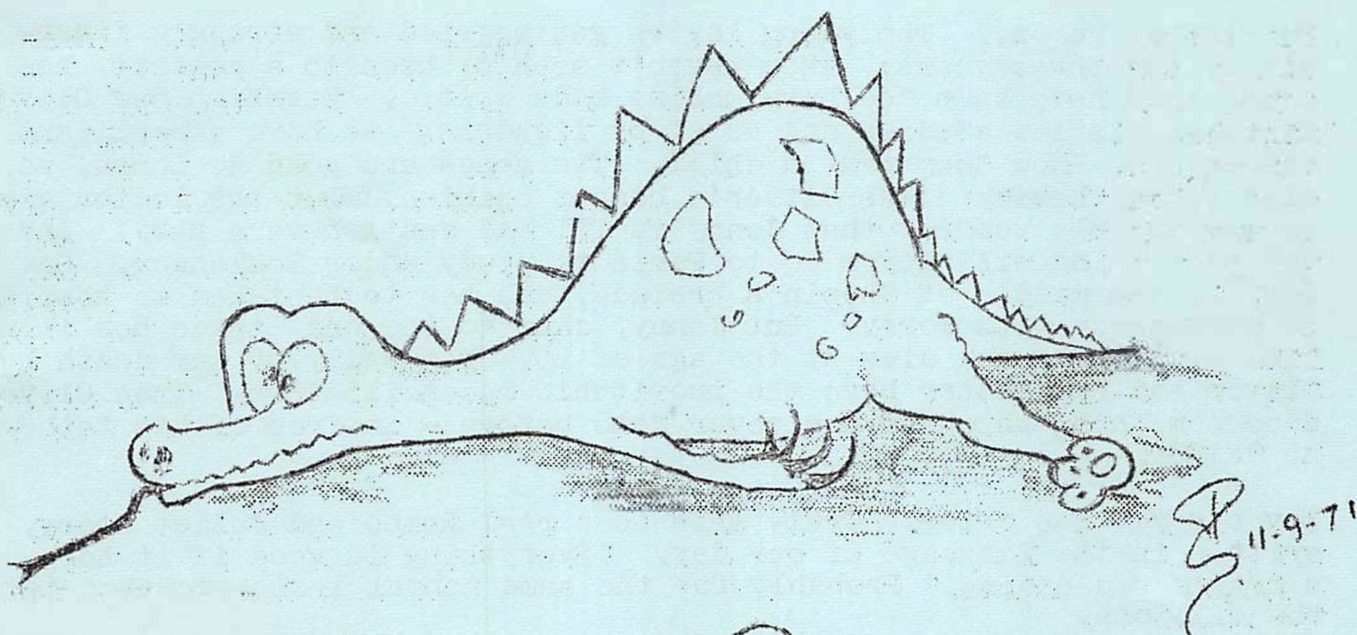
There were some questions about Jo Withisone's ROPE, so perhaps this is the best place to answer them. I choose that particular story for our first (and I use the singular advisedly this time, 'cos Phil had reservations about it and uttered a desperate 'on your head be it' in the end... & it is, it is!) so as I was saying, I choose ROPE, firstly because I liked it, naturally, and secondly because I thought it would provoke most comment, being itself a comment on our society. Which answers your questions about the 'meaning' of the story.

This time we have three very different shorts, HERO by Roger Johnson is the first of many installments, I hope you enjoy them and will be moved to comment on them.

(3)

We can hardly complain about the lack of letters/comments to Z-1, for we got more than I had dared hope for - and we both thank you muchly for them, please keep 'em rolling in. However, carp I must. Why is it that most fen - and fen who are amateur reviewers, mind - refuse to comment on so called fanfic? I mean, surely if you review a pfo publication you can do likewise for your fen-amateurs-attempts. Pro, fanfic, what's the difference... it's all fiction, isn't it?! And talking about earth-shaking publications...

I went to my favorite book shop the other day; to see if the Brian Aldiss book I'd ordered had come in yet - it hadn't. But I saw a SIGN, a huge poster: ' NOVEL OF THE CENTURY ' it screamed ' LOVE STORY '.



Love Story

For a minute I thought Mr A had written something I had not heard of, but no, this was by Erich Segel. So since my order wasn't in, and I hadn't bought or read a mainstream novel for some time... Go on I thought, give yourself a treat, live a little. After all this book's had unbelievable success all over America and Europe, as well as being filmed - the film is said to portray the so called mass culture of the day.

I bought the book. I read it. And now I simply must tell you about it, please listen, this could be S.F..

Time : the 60s; romantic love in the vicinity of the elite University Harvard. Narrated by the hero - Oliver Barrett who tells of his love for a 'beautiful' and 'unusual' girl. A girl who loves Mozart, Bach and the Beatles (boy, that's unusual..ghasp!). They meet in the library. She - Jennifer Cavalleri, daughter of an Italian cafe owner, is

completing her music studies.

He - is preparing for law school and comes of a aristocratic family from New England. She treats him with arrogance, being aware from the start of the division between them - social status, y'know. During their first 'date' however, when asked why she agreed to come, she answers 'I like your body'. Later he tells her - over the telephone - that he loves her. To which she replied that he's an adolescent.

Jenny loves her father to distraction (poor people always seem to love their parents), he breaks with his, because father does not approve of his romantic involvement. He very simply calls his father 'bastard'. About himself and his Jenny he says that they are intellectuals. Probably because they use the word 'love'. Love usually manifests itself with the help of money. I think Mr Segel tries to preach that love is more precious than money, which is after all a healthy thought for a 20th century writer.

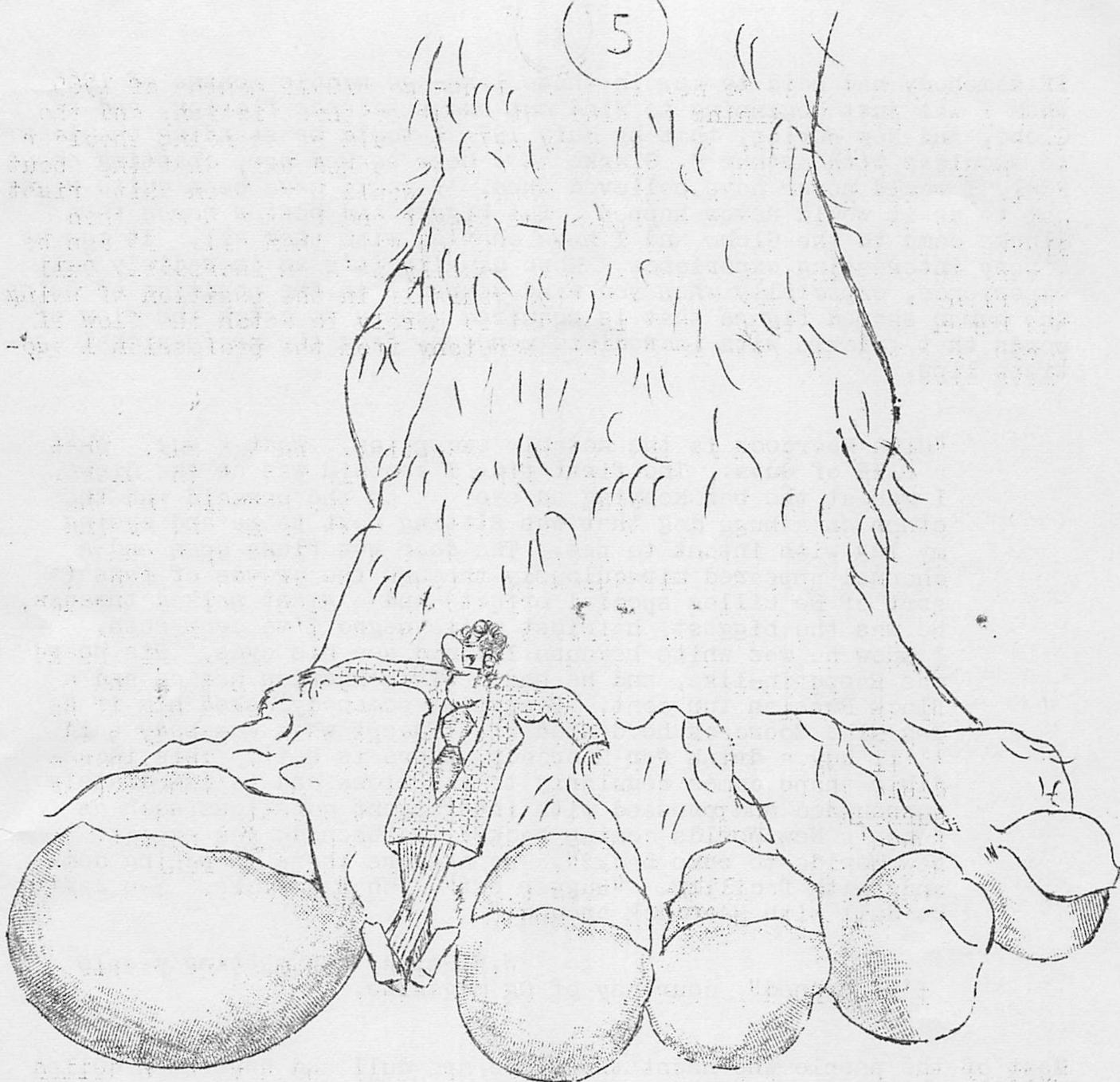
But let us go on.. The young lovers get married and struggle financially for three years: They haven't seen ^{him} or been to a concert, because they have been too busy making ends meet... Meantime our Oliver finishes his law studies and as if by lightning we have a brilliant career man. Now they want a child. The genes are good we learn, we also learn that this was Oliver's honest opinion. But the Doctor gives an unrevokable verdict that Jenny is ill and can't have a baby. And the poor thing will never go to Paris to study under Boulanger. One day, in the middle of Chopin's prelude, she has to be taken to hospital. He goes crazy with worry. But Jenny, calm to the end, takes her illness like a soldier, and dies at the age of 25. Naturally by her death bed Oliver and his father have the inevitable reconciliation. Then Oliver does something which he has never done before - in front of his father - he CRIES !

Everyone cries. Truly this is a real Romeo and Juliet story, written in the language of our day. 'Everything is good if it has a ~~tragic~~ sad ending.' Probably for the same mental level - romance for the millions.

The fact is, it really is a Romeo and Juliet story, for it is a romance that has nothing to do with the 20th century. In an era when sex runs wild, youth protests against the mad society we live in, Erich Segel has made it his business to bring back stereotypes and melodrama. Written, naturally in the modern language of our day. Here we accept love before marriage, treat God with flippant disregard, and of course use four-letter words.... Even Mrs Nixon, the guardian of Americas morals was somewhat shocked by this. Ah, but how they loved - they loved helluva lot! And quite right too, let's leave the complications of the world to the idiots who have never known true love, never known an 'unusual' girl like Jennifer and never left their father's millions behind.

The most important thing is that to-day Erich Segel is a millionaire... Which may not have anything to do with science-fiction, though it has a lot to do with writing - be it pro or amateur....





GLOBAL WARFARE

Recollections and vivisections
of the monthly gathering at
the Globe of certain disre-
putable fans and at least half
of Bo:Peeps sheep.

ROB HOLDSTOCK

The average diameter of a Science-fiction fan's head is four feet greater than the national average and is totally attri-
butable to the presence of their halo's which only they can see.

Andrew Statts, writing in the
Journal of Biometrics, Vol. 41, p.21.



If somebody had said to me, in those long-ago middle months of 1965 when I was just beginning to find out about science fiction, and the Globe, and New Worlds, that by July 1971 I would be standing shoulder to shoulder with Arthur C. Clarke at a beer soaked bar, chatting about 2001, I would never have believed them. I would have been quite right not to as it would never happen. But bigger and better names than Clarke come to the Globe and I have chatted with them all. It can be a very interesting experience. More usually it's an incredibly dull experience, especially when you find yourself in the position of being the human shaped figure that is required merely to catch the flow of words that trickle with incredible monotony from the professional ego-tists lips.

"Mike Moorcock is the notable exception. What a guy. What a PAIR of Guys. The first time I saw him was at the Globe. I was at the bar keeping an eye on the barmaid and the other on a huge dog that was sitting next to me and eyeing my leg with intent to pee. The door was flung open and a channel appeared miraculously through the crowds of fans (a sort of De Milles special effect) and a giant walked through. He was the biggest, hairiest white negro I've ever seen. I knew he was white because I could see his eyes. His beard was Rasputin-like, and he had a black Russian hat on and a Black Russian fur coat. Everytime somebody asked him if he was Mike Moorcock he denied it. Except when somebody said 'I'll buy a drink for Moorcock, where is he?'. This incredible shape comes regularly to the Globe and is immediately surrounded and pressed with intelligent questions such as "When's New Worlds coming back?" or "When do you expect New Worlds to come back?". He answers these searching demands with facility. "Bugger off". What a bloke. You can't be dull with Moorcock around."

W.H.Smith, "On meeting people I've banned", courtesy of Og magazine.

Most of the people who haunt the Globe are dull and have been dulled by failing to adjust to what I will call the 'Bandwagon Effect'. The conversation at the Globe is anything but SF. This frustrates me immensely. Luckily there are a few very bright people, however, who make Globe evenings great fun. Andrew Stephenson, for example, is the only man I know who can quote verbatim from Tennysons famous poem, "Macbeth". (Or was it Shelley?). Anybody who can do that HAS to have a certain something, even if its only a ready supply of story titles. Andrew and myself have been collaberating on a mammoth piece of SF entertainment. We go off into a quiet corner of the bar and for a few brief moments (beautiful moments) aliens and androids, viral diseases and super-duper Analog-enticing technogadgetry fill our cosmic minds. It's like an orgasm. It releases tension and you're still raring for more, but there's a limit on your strength and so: back to mundanity and the Globe chat which, inevitably, centers around anything BUT SF. The ultimate irony: I work thirty days of the month among brainless, mindless post-doctorate research workers, talking shop, talking shop... and on the 31st day, the ONLY day I can talk SF, nobody wants to talk it.



"It was my first night at the Globe. I was already drunk, and feeling sick from eating seven sausages. I found myself sitting in an enormous group listening to the piping strains of someone called Roy Kettle who was arguing about the SF content on the back of Kellogg's packets. Everybody was forcing their personalities upon the gathering, madly writing down names and addresses that we would never write to. I remember people called Howard Rosenblum, Brian Hampton, Jake, Jake's bird. There was a superb girl sitting in a blue poncho and long black hair. It was all around her face. Incredible black hair. She was a cool chick and was arguing with an Australian. She was called Jean Finney and he was John Brosnan. There was a radio-whizz kid who knew everything about electronics and was consuming sausages at a rate of knots. Andrew Stephenson was his label. He had the happiest grin I ever saw, always laughing.

Suddenly a cool American voice behind me began to spout nonsense. It went like this: "2-4-6-8 who do we appreciate? Q - W - E - R - T - Y - U - I - O - P ." This was Sam Long, distributing reams of his fanzine. He didn't give me one so I pinched Roy Kettle's. He began to talk to me, Sam that is, and before the evening was out I'd heard twenty seven Ferdinand Peghoo sagas and promised a twelve page analysis of the effect of sugar puffs on the ability of man to walk backwards to the toilet, a promise I would never keep to my shame and delight."

From, Adventures of a Neofan.
Bantam books, 5/-

My first impression of the Globe? Walking through the door and smelling freshly roasted human flesh. I thought it was the sausages at first, but it turned out to be Howard Rosenblum, waving a pipe about and letting bits of charred flesh and bone fall onto the floor and drift to the door where I could smell them. He smokes anything, you know. You've heard of the Marie Celeste? He smoked it, all but the ship.

Report for Walls Ltd. "Cases of upset stomachs at a pub selling camel sausages".

"When I first went to the Globe I walked through the door and and commented on the busty barmaid. It turned out to be a long haired youth with prominent shoulder blades. I haven't been since."

