

ASMODEUS

Spring 1952

15 cents

Bixby
Fyfe
Gross
Silverberg
Reynolds
Rothman
*and many
others...*