Anon.

Going to the lobe is like having your entire family die of bubonic plague. It makes you feel bad at the time and the only satisfaction you get is that you know it'll get YOU tomorrow, provided you eat enough bodies. The bubonic plague of the Globe is the egocentricity of its attendees. They're pseudos one and all. Well, not all, but many. I'm dying of heartbreak. I'm a poor old soul who's never had any pity but self-pity. But I pity our culture if the meetings at the Globe typifies the social aspects of that culture - a group of rats trying to make a human pyramid and all wearing running spikes. I pity myself because to go through life hating people for what they are TRYING TO BE will cause me to be hated. But most of all I feel for the neo-fan, that chubby loudmouth who at least has some interesting attitudes

GP

before the munfans (mundane fanatics) squash his shining light and trample him under the collective foot. Science fiction fandom could have been the greatest social gathering since Hitlers Stormtroopers. But it won't be. The sausages will see to that.

from Journal of Psychiatry. Recorded conversation in a paper on 'Pa anoid and Regression developments of outcast persons.



"I once carried Michael Moorcock on my back."
Roy Kettle.

"I once threw beer over Charles Platt."
Roy Kettle.

"I've REALLY torn Fowler down a strip or two.
You wait till you see the letter."
Anon. (Possibly
Roje Gilbert).

"If you stood all the big names of science fiction on each others shoulders to form a single column they might relieve this abominable itching in my left knee. Have you read Stand on Zanzibar by the way?"
Professional.

"I come to the Globe for intellectual conversation with as wide a variety of people as possible, and you, young lady, look very intelligent, so we must exchange opinions - but lets get first things first - how do you feel about a bit of adultery?"
Professional.

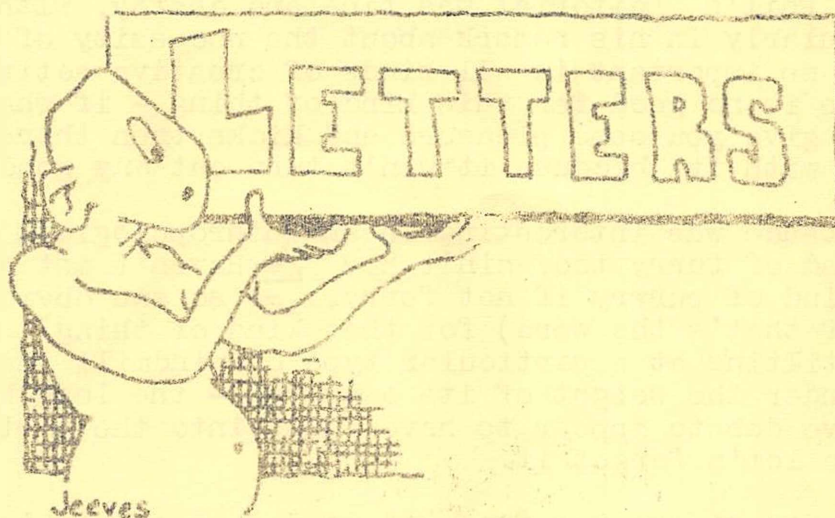
"Are you Rob Holdstock?" My heart missed a beat. I fumbled in my pocket for money to buy this man a drink - he had actually HEARD of me! "Yes," I said. "Yes, yes." "I thought you were. I've heard of you." Oh Bliss. Oh sweet joy. I looked at the newcomer. He was clean shaven, though he would one day mimic Wild Bill Hickock by sporting a knee length moustache. He had sparkling eyes and reached for the beer I bought him with extreme rapidity. "Yes," he said, "You wrote that story for Audrey Walton, Beacon, wasn't it?" "That's right," I said, smiling broadly. "Did you like it?" He drank half his beer. "It was TERRIBLE."

- Jack and Jill went up the hill to fetch a pail of ego. Jack fell down and broke his crown and Jill went off with a young writer earning 200 quid a week. That's the way it goes. -

"Wild Bill" turned out to be Jack Marsh, one of my good friends. He liked the story really.

Rob Holdstock (3.8.71)





/= This will probably be the longest lettercol in the history of fandom... A certain lady in Scotland will no doubt disapprove of the idea oh, well... What can I offer for an excuse, except that I enjoyed reading your LoCs so much that I assume everyone else to have as much good taste... My own natterings are within the brackets used here, Phil's direct response thus: ((... ..)) tho he has much more to say in his 'P.S.' No more to be said, so on to the letters themselves.=/



DAN MORGAN 'VILLA BANGORA' 287b COSTABLANCA ALMERIA ESPANA.

Many thanks for ZIMRI No.1, received here yesterday. Finds me in the mist of contemplating pending de-Gafiation. The Yuccas have bloomed and the Oleander is fast fading, and next Wednesday we begin the long trek back through France, arriving back at Spalding (ugh!) around Sept.1. Still its been a great six months, with a lot of work done as well as some very specialised loafing like skin-diving, playing guitar and just sitting around nattering with wine and sunshine accompaniament. At the moment I'm at the stage of finding excuses for not starting the next book, which is looming larger and more urgent as each day goes by. This isn't entirely a matter of idleness - starting the long creative flight involved in writing the first draft of a novel only to break off just after you've left the ground (as I would have to do under the circumstances) can be quite fatal. So here I am, able and willing to write a Loc.

It's quite obvious that a lot of work and dedication has gone into the production of the zine. The layout is very good, and the illustrations are without exception of an extremely high standard -

the one that really knocked me for a loop was yours on P.34. if you want to know - with a suspension like that it really would be an all-purpose car. Phil's Editorial was fine and chatty, with a hint of wisdom, particularly in his remark about the necessity of the fun element, which is so important in all kinds of creative activity. Grim determination is no good for this kind of thing - if what you are doing doesn't give you some pleasure and kicks then there's no point in going on with it, because it won't turn out any good anyway.

Beryl's Furry Dance was interesting in an anthropological kind of way - Archie's kind of furry too, ain't he? = Haven't met him yet, but he 'sounds' kind of purrry if not furry... = so she obviously has a penchant (if that's the word) for that kind of thing. John Alan Glynn seems tilting at a particular type of windmill that ready fell over under the weight of its own crud - the long knives of the Old/New Wave debate appear to have faded into the past and a good thing too, so let's forget it.

Your Homage to Stravinsky was fine and needed no excuse to my way of thinking - please to let yourself go on Cordwainer Smith as well. I'm sure no one would be bored with the result. In fact, this idea of writing about one's particular heroes seems to be one which could be pursued with some fruitfulness. Why not get different people to sound off on the subject of their choice? Like for instance a guy named Django Reinhardt who had two crippled fingers on his left hand but still managed to play ten times as much guitar as anyone else before or since... Nothing to do with SF? Don't you believe it! Anyone who does the impossible at least ten times in a thirty two bar chorus belongs in the club automatically. = Yes indeed, my sentiments exactly, Dan. Apropos sounding off about old Django there, er... if at any time you happen to be in between books and such....? Likewise all you different people with different heroes, lets he hearing from you oh? =

Graham Poole's CONVENTION TREK came over quite well - a good idea to get a report from someone with a completely fresh eye. The only sour note is his account of the encounter with John Brunner. John certainly doesn't need me to rush to his defence, but I should point out to Graham that nobody is exactly at his best on the Monday of a Con - that's about the time when the ghost of Ted Tubb usually hovers wraithlike around corridors, wincing at any sound louder than a dropped aspirate. This apart, having spent my formative years in show business, I'm slightly baffled by the autograph hunting thing. What I mean is, if Graham has never read one of John's books - something which I find incredible even in the neo-est neofan - what could possibly be the point of asking for his autograph? What do you do with autographs when you have them, anyway? Leaf through them and gloat? Or try to find ways of transferring them to a cheque, maybe? = Hmm, must say I've never thought of that'n... don't anyone out there ask me for any more autographs please! =

The Book Review section is uniformly thoughtful and intelligently written - a refreshing change from the usual fanzine routines which are either slave-like adulation, or smart-ass attempts to score off the author in question if he doesn't happen to be one of the reviewer's particular favourites I remember one review of a book of mine, for instance, which quoted with much glee my obvious 'sources' (a polite way of saying where I had pinched my ideas from) - the only trouble was that at least three of the books mentioned I had never read in my life! For further reflections on the reviewing business see SFWBull No.7. - boy! do I love sticking my neck out.

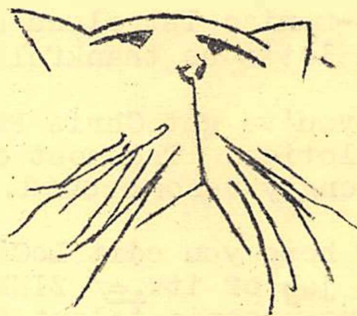
ROPE by Jo Withisone - head and shoulders above most fanzine fiction, and shows a great deal of promise in my opinion. Keep writing Jo, whoever you are - we need you.

Your review of DIARY OF A SCHIZOPHRENIC was much appreciated, although I may never have the opportunity of seeing the film - and that illo! already mentioned above. On the other hand, I'm not sure that I see a lot of point in reviewing other fanzines which many of us will surely never get around to reading. I may be wrong here, however, because it would surely interest those afflicted with fiawol as defined by Ian Williams. / = Right, not to mention the propaganda aspect, in that, hopefully one aims to either arouse curiosity or merely inform what to expect in a given zine. =/

The concluding piece of wit from John Spinks rounds the ish off very nicely -- John Spinks? - to quote Ted Tubb (I think) from way back - how come every Tom Dick & Harry in SF is called John?

/ = Talking about Cordwainer Smith (who was mentioned earlier), much as I'd enjoy letting myself go about him, this had been done very adequately in the latest issue of VECTOR (No.58.), so it looks as though I'll have to wait a-while.. =/

THOM PENMAN
14 WINTERBOTTOM STREET
SOUTH SHIELDS CO DURHAM NE33 2LX



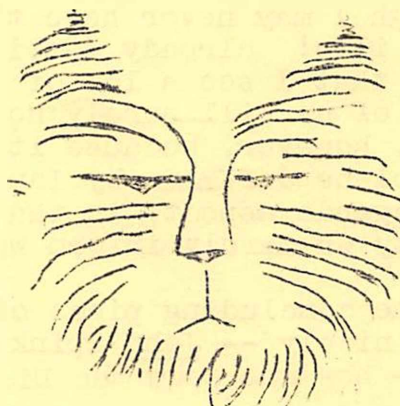
A new voice is mumbling in the vastness of phandom..... ZIMRI uno, then.. First thing I read is always my own stuff of course, which I think is a pretty universal reaction. If its not though, so I'm arrogant. Let me say I was KNOCKED OUT by your phantastic sitar-man drawing. Too much. I only wish I'd offered something better to deserve it. Still, the Magic Roundabout wasn't bad I suppose. (Yeah, like I was saying about arrogance..) For those wondering over the title, "I CALL IT ARTHUR" let me explain. In the Beatles' early days, in a fictitious press-conference ('Hard Day's Night') George Harrison was asked: "What do you call your hairstyle?" and he, all deadpan, replied... Well I thought it was funny at least. Surrealistic, man. / = Mumble.. =/

Artwork overall was good, I particularly like the medieval-woodcut Galadriel on page 4. / = Ta, but who is Galadriel pray ?? =/ Good and original. That's what phandom is all about. (a!) This applies to Beryl Mercer's piece. I still haven't read it in its entirety, but I applaud the idea. In fact it has stirred me in the direction of something on the folk-song-culture of Northumbria -- "I am a man upon the land, I am a silkie-seal in the sea.." etc -- so Be Warned.

As you may have noticed, I am working thru ZIMRI linearly / = None of yer New-Wave stuff for Thom.. I take it? =/ Thus, I disagree with John Alan Glynn's piece almost completely. Though I have wondered how come John Wayne never got off his hoss to whip behind a bush.

Good God, I'm mentioned in the con-reoprt. Nice things con reports, at least this one was. An experience you went thru, seen by other eyes.. rather a strange sensation. I particularly liked the 'Son of Sleipnir' illo. /=Ghod, which one was that, not you on the motor-bike on page 38, was it? =/

Ha! Teddy Bear lives. (Don't you think Ian resembles a teddy bear?) /=A sort of true-blue-stiff-upper-lipped one? =/
"Craggily ambled.." brilliant, brilliant.
Oh, yeach, and did you know that the Goblin has given up editorship of MAYA? Ian Maule the last of the truefans of the True North ascends to the editorship, long live the editor. /=Here, here! =/

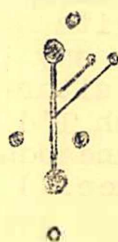


God, what is ROPE? It disturbs me. I get the vague suspicion that Jo operates on a true level of subtlety higher than mine. ROPE is so alien to my thinking-processes I can't imagine writing it or anything like it. It was very good. It was very strange. Write something more Jo, I want to find out if it's my head or yours that is out of shape.

J.G. Ballard is probably the biggest thing to hit SF literature. He's a nut mind you. His head is completely out of shape, upside down, obsessed. What gets me is people with (presumably) heads not out of shape taking the tortured intellectualised rationalisations of the guy as having Great Meaning. But let's be thankful for Ballard and that ego-maniac 1st class Brunner. It shows SF is holding up the side. /=Yeah, let's be thankful for Ballard... =/

I think you've got Chris Priest all wrong, but certainly FOULER has its Subtleties. The most entertaining fanzine of them all FOULER, very strongly recommended.

Jesus, I hope you edit LoCs. /=No, I do, though he'd probably make a better job of it... =/ ZIMRI brings a whole bunch of new good artistic/more-prosaic talent to phandom. Good on you sunshine. Gosh. Wow. Sense of wonder.



ORR DREE WALTON 25 YEWDALE CRESCENT COVENTRY WARKS CV2 2FF

The cover was striking, but the interior illoes were a bit tame, have you ever seen a copy of 'Granfalloon', then you'd know exactly what I mean. /=Yes I have seen it Audrey, but I'm not sure I do know exactly what you mean, except that it is an altogether superb zine one which makes me 'turn meadow-green with envy'. =/

I enjoyed ROPE, but didn't get the point. I would have liked some clue as to whether the victim survived or died... Very glad to see you are doing depth criticisms of fanzines, its something I've always intended to do in WADEZINE but time always seems to run out on me. ZIMRI should rate a fairly high place in the ranks of fanzines, you've done a darn good job. Congrats.

PAUL SKELTON 122 MILE END LANE HEAVILEY STOCKPORT CHESH.SK2 6BY.

'...George's cover was excellent, but the illoe on page 34..HHhmmm. I'm shocked. I had you mentally catalogued as a 'nice' girl, but one of us has got a dirty mind, and YOU drew it! /= as the nymph said to the psychoanalyst,=./ This illoe is positively obscene. (More,more! Ghasp, pant, droo-ool). Now I really must rend assunder Shirley Glyn's artwork. I've just read your page, and was mystified over..'..Shirl is a dab hand with a pencil.' It wasn't until I realized that a 'dab' is a kind of fish, and therefore sans hands, that I was able to make some sense of the statement. The first one of her illoes was passable, but the other... And for this we lost the last line of our review? /= Say no more Paul, got you where it hurts most eh?=./

Pitfalls Of Fandom -- was one of the better bits of the zine and Thom Penman's piece was great. Thank heaven for Magic Roundabout. Just one question here. How come that though Dougal is probably one of the nastiest characters ever invented, he is almost everybody's favorite? Dylan is generally reckoned to be a creep, but he is really the hero. I am confused. Is Magic Roundabout some subtle propaganda aimed at the youth of Britain. I was going to say '..at the children of Britain', but some of the asides makes it obvious WHO the programme is AIMED at. /= Eh? now you've got me confused as well..=./

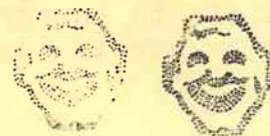
Fanzine reviews -- I agree with the general views expressed both here and in the Editorial. FANZINES ARE FOR FUN. It doesn't matter if nobody likes them when they are done, its the doing of them that matters. Anyone who denigrates their own zine is a liar. Of course people think their own zine is great, it's just the fear of appearing 'big-headed' that causes them to crawl under blankets of false modesty. OK, so I may appear 'big-headed', but I think Manchester now has two damn good zines, both of which will obviously shake-down as they progress, and hopefully go from strength to strength. That's why fanzine reviews especially are a statement of personal reaction. This is also true of much book reviewing, but at least in a book there is some degree of intrinsic worth, to be mined, smelted, and beaten into a design suitable to adorn the perceptions of the reader. With the exception of a certain rarified strata of fanzines, those in contention for Hugos, this cannot be said to apply to zines. It is not the content of what is published that is significant, but the publishing it'self. Hence all fanzine views are merely a personal reaction, and thusly can be read more as an insight into the reviewer than into the original zine. This is why I prefer the type of review found in the better OMPazines. Quite often they will ignore the content entirely, and proceed on the man himself, the power behind the mimeo. As I said this is the kind of review I prefer. Others prefer a straight listing of contents. The majority of fandom however, take a stand somewhere between these two poles, and your reviews should satisfy them to the hilt.

/= Most of what you say there makes sense to me Paul, except perhaps one thing I would not agree with entirely. I'm not frightened of seeming big-headed... I still think that the next zine (or anything else I'm about for that matter) will be the best, and never am I completely satisfied with the finished result. Is anyone who keeps trying?/

Caption for the illo (?) on page 42. Two blokes in the bottom left - hand corner... looking up at the hand, and one says to the other...

"Christ! Who'd have a hand like that?"

No? /= NO,=./ Oh well...*PSIGH*



GRAHAM BOAK 6 HAWKS ROAD KINGSTON UPON THAMES SURREY KT1 3EG

Many thanks for ZIMRI - I enjoyed it. So much so that I've hauled out this typewriter to do a loc, and that's something unheard of recently. /=
And a prrrr.. to you to Gray. I think I'm gonna like this scene. =/

The layout on page 1 I liked very much. Not quite meadow green, but at least a light foliage colour. The rest of the zine is done in much the way I feel I would have done it, so I'd better not comment.

Beryl's piece interesting if uninspired. Quite well done. John Alan Glynn doesn't say anything. Terry Jeeves will like ZIMRI.

Stravinsky: would have been better fitted into the editorial. As it is, ZIMRI seems far too 'bitty'. There's insufficient space devoted to any one subject before you're torn away to something else. Beryl's article was a good length, and so is the next. I enjoyed Graham Pooles piece, even though he didn't mention me in it. (Except, I suspect, in passing.) It does have a fish out of water' air to it, probably because of his newness. This seems to affect most neofans - the only exception I can think of offhand is Ian Williams, who took to fandom and conventions as a duck takes to water. After a couple of Globe meetings, you'd have taken him for a veteran!

Lo! and Behold! The Glass Goblin himself. Too short and too schoolmasterly. But its all true, folks.

Book reviews: High quality, but you didn't say who reviewed the excellent WIZARD OF EARTHSEA. So far ZIMRI is dipping it's (undoubtedly very dainty) foot into most waters. /=
Phil did the WOE review, undoubtedly the most popular one in the zine. =/ A zine for all seasons. OK, you exist. Smear'd thinly over the whole field. Where will you settle? (Coagulate?) /=
Only a huis clos - it could be catching. =/

Fanfiction - fine for those who like it. This was a well done little example, but I disapprove of such on principle. (On the other hand, should you wish a fine example of humorous fan-fix, accepted by RELATIVITY, that fine editor of excellent taste, before said zine folded completely..) /=
We are proud to announce that this has been secured for the next issue folks, so be sure and order your ZIMRI well in advance and avoid disappointment... =/

Fanzine reviews: Rather good, I may even sub to SCYTHORP on your recommendation. The only point of disagreement is HELL, but I shall have more to say on that subject elsewhere. Here I'll merely say that its clearly rather than beautifully produced - and I really mean reproduced. Layout is bad.

John Spinks ended the zine on a high point. I liked it, though it would have read better with some careful re-arranging of the alternatives. And as for his opinion of fanzine reviews... /=
You'll be pleased to hear Gray, that John has since changed his mind about that, probably our efforts were so good, chem... =/

Returning to the editorials; I've read a lot worse. (I'm somewhat astonished that Phil does not wish to improve his sex life - and I mean no discredit to it, for I have no knowledge of it, but surely, out of general principles....) /=
Phil said that he'd like to devote a whole article to answer that one, and probably will one of these ZIMRIs, for now he merely disclosed that his mind's boggling.. =/

B.T. JEEVES, 230 BANNERDALE RD SHEFFIELD S11 9FE

'I liked the cover, which I thought quite striking. Beryl usually writes a good article, but this time the subject was of so little interest to me that I didn't really enjoy it. Cornish dancing is high on my list of highly desirable activities to avoid, so I wasn't really overwhelmed...I hasten to add that this was no fault of Beryl's..just my own (lack of) tastes. John Alan Glynn's piece about things under S.F. was much more to my taste, and I was pleased to see that he emulates my own feeling that bodily functions described in minute detail do nothing (99 times out of 100) to further the story. If they did Burke's 'Anatomy' might become a best seller. As for Stravinsky... interesting, but not my cup of tea. On the other hand, Stravinsky Fandom will love it because it is SF.

The book reviews were much to my taste. Not the airy fairy kind so often met with, and apparently so highly rated... you know the type, where the first three paragraphs are about some totally unassociated item, then one or two sentences about the book (usually misleading) and then a detailed analysis of the authors big toe. /= Sounds fascinating the way you put it Terry, wish I knew what you were talking about tho..=

Rope was well written.. but got too implausible too quickly...I just can't accept anyone getting dressed with arms and hands bound... nor carrying on as normal without trying to get it off.../= I think this is what the author found unacceptable too...=..then the ending just flopped.

I DID like the fanzine reviews, of decent length, and again, giving some idea of what to expect from the zine under review... obviously though you like QUICKSILVER, it might not interest me, as transcripts of recorded talks usually bore me even more than the original speech. I like to read SF, not have somebody bore me by dissecting it.'

.....
BRIAN ROBINSON 9, LINWOOD GROVE MANCHESTER M12 4QR

'..ROPE. Yes, well... I'm tempted to go on about how it's a reflection of society and all that... but I've already discussed all that with Lisa. It might be of interest to the author to know what I thought on first reading it tho. Two things occurred to me - one that stands up to a close inspection, and one that doesn't. The second first! It seemed rather like the struggles of an introverted mind to find expression in a basically extravert society. Trouble is, that the mind doesn't become introverted like that - over a period that is presumably short. The second idea, is rather more interesting. Think of a person, conditioned by his or her environment, moving from childhood through adolescence to adulthood. The first sexual awakening, though interesting, are "put-down" by the mores of society, becoming repressed, and the guilt-feeling that always accompany repressions grow alarmingly during the adolescent years, until the person concerned finds it difficult to form any sort of relationship with someone of the opposite sex. Then, during the first years of adulthood, the realisation really strikes through (more so than ever before) that if something isn't done damn quick...well, he/she is doomed to have the following inscription on the headstone: "Returned Unopened". I guess that at the age of.....anywhere between 20 and 30 I suppose, such realisation comes as a helluva shock. Anyway, that was the idea. Though I truthfully prefer the real meaning of ROPE. Strange that I should spend so long on it, as I don't like fan-fic...

Good ol' John Alan Glynn. I like this boy. He puts his digit firmly on why I hate modern art (lousy term that) and the so called "new-wave" writing. I feel that any idiot (or worse) can dribble out the most outrageous nonsense and call it "new" or "experimental". I recall Cy Chauvin saying somewhere that the "new-Wave" writers don't actually write SF. Well now there's a revelation. If they don't, then let them piddle-off and form their own clique. / = ? = / I don't want them in SF. As far as the sex that is permeating SF is concerned, I've yet to find any that can be classed as porno. Most of it is just bloody boring and needs cutting out for that reason. / = Oh my dear Ghod, and they say women are illogical... First of all you see sexual implications in a perfectly 'ordinary' story, then you say sex, sorry porno is boring! OK, thus far I agree, but to become bored one must see some of it, and you deny any existence of it in SF. Then you go on about 'cliques' and get all militant want to throw people out..real Brian Robinson, all I can do to answer you is to quote some of the words you yourself used: "dribble" and "nonsense" = /

Fanzine reviews, competent enough, quite well done, interesting. No quarrel with you, Phil, but Lisa (again, do we always have to disagree) don't you think that accusing Chris Priest of climbing onto the "I do like Archie" wheel-barrow is a start to a possible counter-movement, the "Let's All Love Archie" roller-coaster? Sure, I like the chap, though I've never met him, and I feel that Chris Priest was a little harsh, but don't you think your emotions run away with you a little? / = No. = /

.....

ARCHIE MERCER 21 TRENETHICK PARC HELSTON CORNWALL

'..What's the cover - Alpha Ralpa Boulevard? / = Could have been, though I don't think Gorge is as fanatical about CS as I am; actually he says it's the division of reality and fiction within ZIMRI itself. = /

In general, ZIMRI's artwork deserves better presentation. And that means hand cutting on to stencil. There's a special technique of course - but done properly, it can be duplicated by the veriest moron with excellent results. Whereas electro-stencils, though in theory allowing for an equally neat job and more versatility for the artist, in practice simply transfers the onus (not to mention the hard work) of getting a good result from the artist to the duplicationist. Since the artist probably has more of a personal interest in seeing his/her work properly reproduced, it seems to me that he/she should do as much as possible in person - which means hand cutting. / = To hear is to obey. Thanks to you and Eddie Jones who not only sent lots of tips, but his own cutting-aids, I have tried some (tho there were two attempts in the last issue) hand-cutting, results of which I haven't and won't see until it's too late... call it experimental!).

I think I agree with John Alan Glynn. That is, if I read his message right, I do agree with the lad. Though I'm not sure who Susan Fairshaw is, if anybody. (Lisa Conesa with a funny hat on, perhaps?)

The bit about the Riot of Spring that gets me is the end bit where the handful of surviving dinosaurs goes marching onward, ever onward, into the desert horizon. Damn it - such tenacity of purpose deserves a reward. It's time the dinosaurs came back to take over their rightful heritage! / = Hmm, I'm damned if I can see the connection, oh sorry I haven't allowed you to go on... = /

Which doesn't, of course, have much to do with Stravinsky. The only piece of Stravinsky-music I ever remember having been particularly impressed by was his arrangement of Volg Boatmen. I'd probably have bought the record many years ago if the flip-side hadn't been part of a three-side set that I wasn't interested in.

But at least, Strav. manages to scrape ahead of Ritschard Strauss in my musical-indifference stakes. R.S. is the only "name" composer I can think of to whose works I am completely indifferent - so much so that I cannot call to mind a single piece of tune from any of them. /=What not even the Zarathustra theme from 2001 A Space Odyssey? ...or haven't you seen the film? =/

You are badly let down by your proofreading, or the lack thereof. Now, of course, looking for them, I can hardly find any: but when I read the zine properly, they seemed to leap out at me like sore thumbs from every page. (What-ever seen a thumb leaping? They often do when used for mixing methaphores.) (Not to mention similes) /=Ouch!...=/

H'm - so far, I seem to have spent my time picking holes in ZIMRI. Constructive holes though, I hope. Let it be said in conclusion that Z is an interesting and readable fanzine. (Particularly Beryl's and your bits, of course!) /=Ta...=/

This letter is brought to you by courtesy of the Post Office.

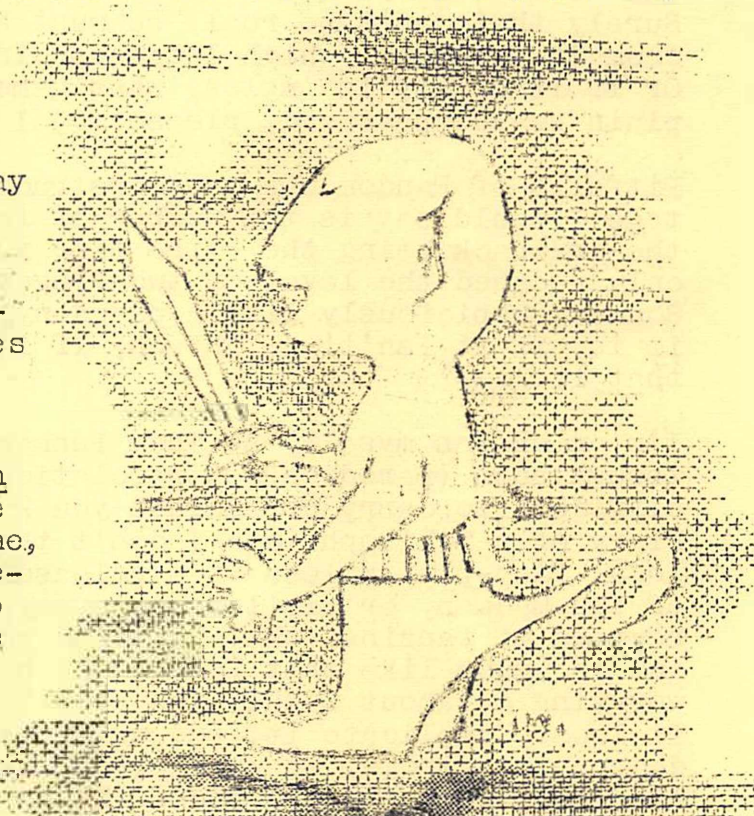
ROGER GILBERT 35, ARBURY ROAD
CAMBRIDGE, CB4 2JB.

This is a LoC. I may send you a contrib at the end of this letter if I feel so inclined.

I'm afraid that I enjoyed very little of your fanzine. The articles lacked 'meat' and could have been edited far more than they were.

...The Polanski film was Repulsion not Aversion /=Yes, this is where I bow my head or something in shame, the mistake should have been corrected before Z went to press, so to speak, for Gerbish did send me the gen I asked for, but.. Oh, well, sorry is all I can say now...=/ These small and very irritating mistakes were lack of sufficient research. St Fantony stuff is red and black, not green. As

editors, you are supposed to edit, irrespective of the feelings of your contributors. Even ego I expect to be edited - and sometimes, when I'm not, the result is shocking, as I never read over a fanzine contrib. Here endeth the LoC. /=Oh, I'm glad you enjoyed my homage to Igor - privately or otherwise... praps you'll find something to your liking this time Roje?... Well keep trying anyhow. =/



ROGER WADDINGTON 4, COMMERCIAL STREET NORTON MALTON YORKSHIRE.

To start with, it's a nice, thick zine, which in itself shows great promise; and it's a first issue that doesn't look or read like a first. You seem to have settled in, already established feeling, which I suppose is half the battle already won....

The Helston Furry Dance is something I'd like to see in the flesh, rather than secondhand as any written version must be; though Beryl really makes it come alive, doesn't she? I'd place it in the category of those memories of the past which are still with us, and are interesting because they're a survival from the past; I'd love to see the Loch Ness monster proved for real... Some interesting points from John Glynn, to be polite: I'd say above all that SF is the literature of change, in technology, civilisations, and most of people; and do we want it to be fixed in one eternal moment with the rockets and the spacesuits and the stars? Maybe modern SF is at fault in that it's reflecting the current hang-up with the functions of the mind and body instead of projecting its visions into the future as it used to; but the swing will eventually come, I would imagine; we just have to wait for it!

I won't say too much about the Stravinsky piece, not knowing that much about him; but from what little I do know, I'd say that he occupied the same position in music that T.S. Eliot did in literature; and as then, their respective worlds seem a little smaller.

Convention Trek I found to be a very full report, exhaustive and exhausting, or maybe that was just the impression our correspondent got? And it made me wish I'd been there... Though Games the Angles Play? Surely that can't be real; he must have remembered the supposed quote from St. Gregory, which I can use in refutation, non Angli sed Angeli.. Or if it really is Angles, what games do they play? (Suggestions on a plain sealed postcard, please...) I know they dance the rhumba, but...

Pitfalls of Fandom was very instructive/horrifying; its greatest advantage I would say is the number of friends you can find in fandom, and the drawback being the extra time you have to spend with them if you've only reached the level of two-finger typing like me! Who's A Truman? Sounds suspiciously like a pseudonym, though please forgive me, whoever it is, if it isn't! = Eh? oh, if it is or isn't you are.....forgiven that is. =/

I'm an MR fan myself, so Thom Penman's piece was doubly appreciated, though such (parodies? extrapolations?) things can be extraordinarily difficult to carry off unless you know everything about your characters. Diary of a Schizophrenic I don't think I'll ever get to see at this local flea-pit, unless it's released with some such title as the Curse of the Madman, or similar... Anyway, some goods fanzine reviews (good reviews of fanzines that is!) and book reviews; and this hasn't turned out too much like that LoC at the back, has it? That's the only thing worrying me about ZIMRI, the fact that most people will gladly prise it loose, duplicate it; and we'll see fandom gradually disappear in a decreasing circle, in which even zines take up the habit! = You mean like that monk and his press in Dan Morgan's Bull? =/

.....

From here on I've decided to experiment with two columns. I hope it meets with your approval gentle reader (?), I hope this meets with my co-ed's apro for that matter, he being the first one to see the end result.

MISTER LEROY KETTLE
21 CRANLEY GDENS
LONDON S.W. 7

After one editorial replete with remarkable trite comments once more stating that fanzines are for fun (but whose fun?) we get a bubbling pageful from Miss Conesa who enthuses over fandom and seems to think it consists of the Mercers and the ability to type other people's inconsequential rubbish on to stencils fanzines -for-the-use-of. The reasonably laudable aim of Keeping Zimri's emphasis predominantly on SF seems to have gone by the board for the first issue. It's just another low-level fanzine. I'm at a bit of a loss to see how a fanzine with the longest article about some obscure Cornish dance for furry extroverts, another article about that well-known SF writer Stravinsky and pages and pages about fans can claim to have an emphasis on SF.

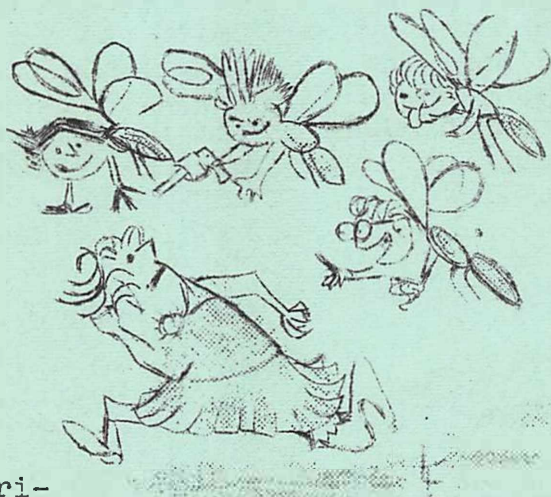
Fandom isn't SF. Or perhaps you didn't realise this. The majority of people who clam to be fans are almost totally ignorant of SF. Even the youth you got to write your con-report points out that he has read no Brunner (rather comendable actually) and didn't know who Bob Shaw was. Get it clear in your minds, before trying to put it over to other people. What are you talking about in ZIMRI? Is it going to be another fanzine which has no aim, no design, no destination? Of course it is.

I think that Mr Williams saying that fandom is a way of life for himself is exaggerating a little. For FIAWOL to apply you have to be putting heart and soul into it. And to use words like

GAFIATE in respect to someone like Panman is ludicrous. Fannish standards are certainly going down. Try reading some of the golden age fanzines. They don't usually miss out pages 29 and 30.

And while I'm mentioning fanzines perhaps the pseudonymous reviewer of FOULER SIX would like to come out of hiding. I suspect it is Miss Conesa but sorry if I'm wrong = right! =/. She's certainly drawing tremendous conclusions from strange things. Mr Fortey's 'Talc' was indeed a convention report. I'm sure Mr Priest has no need to get in on any fannish set particularly in respect of FOULER whose readership is not likely to affect the sales of his latest epic at all.

Just because you happen to like Mr Mercer (mistakenly or not) it doesn't mean that every one has to. The



reviewer gives the impression that she is a nasty small time bully allowing what is obviously a pre-conceived dislike for Mr Priest to colour her judgement of what were perfectly reasonable statements. And strangely it is not unknown for LoCs to have nothing to say. Or fan-

zines. = You misunderstand me Mr Kettle, I was talking about Mr Priest's letter, and the impression it made on me as a reader; not Mr Priest Himself, whom I have never met. =/

.....

HARTLEY PATERSON (Finches)

...Beryl is, as usual, interesting, 'beautiful People' by the way is only overworked by the ignorant media - it has a very specific meaning in refer to the rich (by inheritance) hippies, the kind

who fly over to England for a Dylan concert, or were murdered by Charles Manston. A kind of latter-day 'jet set'.

The con-report was shortened? /= indeed it was..=/ Graham Poole must be blessed with a photographic memory, or was writing everything down as he went along... now I saw Gray Boak with a notebook, and Ken Eddie with a tape recorder, but no one else...

Fanzine reviews... well passing over the beginning of the Maya review (reprint as a crit of Zimri?) ...a fanzine need have nothing to do with SF, what matters is that it is circulated amongst fans. Where is the SF in BLACK KNIGHT? Or as one definition of fanzines run, a f'zine is that literature which is read and produced by SF fans.

No sir, QUICKSILVER is not the best fanzine in Britain. There is no best fanzine, just some good some bad and some middling. The good ones can't really be compared... is SPEC better than SCOTTISHE? For reviews certainly, but if every zine was like SPEC.....
...horrors!

MALCOLM EDWARDS
28 KINCH GROVE WEMBLEY
MIDDLESEX HA9 9TF

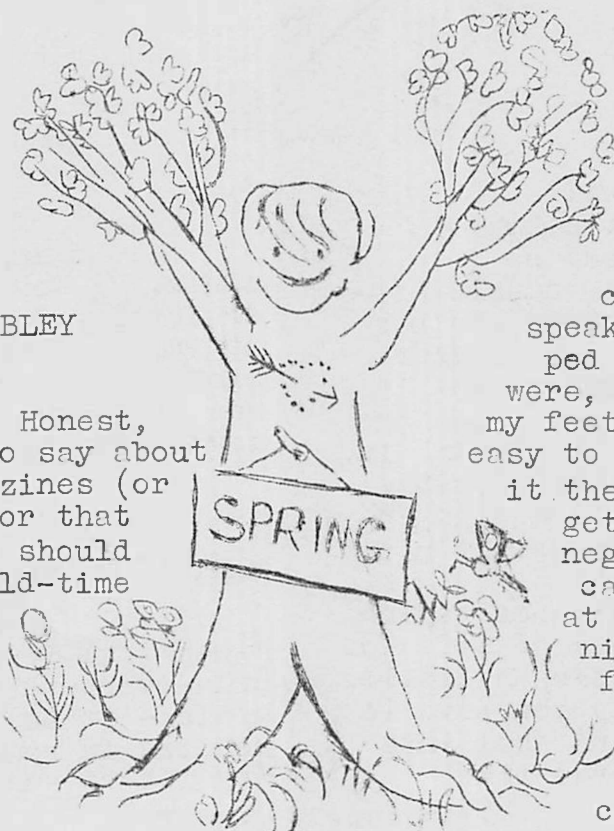
Thanks for ZIMRI 1. Honest, I never know what to say about first issues of fanzines (or any of her issues for that matter....). I mean should I come on like an old-time fan (a great temptation for a comparatively new fan confronted with one even newer) and say wow, great firstish, and I bet

if you get the contribs and locs you deserve the next one'll be better yet !!!!!

Be that as it may, to come back to those new fans confronted with still newer, it's good to see BNF Ian Williams explaining the lingo to the neos. Right on, Mite. I can picture now the drama of the moment Ritchie Smith announces his gaffiation. Not since BRIEF ENCOUNTER has there been such a heart-rending----- No, I'm getting off the point /=if there is one= Fiawol, gafia, bheer-----it's odd how the argot of fandom survives through the generations. And I suspect that it is mostly through articles like Ian's. If you picture fandom as a ladder, then I see all the people on the next to-bottom rung earnestly explaining to those on the bottom what it's all about, to secure their own position more than anything else. Come on, Ian.

Can't help but agree with Messrs Smith and Penman about the irrelevant mediocrity that is fandom (mostly). The bitchy part of me tempts me to ask Ritchie Smith why he thinks that irrelevant mediocrity and he aren't well suited, but I'll refrain, I'll refrain...

/= I'm rather glad you did refrain, 'cos I might have been tempted to be nearsty..=/ Of course, Fiawol is an awful trap and a very easy one to fall into when you first discover fandom. I speak as one who slipped on the edge, as it were, but have now found my feet again. It's very easy to put far more into it then you can possibly get back: the kind of negative feedback that can leave you sitting at home night after night getting into it further until you either break free or you are finished. If you're careful, you can



discover a reasonable sort of balance, where fandom can add to your previous social/leisure life, not replace it. Actually, for all like-minded people, if there be any, I'd like to propose a new acronym --- Fifi (or FIJA). Which means, to paraphrase the Byrds, Fandom Is Just Alright. That's about how I feel about it at the moment.

I thought you fanzine reviews, Phil, were amazingly well-thought-out, perceptive and accurate. But Lisa Here we go again!..= I don't understand what upset you so much about Chris Priest's letter in FOULER. Well, maybe I do. Its main fault, I'd have thought (and Roy Kettle, and Greg I expect, would agree) was that it was too moderate in tone. Chris tends to pull his punches. I think that what must be upsetting you, all that can be upsetting you, is that Chris is a Pro, author of INDOCTRINAIRE, yet. The line of reasoning seems to be: Chris Priest is attacking Archie Mercer, Chris is a big time pro and Archie is only a fan, therefore Chris is a bully. Well, that's ridiculous.

I agree with you there Malcolm, it is ridiculous. However, I don't quite get your reasoning over Chris a little earlier. If Chris was pulling his punches in FOULER, then what happens when he puts the full Cassius Clay treatment in to action?!..=

JOHN ALAN GLYNN
6 RIVER VIEW
RYTON CO DURHAM

ZIMRI-1, well, the typos sting... it shows lack

of consideration... lack of interest... Oh, John goes on and on like this, but then he stumbles on the truth! and says: Oh, you cringe do you? Well I forgive you. There. Are you shamed? Of course they may have been intentional... to arouse response... insidious you are, insidious.

PATRICIA MEARA
FLAT - A 5 KEDLESTON ROAD
DERBY

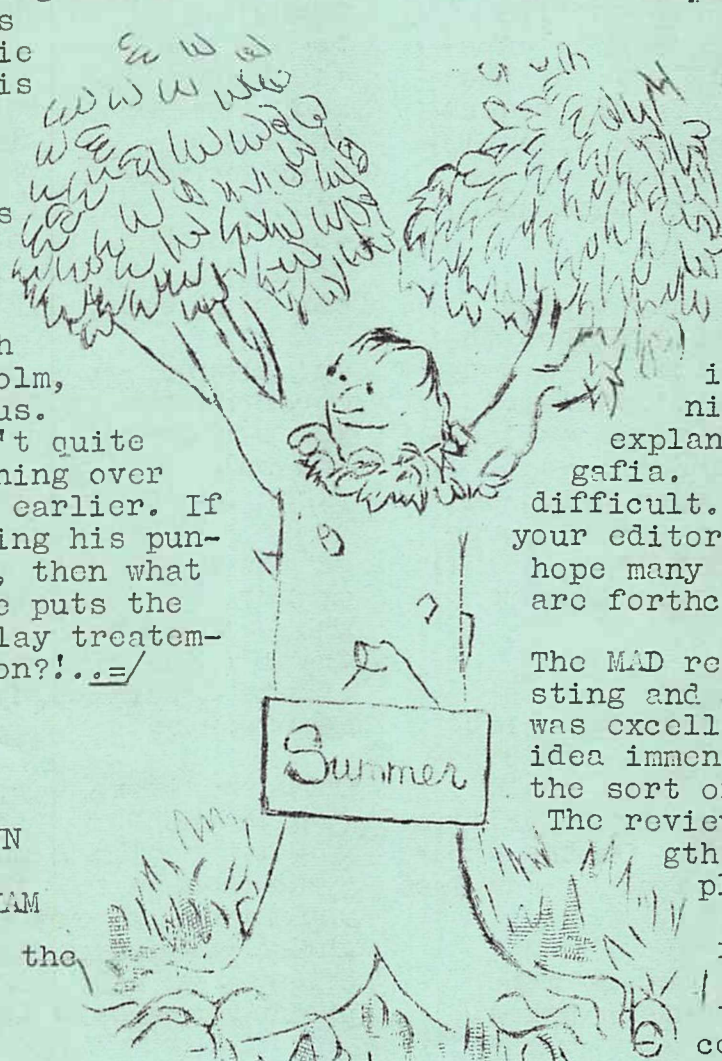
ON THINGS UNDER THE INITIALS SF, was an article with a very good point to make, and on the whole well written. As was THE HELSTON FURRY DANCE, very good, written by someone who obviously knows the subject well and is interested in it.

CONVENTION TREK was interesting, allowed me to compare how we got on at our first con. Your intro says that it was shortened; a very good idea since it allowed you to fulfill your laudable aim of variety.

PITFALLS OF FANDOM was interesting if a little patronising. I needed the explanations of fiawol & gafia. ROPE I found more difficult. I'm glad to see your editorial policy here & hope many more short stories are forthcoming.

The MAD report was interesting and I CALL IT ARTHUR was excellent, I found the idea immensely appealing, just the sort of thing I like.

The reviews were a good length too, in short please keep up the good work with a few more words from you by way of introduction to your contributors.



BRYN FORTEY
90, CAERLEON ROAD NEWPORT
MON., NPT 7BY

/= I make no apology for printing this letter complete, editing it would only break the flow, and the first paragraph speaks for itself! Or for us both...=/

Many thanks for ZIMRI 1, a new fanzine with an interesting co-editing lineup.

Lisa Conesa, who is a fairly new fan making her editorial

debut, and Phil Muldowney, who edited a number of VECTORS during one of the many BSFA crisis sessions plus one issue of a solo fanzine, QS. So, a mixture of new and old, both in fandom itself and in editorial experience.

Because of this I suppose its only fair that more can be expected of ZIMRI than, say, of the first issue of the fairly recent MAYA. Ian Williams was a complete first timer, but half of the ZIMRI team has been around and knows the scene.

Glossing over the many typing errors, which beset fanzines that they are more expected than not, let me straight away compliment you upon the first class duplication and above average layout. If nothing else, you have produced a fanzine guaranteed not to cause eye strain, and that it in itself can be considered something of an achievement!

The content are mainly of the 'short-and-sweet' variety, which is fortunate since most are pleasant but superficial and could easily have been boring if written to any great length. On the whole: undemanding, easy to read, and just as easy to forget.

It was pleasing to see so many new names on the content pages.

But how much did it cost to tempt Beryl from her Cornish gafia?

/= Disclosing the actual sum involved would mean breaking a promise to the revenant in question, I'm afraid...=/

ROPE Jo Withisone was an interesting couple of pages. Maybe I am reading more into it than the author intended, but it strikes me that the theme being dealt with concerns the ever

decreasing
freedom
allowed
by society
at every
level.
Even those

who consider themselves more free than most are in reality beset by rules and regulations, though maybe different ones to the majority.

/= Yes indeed, nothing short of perceptive Sire...=/ This is the theme I have found myself dealing with more and more of late, so found that ROPE evoked a sympathetic response. I thought it the best thing in the issue, and look forward to reading more from the author. /= I thank you, grinning broadly in Phil's direction... yours was one of the LoCs I couldn't wait for Phil to see! By the way, Bryn, how about a story from your own true self, like? =/

One grouse, on a personal level, concerns the review of FOULER 6. The reviewer (Lisa?) /= The one and only ...! =/ describes my piece as 'a tale that's supposed to be a Convention report'. Okay, so the names were changed to make up for the dull originals, but the whole thing was based upon pure facts (plus some opinion), and the events described did indeed happen as reported.

Only two items were exaggerated (1) At the BSFA Ltd. AGM there was not really a motion proposing a new seconder. (2) The Miasma moustache did not move even slightly off centre, in spite of all efforts to make it do so. /= Er.. praps you should have tried

a head or two, there were some loose ones about...=/ The thing is Barefoot old girl, that no con attendee can see anything near all that goes on.

I, in my inane FOULER style, reported on the con as it was for a particular group. I don't suppose anyone outside that group would recognise any of the events as having taken place, but they did. /=
OK, I stand corrected, it being too painful to sit down, you understand..=/

Oh, add a third exaggerated item.

(3) The comic, while used as a weapon, was not really metal tipped. Though both Ramino King and the Groovy Prince might not agree, seeing they were the ones being clobbered! /=
Phiu! I'm glad you've cleared that up, ta.=/

All in all, while not replacing FOULER as my current favorite fanzine, ZIMRI has jumped in as a genzine better than most of its type (even though you were harsh on Chris Priest, a writer who has never been really at home in letter columns), and one that I look forward to seeing future issues of.

"If you don't indulge in any kind of fan activity and find fandom rather dull, its your own fault!" True, but what if you don't indulge in fanac and are quite happy about the state of fandom? Then I say good luck to you, but according to Mr Williams: "Nobody is interested in a passive fan who just subscribes to fanzines and never sends in any form of comment. Nobody wants a passive fan!" Nobody? Well, passive fans obviously do, and why not? If every reader would write a LoC, the faned would have no time to read them. But much more important, I think this urge to tell everyone else to do it 'your way' or else, (feel unwanted) should be suppressed in fandom, as in all else.

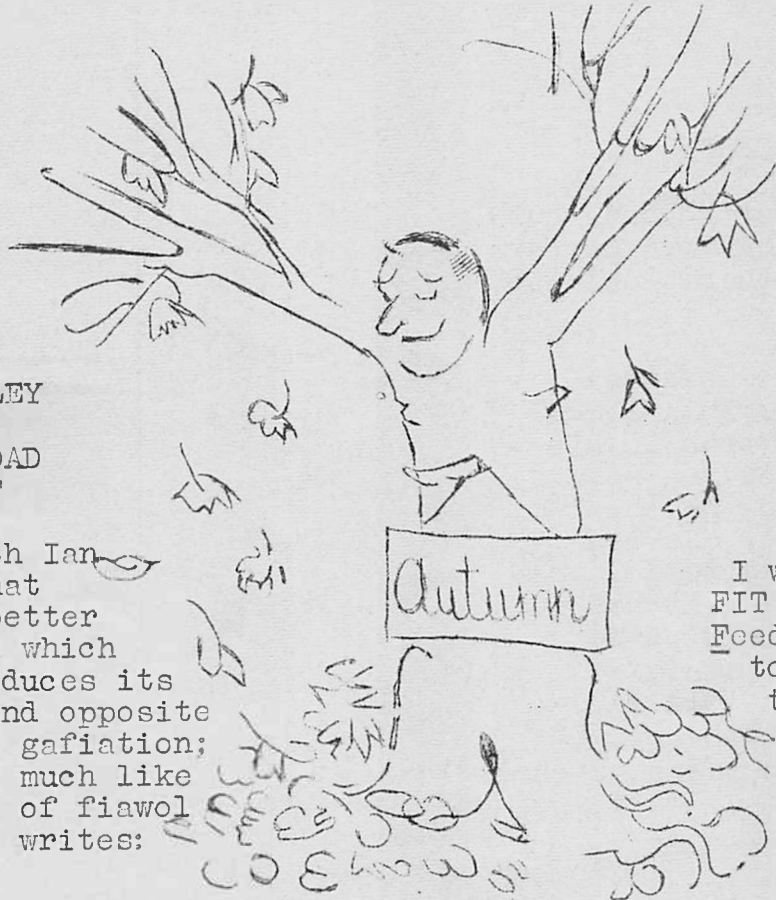
When Mr Williams writes: "But I'm being unkind to you. I'll assume that you do intend to indulge in fanactivity" he means: 'I'll now be kind to you by assuming that you intend to do all these things us true fans do.' Its hard to see how this assumption is a kindness, not just an assumption, he further writes: "And fanactivity doesn't mean turning up to conventions to listen to James Blish and get

pissed." Well, if I like listening to James Blish and getting drunk, I dont see why this obliges me to "write LoCs, write to various people, send in articles, poems or fan fiction" and try to meet local "fen" - a ridiculous plural by the way - which is apparently what fanac is all about.

I would prefer the FIT formula: Fandom Is Feedback (from readers to writers, an important and necessary task for growing the genre up) and in this case, listening to James Blish is a very

PAUL SHACKLEY
"BEVERLEY"
OAK HILL ROAD
7OAKS KENT

I agree with Ian Williams that fiawol is better than fitwol which rightly produces its own equal and opposite reaction of gafiation; but I don't much like his concept of fiawol either. He writes:



valuable way to deepen ones understanding of his work - much more so than sitting in a pub with fan whos contact with SF can be very tenuous. So my advice is, treat fandom as you like, and don't let older or more active fans tell you what's "wanted" from you.

Lisa, you've really got your knife into poor old John Brunner. / = Oh? And look who's talking about knives, yet! = / I recognise your stlye: "Auntie Fandom", hmm.. Aunt Fanny? / = Who she, Paul? = / Your paragraph on Brunner was irrelevant to your attack on Priest, which should have been the subject of a LoC to FOULER, and not in a general review of the fanzine. / = Much as it pains me to admit it Paul, I am inclined to agree with you there, but my LoC was already sent and I got so steamed-up by Chris' letter, I just had to say something somewhere, and... = /

John Spinks was amusing. What's a genzine? / = What's a genzine fellers? I'm too young to answer that'n. = /

MIKE MEARA Flat - A
5 KEDLESTON ROAD DERBY

Cover I agree is pretty good, but it is not your prerogative to say so. Leave it for other people to judge.

Book reviews are an essential part of any fanzine; Phil comes through here better than in his editorial. Why don't you have a go at book-reviewing. / = Ah, I'm glad you asked Mike, cos its something I'm itching to do, trouble is I've not had all that much time for reading lately... We were toying with an idea of running some such on 'Old Favorites' - books and authors. If anyone out there has ideas of their own on the subject (s), we'd love to hear from you. = /



When I pulled open the envelope in which ZIMRI had come my heart was thundering - I thought it was a manuscript returned, y'see, and I was delighted when it wasn't and had a celebratory cup of coffee. It wasn't for some minutes that I thought 'Hey, if that wasn't a script, what in hell WAS IT?' and tearing the zine out of its envelope I found myself holding, tremblingly, boggle eyedly, the most beautiful looking fanzine I've seen from the British scene. I thought it was YANDRO for a minute (that's a compliment from me, a Yanfan) then... the name... Zimri... and I realised that you hadn't been letting no grass grow under your feet and here, months earlier than I expected, was your blood sweat and tears, all neatly compressed and disguised as thirty odd sheets of paper. How beautifully presented it all is, as I sit here and remember it, having temporarily lost the copy. It's nice to be able to turn straight to a page and find an article. It's nice to find a conscientious approach to layout. It's nice to find little snippets tucked away, but not a whole fanzine FULL of them. It's nice to find lots of your artwork,, good artwork, covers especially (though if that, on the back, was meant to be snoop - Schultz? Sue her! Quick!) (Personally I think its meant to portray Bryn Fortey after the Con) (Sorry Bryn).

Now I hate rambling LoCs that go on about layout etc. as I have done, so I won't do it. The editorials were pleasant, not, as they shouldn't have been, weighty with philosophy and other crud. There was personalisation there, and that's good. I don't think Phil really knows when and where to apply these stupid fannish terms. Tom Penman can't have gaffiated as he hasn't been anywhere to gaffiate from. I hate those fannish terms, don't you? /a Nope. =/ They're gruesome, as are the people who use them a lot. I hate the term fan, which (being an abbrev. of fanatic) doesn't apply to more than half a percent of what is loosely known as fandom. Most people are fanatical about themselves and little more. But I guess that if they weren't there would be no fanzines. Fanzines are reflections in a golden ego. Christ, there's a word I hate too, EGO. Everybody (i.e. me) uses it so loosely and its becoming synonymous with SFfan.

Back to the zine. Your fanzine reviews leave a little to be desired. Everybody reviews fanzines like that. Try and be different! Review them from the point of view of the paper they're printed on, anything, b u t please DON'T let me have to labour through the same list of good things, bad things, with a bit of vitriol thrown in because FOULER does it. The review of that particular magazine was a bad one. This is my only gripe with Zimri-1. Let me explain - /= Oh, by all means do... after all that bitter-sweetness up top, how could I cut you off now! =/- Gray Boak has just put out an issue of CYNIC in which Ian Williams' beautiful MAYA was slated on the basis of two letters, one mine. WHAT A WASTE OF REVIEW SPACE!! Only a total moron reviews a zine on the basis of two letters he doesn't like. You are not so guilty but you went on to laborious and annoying lengths about CP's letter in Foulter and wasted all that space. Full marks, by the way, for the most original entry - to John Spinks. That was the most sensible LoC I ever read.

And then the articles - Phil did say, in his editorial, that the emphasis would be on SF?? /= And I said we'd have variety; I think we had a bit of both. Whenever Phil spoke it was about SF, and I did my best to be various.. =/ Beryl, was an unmistakable Beryl, always entertains me (have you read her 'March of the Mad Onions? Ask her for reprint rights). /= Like the dutifull editrix that I am, always aiming

to please our readers I have gone and done just that. The answer was 'Yes' so you'll be seeing the Marching Onions in the future. Now, ain't I good? E/ But Stravinsky! Yorch! And John Alan Glynn... you spell it Fluoredi. It was pleasant to read a con report by a relative newcomer. I never knew what to make of people who can't recognise a take off of DEATHWORLD. I don't think Graham can have read his classics of SF, just the new novels. Much good SF was written before 1966, Graham. Try some, it's good for you. So you also, Graham, got into an argument with Ken Eadie and Thom Penman about the intelligence of Apes? Well, well, - I spent an interesting hour with two apes arguing the intelligence of Ken Eadie and Thom Penman.

A final word on your book reviews. Excellent. Keep it up.

.....

CHARLES LEGG 20 WOODSTOCK CLOSE OXFORD OX2 8DB

At the convention David Gerrold made references to his course in group dynamics as an aid to his communicative powers. As another casual student of such matters, I find the best course to take is to say the nice things first and slip in the unpleasantness (if any) next. So, to the praise first.

The two most readable items in the whole journal were Beryl's THE HELSTON FURRY DANCE and your own HOMAGE TO STRAVINSKY. Reading the two pieces made me appreciate one of the major faults of fanzine writing, and indeed much professional SF. I refer to the almost obsessive use of the pronoun "I" especially when the 'I' is not the real subject of the text. Beryl's description of the antics at Helston succeeded in conveying most of what good descriptive writing should convey - details of what happened and some indication of the writer's attitude to the events. This is I fear, where the Conreport fails (as do so many others). Your writer hasn't taken the trouble to gather together sufficient facts to give a complete view of the convention, which admittedly requires some considerable journalistic skill. Neither has he succeeded in conveying all his personal reaction to the con. For that he would have to have been a lot more candid about himself than he was. Z= Ah, well, don't forget Churl that the report had been edited, Graham did in fact include a lot more facts which I 'in-me-wisdom' condoned or left out altogether, leaving merely the reactions of a 'fan at his first ever con'. So I'd better share some of those slings and arrows there. =/

In HOMAGE TO STRAVINSKY you succeeded in conveying what is the relevant point, to me at least, of any tribute. Firstly, the fact that you admired the man, and secondly, why you admired him. I can't say I share your admiration however. (Everyone knows that Beethoven is best...) For me Stravinsky had one great failing - he was cold spiritually. This is indicated to me by the general lack of 'melody' in his work - even melody involving abnormal harmony or tonality is greatly wanting, by his preference for the even numbered Symphonies of Beethoven, by his failure to appreciate the spiritual triumph of the choral finale of Beethoven's ninth (Stravinsky considered of the effects of the piece "unmusical" in a strictly mathematical sense), and by his unforgivable pseudity in having the libretto of OEDIPUS REX translated into Latin.

Let me pay homage to a very clever illustration on page 34, the Freudian

overtones are quite delightful . And I would agree with you that Dr Ballard is quite wrong about the Freudian overtones he seems to see in everything that we do. Perhaps Ballard, if he believes us all to be schizophrenic (whatever that may be) would be better off trying to solve our own inabilities to cope by illuminating them for us. Come to think of it, is this suggestion any different from the Christian doctrine of Original Sin?

/= A short foot-note on your OEDIPUS REX there Churl: I agree with much of what you said about Stravinsky himself, (Oh, Beethoven is not the best, one of the best may be, but...) I think the Latin libretto in his oratorio-opera 'OR' is particularly suited, it being a 'dead' language seemingly adding dramatic interest which resides in the vocal sounds rather than the orchestration, which often provides merely accompaniment, with practically no thematic development. The text is unimportant to my mind. =/

.....

ANDREW M STEPHENSON c/o "WOODLANDS" ISLET ROAD MAIDENHEAD SL6 8HT

Having digested you Mark One production, I find myself experiencing a flux of indecision as to my summation of it, but in short I think I can begin by saying "this is one hell of an issue to start off with". Now, before you take off, umbridge, or no the wrong way, I'll elaborate.

In essence, this zine of yours seems to have a strong cultural bias: / Is that good or bad please?=/ vide Beryl Mercer's anthropological account (interesting, alive, colourful and somewhat reminiscent of those old "Look At Life" films they used to show at Rank cinemas), John Glynn's apposite and timely assault on Senseless Filth in fiction (though I thought it threatened to run away with him at times), Lisa doing her nut over Igor (yeah, I liked "Fantasia" too), Prof. Ian Williams educating the masses in a brief but coherently entertaining autobiography, and (most revealing)...

I CALL IT ARTHUR by Thoth Penman was certainly a very clever piece and argues that the author carried out an intensive and extensive programme of research prior to writing it --- he also seems to watch "Magic Roundabout". Very funny if he can do it again without a) repeating or b) diluting, I'd be all for it.

In general, you've managed to assemble quite a collection of material, most fair, some good..... As I said... hell of an issue to start off with --- like a bolt from the blue, almost. Keep the elbow grease well st irred.

/= Andrew did some stirring himself in his LoC by suggesting we sack each or one the other, but I choose to ignore that part since the typing is now almost perfect (isn't it?) and this letter 'column' is really running away with me and still the Locs keep rolling in... Hey, we could add 'Letter-zine' to some of the other names Zimri has collected, or has that been done before too?..=/

.....

CHARLES PARTINGTON 5 BOOTH ROAD LITTLE LEAVER BOLTON LANCs.

HELSTON FURRY DANCE, by Beryl Mercer. The title conjured up an image of countless little Zhai-ee-vans performing some erotic dance imported from Center - a delightfull thought - until Beryl shattered it with

the text of the article. Enjoyed it though - the article I mean. Penman's piece was trite. If he feels strongly about the subject (and who doesn't) then surely it behoves him to construct his arguments/criticisms/opinions in a more coherent form. I just feel its too strong a subject to play around with.

CHRISTOPHER PRIEST 1 ORTYGIA HOUSE 6 LOWER ROAD HARROW MIDDLESEX

Thanks for ZIMRI-1... I take it that by publishing John Alan Glynn's article you at least condone his views, even if you don't exactly endorse them. If so, there is a distinct streak of inconsistency, whereby Glynn mutters distrustfully about experimental sf, while on the opposite page you are raving about Stravinsky (who was a great musical inovator), and yet on another page Phil is complaining that Bob Shaw's handling of sex is coy. /=In other words Chris, variety!=/

Whenever I read an article like Glynn's I feel as if I am missing something. I wish he'd listed titles of books and their authors! Where are all those sf books that are full of pornography??? Seriously though, Glynn's article is something I can sympathise with, even without agreeing with him. /=Likewise I'm sure=/

Anyway, even taking his word for what he says, is experimentation as such a bad thing? The French 'nouvelle vague' cinema of the fifties was full of avant-garde devices such as hand-held cameras, alinear editing and so forth, and while being praised in high intellectual circles, was no great success with the public. But now, fifteen years or so later, the techniques of that time have been absorbed into the common vocabulary of all contemporary film-makers that not only does no one notice them now, but the French films of that time look completely plain. So it will be, I'm sure, with sf. The cheap sf experimenters will have their day and pass unnoticed... the ones who are really doing things (Even if they are not readily accepted by the readership) will have a profound influence on writers who follow. One writer whom I am sure John Glynn must have read--Ursula LeGuin--has been writing for only a few years, but is already very popular with many kinds of reader. She is someone who does not resort to superficial "Rorshach" writing, but who deals--within a framework of straightforward, linear writing--with mature and adult themes. ((..I do so much agree with you there Chris, Ursula LeGuin without pyrotechnics or cute effects brings a maturity and intelligence to her books that most others should envy! ..))

One final point which comes from Glynn's article. He appears to dislike the inclusion of "every mental mutation in sf. But surely...isnt this what sf is all about? I know that I at least was first attracted to sf because it stretched my mind and made me think in new ways. 'Nuff said.



JAMES GODDARD - Lymington

Shows his singular lack of taste and writes: '...There were several things in Z-1 I did not particularly like ie A FLOWER FROM BERYL and HOMAGE TO STRAVINSKY...

Rites of Spring and all that Junk

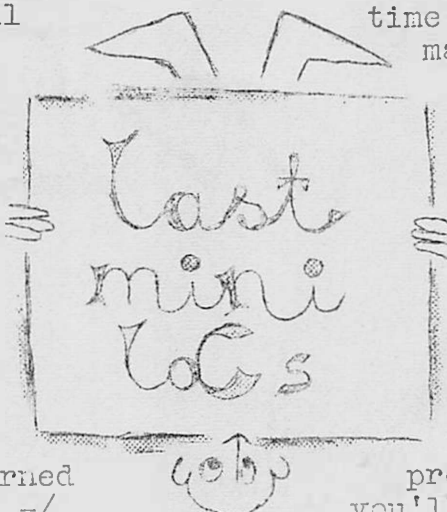
never appealed to me.

IF Stravinsky composed like Delius now, he may well have become the subject of my admiration..'

Arr Jim Lad in which case I'd never have paid homage to him... what a

great loss that would, have been to all concerned ... the mind boggles?..=

We had a very strange Loc from someone who appears to be travelling incognito. Post mark, as far as I remember was Plymouth.. I hope it isn't you Phil sailing under false colours?! Anyway thankyou whoever you are.. brave man-o'-war, but next time let's see behind the mask eh??



JOHN SPINKS - Norwich Agrees with Phil about Bob Shaw, and changes his mind about fan-zine reviews. John's very beautiful and sensitive story A SEASON TO EVERY PURPOSE, can be seen in the coming issue. Oh! darn it, I wasn't supposed to express my own opinion...well, you'll be able to judge for yourselves...

ROGER JOHNSON - Chelmsford '...The scraps of poetry were effective... I loved BERYL'S FLOWER..'

PETER LINNETT - West Wickham '...The articles seemed to be either poorly-written but interesting or well-written and uninteresting. At least you are not obsessed with sf.'

MARY LEGG - Oxford. 'Now you know why I never write editorials... Beryl is always stimulating and interesting this time was no exception... how beautiful it all sounds.. Maybe next year Archie and Beryl may be stepping out with them? ... John Glynn may mock (& doubtless will) but there is a chimp who is producing paintings which are being sold...truly!

RITCHIE SMITH - South Shields. Says it all poetically: '...don't believe any of you are alive, alive-oh, Or real. So there we are. Names on sheets of paper. Quo Vadis? Who operates the "reality" called Phandum? ' Come to that, who operates the operator who operates... Oh... from here there is only up, Domine..=

PETE COLLEY - Manchester. Enthuses: '...Best thing in the issue was Thom Penmans I CALL IT ARTHUR. Thom can't be allowed to gaffate, his work is too good.. You must get more by Thom somehow; it doesn't matter how, just GET IT!! ' Panic not Pete, Thomas Penman will be with us again..=

IAN WILLIAMS - South Shields, writes a very interesting Loc, it came a bit too late to be included complete but I understand that there was a good reason for that, so he's forgiven...he says: '...Wasn't too keen on Phil's editorial. He's statement that the emphasis of Z will be always on SF is utter balls (pardon)'((..blush..))'Thoht's story is obviously a intricate allegory of Joycean proportions.. It is also full of red herrings designed to trick the casual reader into believing it is something that it is not... It is, of course, about the odyssean trials and tribulations of Ratfen in their attempts to overthrow the cornerstone of established fandom.. Need I add further that the mysterious Zebedee is none other than their mentor Archie Mercer? 'Course not, it was as plain as the wart on your elbow.. Would we have used it otherwise?!..=



God shall send forth his mercy and truth: my soul
is among lions.

And I lie even among the children of men, that are
set on fire: whose teeth are spears and arrows,
and their tongue a sharp sword.
(Book of Common Prayer)

He stepped into the early morning sunlight, blinking his eyes, pausing outside the heavy iron doors, dazzled and half-blind after the cool, shaded interior. The sun was barely above the horizon, but already a heat-haze danced and rippled over the distant sands.

The vast crowd were completely silent now, even the vendors had temporarily ceased their raucous braying, and a sea of faces turned

dispassionately towards him.

Involuntarily, despite the heat, he shivered. His mouth was dry, and the now-familiar domed helmet felt suddenly awkward and heavy. Only the self-discipline imposed by a rigorous military training enabled him to repress the rising feeling of panic before it gained complete control.

He fumbled unconsciously with clumsy, gloved fingers at a chafing strap, glancing down and seeing, as if for the first time, the badge of rank blazoned across his left breast. "I must not show fear," he thought and, squaring his shoulders, strode forward, his two companions automatically falling in step just behind him.

As he walked he looked upward, his eyes travelling up the height of the sleek metal colossus rearing above him, almost as if it could claw the very stars from the sky. Its base was wreathed with smoke, and clouds of white fumes were venting from it, swirling and dissipating in the slight breeze. A soft hissing sound rose over the hushed assembly.

A small group of officials turned to him as he approached. He halted before them and saluted, perfunctorily, almost casually. A priest stepped forward, intoning a prayer.....

He half-listened, head bowed, indifferent to the words as the voice droned on, glancing side-long at his wife, who stood gently cradling their baby son in her arms. The child still slept, one tiny fist clenched and knuckled into its soft cheek. His wife stared unseeing towards him, dull-eyed, wretched in her misery.

"Courage, brother. It is time." He looked up sharply, his reverie shattered. The priest stood before him, now holding the baby. Wordlessly, he gathered the child in his arms. It yawned mightily and snuggled, still sleeping, into his chest. Pale-faced, he held his son tightly to him for what seemed an eternity.

Suddenly, almost eagerly, he stumbled towards the enormous bronze image Ba'al Hammon - the vile devourer of children. The face was human, but had the muzzle and fangs of a jackal, with horns out from the skull. The body was that of a baboon, its tail arched in rage, its belly a white-hot furnace.

Without hesitation, mindless to the fierce waves of heat that enveloped him, he flung his child into the flames.

The small body jerked and kicked and died. And blackened and burst and shriveled.

There was a smell of hot metal. A stench of burning flesh.

The two bodyguards edged closer, in case their beloved Captain's strength should fail. But his body had turned to ice. His mind screamed within his skull; the tears from his eyes and the blood from his lips mingled in his grizzled beard.

And as the drums and cymbals clashed their barbaric discord he turned away, raising his arms in a gesture of command.

"This time we will win," he muttered. "This time we must win.
.....as the first of the thousand chariots under his command whe-
eled through the wide gates of Carthage, towards the invading
hordes of Scipio the Roman.....

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ZIMRI

Some of their chiefs were princes of the land;
In the first rank of these did Zimri stand,
A man so various that he seemed to be
Not one, but all mankind's epitome;
Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong,
Was everything by starts and nothing long;
But in the course of one revolving moon
Was chymist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon;
Then all for women, painting, rhyming, drinking,
Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.
Blest madman, who could every hour employ,
With something new to wish or to enjoy!
Railing and praising were his usual themes,
And both, to show his judgement, in extremes:
So over violent or over civil
That every man with him was God or Devil.
In squandering wealth was his peculiar art;
Nothing went unrewarded but desert.
Beggared by fools whom still he found too late,
He had his jest, and they had his estate.

John Dryden
(1631 - 1700)

In Zimri-1, a certain Mr Poole, whom I met at the Giffard Con and got along with well enough, described his meeting with me. He mentioned that at the time, he had not realised how infamous I was. I, was, shocked!!! Infamous, me? was my immediate reaction.

Now, possibly, amongst a certain fraction of Ratfandom, I am unpopular, for some remote reason known only to themselves; for I have not attacked them in any way; but infamous, NO. But apparently, infamous, YES.

It cannot be ^{a/}very encouraging prospect to think that everyone new I meet will take me upon my reputation, rather than as I really am: kind, generous, quiet, studious, intellectual, forgiving and down right lovely with it.

People have fannish personae...

Ian Williams is different in print than in the flesh, Lisa Conesa never says a word except in print. If people would only take the trouble to spy beneath the surface, then perhaps they would find that I am different.

Most of my conversation is meant to entertain, even at my own expense, but some persons seem to take offence at that! Well, having admitted to myself that I am infamous (or just plain misunderstood), I considered that there must be advantages to being infamous. It is simply a question of finding them.

A mere second By my superior intelligence provided the following;

1): No-one can think any the worse of you. Being infamous, you can only

improve. Only one person I know has started at the bottom and moved down. Phil Muldowney and Leroy Kettle have attempted to emulate this feat, with distinguished success. But in my case, being generally a cut above the run-of-the-mill human, I can only improve the fine-honed edge of infamy, and become admired by all.

2): Since everyone expects the worst from me, when I am kind, I am doubly rewarded by glowing admiration heaped upon my unworthy head. Each little compliment is so unexpected that it is appreciated that much more.



3): Little effort is needed in making it with fanzines. All I have to do is to take upon me an Aspect of all those qualities I hate, and am hence that much more verbal about, and write. All say, God is at it again, time to have a field day with Gilbert. It amuses me to see the frenetic attempts made to emulate my nastiness, or to read nastiness into something quite innocuous, purely because of the appended author's name.

4): It is all very, very amusing. The gist of this in '3)'. Many try to compete with me - an unrewarding pastime. I am not worried or concerned about the opinion held of me by people who do not matter. Fandom is a separate compartment in my life, not fiawol at all. Their mistaken idea that what they say can mean anything other than passing amusement to me causes endless fun in my household.

My fiance often asks me why I set myself to be knocked down. Well, it gets a laugh and it doesn't matter, so why not.

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KIND: Be kind and considerate to others, depending somewhat upon who they are. (Don Herold)

I hope you have not been leading a double life, pretending to be wicked, and being really good all the time. That could be hypocrisy. (Oscar Wilde)

QUIET: Very often the quiet fellow has said all he knows. (F.M. Hubbard)

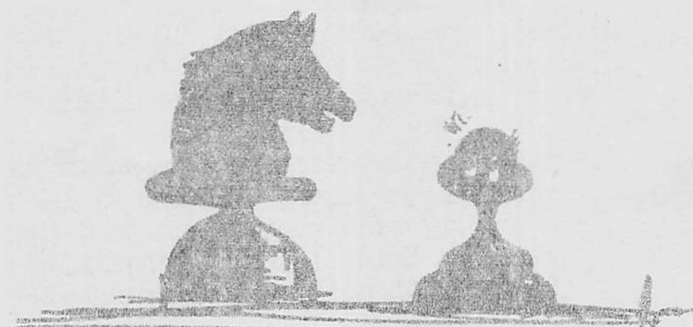
AMUSEMENT: Amusement is the happiness of those who cannot think. (Alexander Pope)

A blockhead rubs his thoughtless skull
And thanks his stars he was not born a fool.
(Ibid.)

You grow up the day you have your first real laugh at yourself.
(Ethel Barrtmore)

...and last but not least:

Moral indignation is jealousy with a halo.
(who else but H. G. Wells)



THE LAST MEETING

by

ROGER WADDINGTON

The last bombs had fallen in the war that brought the earth to a molten fury, and silence settled once again over the wasted landscape. High on a ruined mountainside, the unicorn awoke from a dreaming sleep in his cave, disturbed by the light that was spilling from a crack in the wall, across his bright, sensitive horn. Still sleep entwined, he crossed to the gap, pawing at it until the whole scene was laid out before him; and he wept at the ash-covered landscape, the flowing lava and the fires everywhere, never doused by the endlessly weeping sky; and he went out to see.

"Where has all the green gone, where are all the little streams I used to know?" he despaired to himself. "And where are all our people, their houses and temples, that came after us, like the first race we knew?" And as if in answer, a figure came stumbling across the ashes, bearded grimy and staggering, falling every now and then, but still manlike; they came face to face.

"I thought unicorns were no more than a myth" the man said to himself.

"We have become a myth; yet before you inherited the world, we roamed free," the unicorn replied. "But how is it that you speak my language?" came the reply. "It was we who taught it to you, and brought you from barbarism; and then when we had to depart, our offspring the Centaurs carried on the work."

"You should have been with us all the time," the man said. "We reverted to savages too soon, with too much power; and this is all we have left for those who come after," he pointed to the shattered rocks and rabble, "not that anyone will come, for we have killed the future and yet you come ... from the past.."

"There is no hope there; for I am the last of my race. We fled with the men escaping from the fall of Atlan, and came to settle here in this land by the sea. We were going to build a city called At-thens; but the hills and freedom were calling us; and there we dwelt, slowly going until I too at last lay down to what I thought was death; but this is worse than death."

"Athens went long ago; we built bigger and bigger cities, learned more and more and finally reached out to the stars while our people spread out all over the lands and seas; though how do you stop the spread of hate?"



fanzines

CYPHER No.5 and SPECULATION No.29; two second to none in serious comment and discussion in UK, the C-5 manages to be more lighthearted about it, therefore more entertaining. Roger Waddington lets in a spot of Fannish air in his PROPOSAL which calls for more cons and mini-cons - a call which seems to have been heard, by all accounts.

Terry Jeeves 'does his thing' in OLD PLANS OF HEAVEN and attempts to divide SF into lumps or was it 'Bands' and cooks up a fairly reasonable argument, even if I do find certain recipes a little hard to swallow, Terry is Terry and one would not expect him to serve up New Wave in preference to SF's Golden Age writings.

CY Chaivin INTERROGATES Greg Benford; this is eleven pages long interview, delightfully illustrated and intelligently conducted. One gets to know the interviewer as well as the interviewee.

C-5 Has long and interesting Book Reviews, a Letter Column and a sort of who's who called PEOPLE. The editorial address is: JAMES GODDARD, 1 SHARVELLS ROAD, MILFORD ON SEA, LYMINGTON and can be obtained for 13p per issue or 2/23p, 4/45p, 5/50p. If the editors would mix in a little of the CYNIC into it it would undoubtedly be my favorite zine, it could even be yours!

SPECULATION on the otherhand is strictly un-fannish, though in Number 29 Pete does concentrate on the last EASTERCON with four pages of photographs taken at the con, plus some personal remembrances. Larry Niven welcomes you to his world, one which he offered at PresiCon Los Angeles. Here one can see the birth of various Niven-Myths, past and future. It's a fascinating glimpse into a creative mind, concluded by Pete Weston's own thoughts.

Thny Sudbury asks WHAT DO THEY SEE IN PHILIP K. DICK? And Philip Strick reports exclusively on the Science Fiction Film Festival at Trieste and James Blish studies Damon Knight - an excellent talk Mr Blish gave at the EASTERCON.

What else is there? Oh, yes book reviews (long and short) and letters from readers; all this is edited and produced by: PETER R. WESTON 31 PINEWALL AVE KINGS NORTON BIRMINGHAM 30. 20p per copy or 5 for £1.

CYNIC and EGG, fannish plus... CUNIC-3 is wrapped up in superb covers, the front of which represents the classic story of flight: Deadalus and Icarus.

Gray's Ego Centre is about fans and fanzines, written in the usual friendly 'off-white' style. Which leads me to the fantastic tales of Northumbrian Fandom by the one and only: Bryn Fortey. Its so superbly frothy to be impossible to describe other than by one three letter word:- F U N !

Jhim Lin Woo's fanzine reviews aren't as perceptive as before, having fallen into a trap - a trap I know from old..- of judging a fanzine on one letter of comment, nuff said?

Bth Cynic and Egg have very lively LoC columns, expertly edited and answered. Gray's illoes are very much better than in the previous issue (one promise kept!), some hand cut and electroed and executed by many artists who's tallent is envialbe indeed.

EGG-5 too is rich in artistic tallent, illustrations and the written word alike.. My own favorites are NOG by John Brosnan which is a sort of confession of the time when Peter Roberts asked John for some sex to put into Egg; and a very warm tale by James Rathbone with an intriguing title WHY I AM NOT WRITING THIS ARTICLE. This is lovely look-back-in-nostalgia type artic about fandom in the golden gge of 50's when no one thought of such things as 'Rat-Fandom' or alike, nice...

CYNIC edited and produced by GRAHAM BOAK (OMPA-zine) adress is 6, HAWKS ROAD KINGSTON UPON THAMES SURREY KT1 3EG.

EGG edited by PETER ROBERTS THE HAWTHORNS KEELE STAFFS. Subs are 15p an issue or 4/50p and the usual trade, contribution or LOC. This is also an OMPA-zine.

*Pete also produces CHECKPOINT the only british News-zine. Subs are 4/20p (1st Class) 5/20p second class or any newsy item. Highly recommended since it lets you know what is happening in Fandom etc. Address as above.

OTHER FANZINES WORTHY OF ATTENTION:

ERG 36 (OMPA) 'perpetrated and desicrated by:-' TERRY JEEVES 230 BANNERDALE ROAD SHEFFIELD S11 9FE. 8p percopy or 4/30p. Personal and fannish zine. Lettes, Book Reviews, Views and Who's Who, or the beginning there-of.

HELL 2 (OPMA) edited and produced by Paul Skelton and Brian Robinson 9, LINWOOD GROVE LONGSIGHT MANCHESTER M12 4QH. Letter, Trade or Contrib.

Don't know what to call this zine, its not fannish, not really personal, not Science Fiction orientated... It is friendly, has nice illoes and a short letter colum. A very long editorial called LIMBO, some fanzine reviews, an article by Terry Jeeves, another one by Mike Maera and one or two odds and ends. Definetly worth a letter or contrib.

THE MIDDLE EARTHWORM produced by ARCHIE MERCER from 21 TRENETHICK PARC, HELSTON, CORNWALL.

This is a compound of letters from Worm-friends with comments from Archie. The key word here is frinedliness and J.R.R.Tolkien, the writers such Cordwainer Smith have been known to keep in.

Archie says he'll send WORMS to anyone who asks for it and contributes an interesting letter. So get writting!

Talking about writing, did you know that you can have your manuscripts aired in the coming MACROCOSM? Edited by ROB HOLDSTOCK of ORBITER fame.

Rob Holdstock announces:

In London at this moment

GREG PICKERSGILL
ROB HOLDSTOCK
LEROY KETTLE
MALCOLM EDWARDS
JOHN HALL
JOHN BROSNAN

have formed VUG PUBLICATIONS.

FOULER - produced by Leroy Kettle and Greg Pickersgill, needing no introduction.

QUICKSILVER - produced by Malcolm Edwards, critical zine of high standard.

MOTORWAY DREAMER - a new zine which will be produced by John Hall.

GILBERT - a second new venture, it will be... 'unusual'?

'Which leaves MACROCOSM. No amateur zine can adequately produce fiction; fiction in fanzines is of low repute. MACROCOSM will be a zine that will change that reputation. The first issue comprises amateur-pro writers nearly all of who are making it in prozines. The stories are either specially written for MACROCOSM or printed prior to being offered to pro-magazines. The editor is satisfied they are high quality entertainment.

MACROSOCM invites submission, but only stories of an almost professional standard will be printed - with gratitude and care. And articles too - are invited and will appear and will be digestable and thought provoking.... Your support is genuinely requested. Your 5p in stamps would be appreciated.'

Rob Holdstock, address elsewhere in this issue.

LC



Zimri-3 will REVIEW the following BOOKS;

ALPHA ONE edited by Robert Silverberg
GREAT SHORT NOVELS OF S.F. ed. R. Silverberg
BREAKTHROUGH by Richard Cowper
PHEONIX by Richard Cowper

LILITH by George Macdonald
PHANTASTES by George Macdonald

*(all sent in by
PAN BOOKS Ltd., from
their Ballantine Science
Fiction)*

STOP PRES! STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS!

Here, a report on the NOVA-CONVENTION by Chuck Partington, fan made good (several of his stories have had pro-publication! *sigh*) member of the MAD SF Group and programme coordinator for the coming CHESSMANCON-72 next Easter, to be held at BLOSSOMS HOTEL in CHESTER.

The 'we' Chuck refers to in his report is ofcourse his beautiful wife Linda who graces our meetings from time to time...and keeps Chuck in Check?!

PAUSE FOR STARTLED GLANCES

by CHARLES PARTINGTON

Being asked to comment upon the Novacon after a gap of several days is a little unfair for a man in my position. (Pause for started glances?) Being somewhat reticent of nature and possessing a memory akin to a sieve, I can only offer whatever images impressed themselves forceably enough to be retained. Also, there's not much one can say about a convention without slandering or misquoting somebody. But here goes.

We staggered into the notorious non-residents bar after depositing our suitcases and such at the registration desk, quite unaware of the gay clientel it attracted. The dark and surprisingly handsome arab totally ignoring the bar-maid gave me the first stirrings of doubt, (Ina Shorrocks confirmed my suspicions later) but the call of alcohol was sufficient to drown my nebulous fears.

We had arrived on the Friday evening to find many fans already in suite, which boded good for the opening of the convention on the Saturday morning. I can recall eating an expensive meal in the hotel restaurant, then nothing. What did happen to Friday night?

I confess to catching little of the programme, yet what I saw proved interesting enough. WRITING FOR THE SCREEN with Kit Pedler and John Brunner brought several pointed comments from the audience, though the speakers tend to loose track of the subject under discussion, and their knowledge of film techniques seemed somewhat dated.

The malapropism of the convention was a member of the committee introducing the Guest of Honour as James Blish when he should have said James White. Still, these things happen.....

The Guest of Honour's speech though not shatteringly inventive or original was illuminating, a talk on how the SECTOR GENERAL stories came to be written, sprinkled with a few memories of Irish fandom.

I recall John Brunner dressed in a fantastic red velvet suit, and a discussion with two obviously shell-shocked Irish fans who insisted upon talking about Clarke and Assimov. Bob Shaw cornered me when he found out I used to live in the Bolton area and inquired if I had ever heard of bottled ale called OBJ. It seems he had spent some time in the area a few years back and for some reason he never revealed he had fond memories of that particular brew. Anyway, I ended up agreeing to send him a bottle. Why do I make such rash promises?

At one point in the convention, the hotel was invaded by five idiots dressed in monkey masks, who ran amok in the residents bar, then went on to the fancy-dress room-party, accompanied by the human fly, and an unbelieving night porter.

The mini-banquet provided just sufficient nourishment to sustain one through the Guest of Honour's speech (it seems one pays more for the service than the food), who revealed an nfullfilled desire to be both pilot and a general practitioner. Somehow he blew it though and became a science fiction author instead.

At the banquet I met Mike Higgs, a member of the Birmingham SF Group, and talked to two fans sporting unicorn emblems, UNICORN being Mike's fanzine. The latter was complaining that though professional SF authors are acknowledged and feted by the majority of convention attendees, the artists and illustrators for the most part went unknown and unrecognised. I pointed out the brilliant black and white illustrator Jim Cawthorn, undoubtedly the finest fantasy artist in Britain, who has yet to be acclaimed by any convention.

The bookstalls this year were overflowing with items of sufficient variety to pander to every taste (well, practically every taste) from pulp magazines to current paperbacks and hardbacks, and rare out of print editions. I guess that I must be fundamentally masochistic, for knowing that I couldn't afford to buy any, I kept returning to browse through them.

I did not like the choice of films, VILLAGE OF THE DAMNED, THE TIME MACHINE, etc. Though one can escape such trivia easily enough by a trip to a room party or suchlike, those aberrations eat into programme time. If films must be shown, then for God's sake let's have a little thought. Why not THE DAMNED, THE AGE OF GOLD, CHIMES AT MIDNIGHT, or similar easily obtainable films?

On the whole the convention went extremely well, and I was delighted to discover that the Novacon is to be an annual event in Birmingham. With luck, I'll be there next year.

Charles Partington
November 1971.

NOVACON - One was held at the Imperial Centre Hotel in Birmingham on the week-end of 12-14 November '71, about 150-odd fans attended. On the programme, apart from the items mentioned by Chuck, was a talk by Dr Jack Cohen "Man's Successors", panels on "Science Fiction Publication" and the already mentioned "Writing for the Screen." The programme came to an end on Sunday afternoon with Pete Weston's talk on fanzine publishing and panels on "Pantropy vs Terraforming" and "Robots and Robotics." The committee members were Ray Bradbury, Alan Donnelly, Alan Denham, Pauline Dungate and Vernon Brown chairman.

about books

David Goodier

DAY MILLION by
FREDERICK POHL
188pp
Gollancz £1.40

One reading is usually enough to dismiss a bad book, a meritorious one may need several readings to fully appreciate it. I picked up 'Day Million' with such pleasurable anticipation that the above axiom fell apart. I had to read it twice to make sure it was as bad as I thought. Of the ten stories in the book, only two satisfied me and a number were so bad it was difficult to believe that Fred Pohl was their author.

The change in mood from story to story grated on my nerves rather than enhancing pleasure with variety. The price of the book is low for these days of soaring book-costs, and with good reason. Don't buy it, don't borrow it, don't even accept it as a present unless you intend lighting the fire with it. You will doubtless be able to obtain the two decent stories elsewhere without having to condone bad writing.

Having said that, and discharged the primary functions of the reviewer, all bad writing is not equally uninteresting. The real fan looks for something more than 'a good read', and finds the causes of failure as interesting as those of success. 'Day Million' contains some instructive material. The two stories I think at least passable, 'Way Up Yonder' and 'Under Two Moons' are both longish, 34 & 44 pages respectively, and in a light vein. The first is a story of the blindness of decadence to danger; eager young man from earth spots spy on plantation planet, love interest thrown in. Nothing terribly intense, rather in the manner of 'Asimov's Mysteries.' The second is a straight send-up, no holds barred, of the 'impossible gadgetry' spy thriller. It is here you may find one or two sparkling moments in the whole book.

These two stories were both written for S-F mags, both are competent pieces of work. Comparing these with 'Day Million', 'Schematic Man', 'Making Love' and 'Speed Trap' (the four stories written for the so-called adult magazines) the impact is one of style. A jocular tone at once coarse and coy replaces wit, good humour and plain fun of the two straight stories. Note that this is not a matter of incompetence. The writing is slickly professional and may even be intended to be satirical, an attempt to make a living out of those magazines while sending them up at the same time. However, no author can be judged on his intentions, only on results, and 'He who touches pitch shall be defiled thereby' was never truer than it is here.

'Day Million', the title story, is a love affair of the far future which regards a relationship as satisfactory in proportion to the intercourse it condones. It may or may not be meant as satire, but the language and tone it uses have been so far degraded by the adult mags as to be incapable any longer of conveying any message. The tone is that of a party-know-all forcing his opinions feet first down unwilling ears. The most damaging consequence of this is that the reader cannot establish any communication with the author except by adopting the evil assumption inherent in the language he is using. 'Willing suspension of disbelief' is impossible, and the reader is led to examine the stories for faulty logic, as one would examine the opinions of a smug man.

Such faults exist aplenty in these stories, but that is not the main thing; very few works of art are perfect. The point is that the style of the story itself carries the reader out of the natural hunting ground of the writer and into the sterile realms of logical nit-picking. Great writing speaks directly from heart to heart enlarging the experience of the reader. The danger of writing in the style of 'Esquire' and 'Playboy' is the same as that of more serious pornography, namely that it is sterile and mechanical. The problem of handling sexual themes in science fiction turns on this very point. If the new areas of experience made available by the work of great thinkers like Freud and Jung and the efforts of great writers like Joyce and Lawrence are at long last to be incorporated into S.F., then it is from these men and not from hack magazines that ideas and language must be quarried.

Ominously, two stories taken from S.F. mags 'The Deadly Mission of P. Progress' and 'The Day the Martians Came', leave the same dust-and-ashes taste in the mouth at the 'glossy' stories. Both contain clever ideas, the first is a hatched job on the 'going-back-in-time-to-improve-on-history' story and the second is about the infinite capacity of human beings for oppressing those less fortunate than themselves. Formally, both are strong, the first achieving its effect by working out logically the consequences for population size of a radical improvement arounds 30AD in the health of the human race, the second by turning the newsman's vigil into a joke-telling session at the expense of the newly discovered, weak and ugly Martians. Stylistically, however, something is badly wrong. The stories are extremely adroit, yet they provoke the kind of question "Isn't birth control part of a radical improvement in the health of the human race?" and "Would human beings really sit around like that if another intelligent race were discovered?" Pohl's treat of these themes implies a total cynicism about the capability of the human race to solve its problems, a cynicism which transmits itself to the reader's attitude to the story in a similar way as I have described in the case of 'Day Million'.

Frederik Pohl is one of the major figures of S.F. His collaborative work alone guarantees him a permanent place in the history of the genre even if he were neither a fine artist in his own right nor one of the most important editors in the field. Such a man, a professional in every sense of the word, has a responsibility to his readers. He should not present for sale a collection of pernicious drivel, nor waste his time and great talent writing it. S.F. readers are a tollerant bunch, more than usually involved with the problems of their writers, prepared to forgive much for the sake of imagination and a sense of awe, but it is time to say that there are some things we will not stand for. Long live 'Drunkard's Walk'!

This one got on to the Hugo nomination list for the best sf novel of 1970. Which, is perhaps further evidence of the conservative return to hard science, or its approximate, as evidenced by RINGWORLD winning the Hugo.

It is an interesting thought. What makes an author use a cliché that has been running around sf for decades? Laziness, courage, or a supreme confidence in one's own ability? In Poul Anderson's case, I suspect it is the latter. He just could not resist the temptation to give the 'generation ship' cliché plot, his own particular twist.

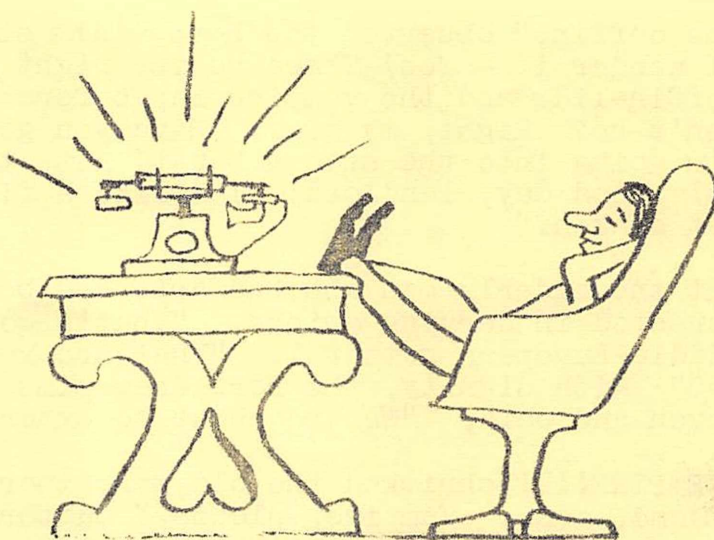
Leonora Christine is a spaceship using a Bussard drive, which uses the hydrogen in interstellar space, as a sort of ramjet effect, enabling the ship to near the speed of light. Of course there is the usual time dilation effect, which enables the crew to get to a star in a subjective five years, that would normally take thirty. However, as the ship approaches the velocity of light, strange things happen. (Have you ever had that sense of déjà vu?) The outside universe becomes a different place, and milleniums go by, for every second of ship's time. Normally, the ship would start to decelerate way before it reached speeds where this sort of strange thing happened. But in this case, by accident, the ship passes through a cosmic storm. Soon, they are on a runaway ship that spans galaxies and ages, until they build their TAU to zero. Interwoven with the hard science, is the personal story of the highly intelligent, handpicked members of the crew, and their reactions to their situation.

Make no mistakes, this is a fine book, which will be remembered for a long time as a true meritorious 'hard sf book'. Poul Anderson is a pro, and his characterisation, his realisation of the complicated skein of interrelationships between the crew is very good. The sexual jealousy, the hopelessness, the atrophy of people under pressure, all is some of the best that I have read in his books. Again, the hard sf is understandable and occasionally awe-inspiring, in that grand old manner of the sense of wonder power of the universe, of which, in this book, Poul Anderson occasionally rivals Arthur C. Clarke at his best. There is no 'here comes a bit of gobble-de-gook I had better skip' feeling but it was clear to me, and as I am a scientific moron, that is important!

But by being the fine sf pro that he is, Poul has created his own faults. While it is a different twist on the old cliché plot, the cliché of the generation ship is still there. I kept on being reminded of the umpteen stories that I have read on the same subject, and to some extent spoiled it for me. Especially when rthinking of the virtues of the book, I wish he could have spent his talents on less well worn plot trails! As far as his characterisation goes, there is more than the usual attempt to round out the characters and motives of his cast. This makes it all the more annoying however, when you realise just how much he is dealing in stereotypes. He escapes the sf heritage in one part, only to use it completely in another! The elderly remote captain, the security chief organising everyone, the gentle chinese biologist, the genius who has warped human relationships..... They are all there, like cadavers resurrected with a little more than usual life. They are irritating stereotypes, because it is unworthy of the book.

While the hard science is very good, I wish Poul Anderson could have incorporated more into the narrative. As it is, the novel reads like a faint imitation of a Bernard Shaw play. Hard science followed by human interplay, followed by hard science, they almost read like two separate novels! While I enjoyed the book a lot, I found it coming apart for me about three quarters way through, the more stupendous the scale, the more failures the crew had to endure, the more unrealistic it got. Until the final postscript, where everything ends in hearts and flowers, hero getting both girls and the newest planet to boot..... Well, I found myself giving catcalls! While the whole is only partially marred by the sf cliché, the ending is terrible!

But I would heartily recommend this one.



Tales

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A HERO'S CASE BOOK

by ROGER JOHNSON

I. The Hero Introduced

The sign on his door read: "J.W. Hero., D. Litt., LL.D., F.R.C.M. etc Oddities investigated, Ghosts shot, Vampires exterminated (Daytime Only)."

Inside his office he was seated elegantly at a rosewood desk, intently doing nothing. His pretty, fair-haired assistant was also seated at a desk, but hers was made of three-ply, and she was working.

The gold-plated telephone rang. The Hero opened one eye. His assistant took the hint and picked up the receiver. She listened for a moment, then, "It's for you, sir," she said brightly, though not without reverence. The Hero took the telephone. "Mmmm...." he said. "Yes, of course, my dears. Certainly." And similar interpolations at appropriate moments. At length he replaced the receiver. "An assignment, my dear," he said briskly. "The peasant folk of Messing are being plagued by a fiendish vampire, and they want me to go and exterminate him. Peter Cushing," he concluded, "has refused the task."

"You will be careful, sir, won't you?" asked his assistant anxiously, as they descended from the silver-plated Rolls at Messing Green. "Of course, my dear," he replied nonchalantly. "You will be doing the dirty work, anyway.... It builds character, you know," he added.

The vampire, they had said, lay by day in a coffin in the Old Crown Inn. Thither, then, went the two intrepid adventurers. "There's

A WORD IN EDGEWAYS..... Well, that is what the title of this editorial states. But perhaps, I need more than just a word to describe the hiatus there has been since the last issue of ZIMRI ! Well, like all fanzines it has been a combination of many things, paper and duplicator trouble, and just the sheer intrusion of the mundane world. Actually, I think that I have somewhat more than a bit of cheek in doing a co-editorial at all, 'cos as can be seen, the vast majority of ZIMRI 2 has been Lisa's work, and darn good work at that. Still, I apologise to all our contributors and to anyone who actually reads this!

It is funny how time passes isn't it ? A brilliant cliché to start off with, but I was only thinking recently, the 'new wave' is now getting on for eight years old. In that Michael Moorcock took over the editorship of NEW WORLDS in 1964, it is a convenient peg on which to hang the start of that nebulous 'new wave'. So what has the new wonder brought us, after so many years, what new wonders have been created in the name of 'new wave'? I asked myself that question, and really had to stop to think, would sf have been any different today if there was not any 'new wave' ? We still have a boring old ANALOG, a NEW WRITINGS IN SF that gives a perfect cardboard imitation of the Carnell NEW WORLDS, we still have many of the same old hacks and the same old bad stories.

It makes one wonder whether it was not all just a great big con trick. So 'new wave' brought us some poetic language, much symbolism, and much navel-dwelling inner space. But has it done anything to make sf more of a mature and meaningful literature? I suppose of course it all depends what you mean by 'literature'. Well to me at least, something that increases my understanding of other people, makes me consider the world and the people around me in a new light, that throws new lights on the human condition. Above all something that gives me personally an increased awareness of humanity and the world around me. Perhaps a stupid personal bias, but one that has meaning for me. To read Tolstoy or Turgenev, Dickens or Dostoevsky, Conrad or Cunningham the 'great' writers and novels. You come away feeling richer and deeper in terms of human experience. For me, perhaps the most fundamental of all, is that the concern of the novelists who mean anything at all for me, is people, in all their richness and variety. For people, what they mean, and what they do to each other, is the foundation of all human life and society.

This perhaps, as has been said many times, is the crucial failure of sf. Its complete failure to deal with characters and people in terms that are no more than just a cardboard shorthand adjunct to plot. The genre of idea and action, where puppets manoeuvre to the whim of plot and idea, subordinated to the simplified soporific entertainment that the masses demand. Now haven't you heard that tone of righteous condemnation before ? Naturally, it is that hectoring 'new wave' tone of those moons ago, when all the old clichés were going to be washed away in a flood of bright new creative talent.

So where are we now? Name the sf book or short story that you have read in the past year, that you thought gave you a deeper understanding of the people and the world around you. Give yourself five minutes to write them down, and then ponder. My list was somewhat short. Bob Shaw's A MILLION TOMORROWS, and THE TWO TIMERS; Ursula Leguin in A WIZARD OF EARTHSEA and THE LAPTHE OF HEAVEN; Poul Anderson's TAU ZERO; John Boyd's THE LAST STARSHIP FROM EARTH. These stick out in my mind, as a purely subjective reaction, as books that I remember with fondness and pleasure. Of books that set me thinking, for a little while at least, of the deeper things of human beings.

So, half a dozen novels from a year, maybe that is a good average. How about yours ? I am a voracious reader of sf, a hundred and fifty two hundred books a year, has probably been my average for several years. Now as limitations on my time grow - and why are there not thirty-six hours in a day - so my frustration at reading a pointless book becomes more pronounced. I could have used that time to a lot better advantage! And when I read my sf score line of books that I really revelled in. You know that old feeling, that old 'sense of wonder' describe it as you will, but that lovely feeling you get when you are curled up in front of a warm fire with a superb

book. When every page that passes you regret, because it brings you nearer the end of your reverie. When a warm exciting glow enfolds you, and you lie there arguing and agreeing, or admiring the artistry of the writer. That is a really beautiful experience! So why do I get it so few times from sf nowadays???

I thought that the new wave was going to bring a whole new jihad upon us, in which the resulting literary bloodletting would wipe sf clean, and create a new, virile and - most important of all- SIGNIFICANT. Because is that not the most important claim that Michael Moorcock had to make of the new wave, a genre of vital truth and significance to the modern world? Indeed so? Well, I don't see sf as the new confessor literature of the technological society, as the meaningful statement of what science means for modern mankind. All I can see the same old groove has been ploughed back into.

Why is it that sf finds it so very . . . difficult to portray real and truthful relationship between human beings? Think of your own experience, of the intense and exciting discussion of an intellectual argument in which ideas flash like firecrackers. Of long and deep friendships in which there is always and inter-growing and inter-twining; of the rich and full moments in life, when you feel that there is perfect inter-communication between friends. Or conversely, the teeth gritting frustration of arguing with a mind-closed bigot; the intense personal anger of little things that friends do . . . and on, and on. All the multifarious, and complicated skein of relationships that makes human life so fascinating, bewildering and exciting. Yet in how many books of sf have succeeded in describing the excitement and beauty of human relationships? Few indeed.

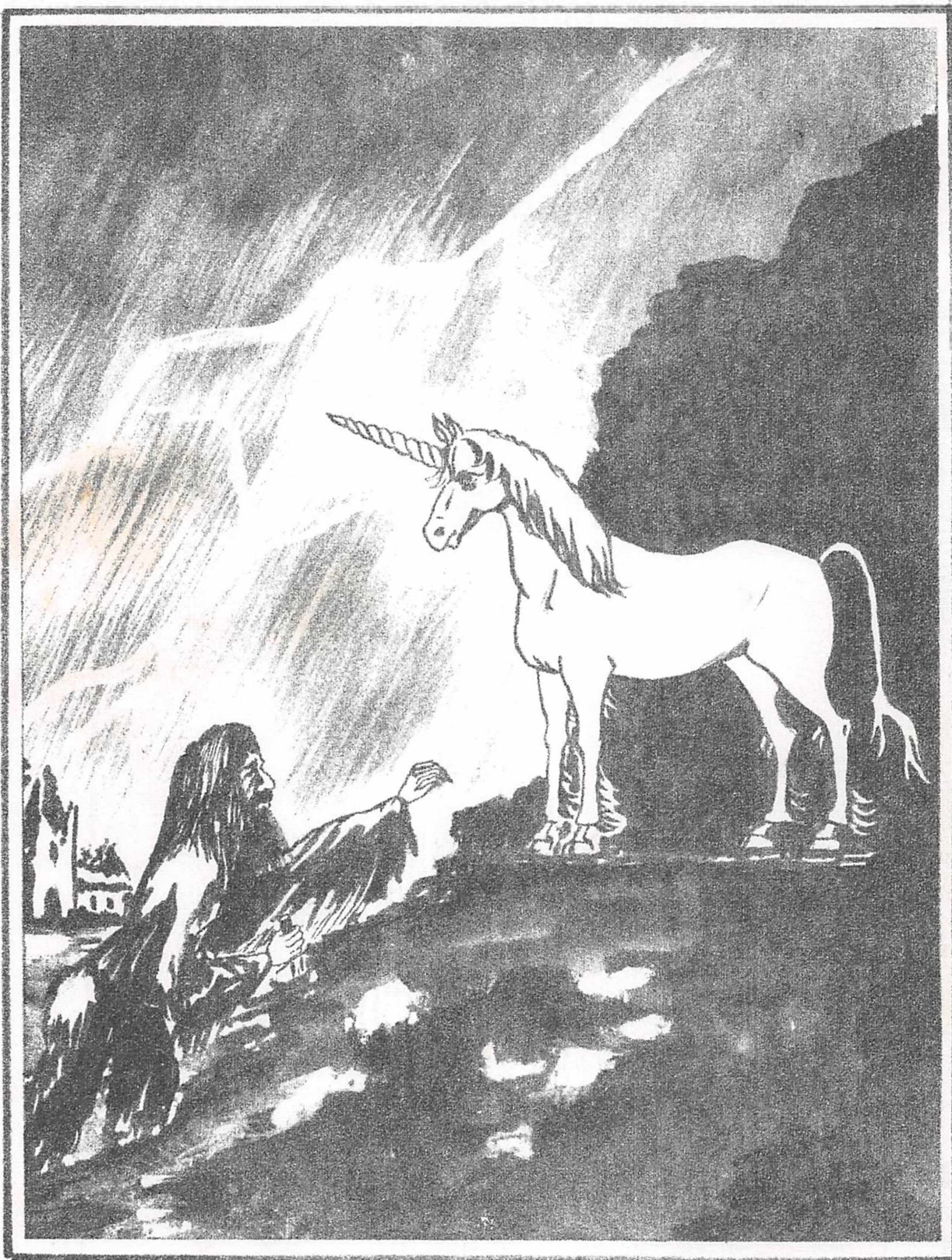
It is almost as though sf authors had a mental block, or maybe it is just that complex characterisation takes more skill than the majority of them have. I don't know, I can only pose questions, not supply the answers. If I could, do you think I would be just lazily reading and carping!

Still to shift the tack somewhat. The thing that attracted me to sf, and still does to some extent, was the supreme optimism of the genre. That all-powering sense of conviction of the human spirit, that somehow man will overcome. That the questing curiosity of the scientist will provide us with a utopia of the promised age. This is in stark contrast with the position outside the sf world today. As the professional jeremiahs seem to take over every other newspaper article one reads, and television programme one sees, so the rat spreads. In a recent editorial Ted White was pondering on the fate of the world, and with a truly convincing pessimism saw the day of chaos coming. It was almost funny, in that his only remedy seems to be to return to the simple farm life and take up carpentry! Which somehow I found very hilarious.

I am sick and tired of woe and death. The next time I see that graph projecting the imminent collapse of human civilisation around 2000+ then I have that vague nagging feeling that I will put a boot through the television screen! It is all so frustrating. One is presented with what seems an endless list of potential woes, until one gets that feeling that the human race is a ball on a roulette wheel, in which the only chance of surviving is to land on zero. The trouble being, that the house fixes the odds! So the next time I see that heavy faced academic pondering on the imminent demise of man's mortal life, then I will take the Sam Moskowitz wau out. I will reach for an April 1928 issue of AMAZING STORIES, and bury myself in a story of stirring super-science and derring do!

And with a final comment on nostalgia, just think in twenty or thirty years time, perhaps we will be going along to sf conventions waving old copies of digest Moorcock NEW ORLDS, and saying that then there youngsters don't know the meaning of good writing. In Moorcock's day they could really write!

Now there is a thought to ponder with. A happy new year folks, if a somewhat belated one!



" ...a figure came stumbling across the ashes. bearded grimy and staggering....but still man like: they came face to face. " (Last Meeting by Roger Waddington)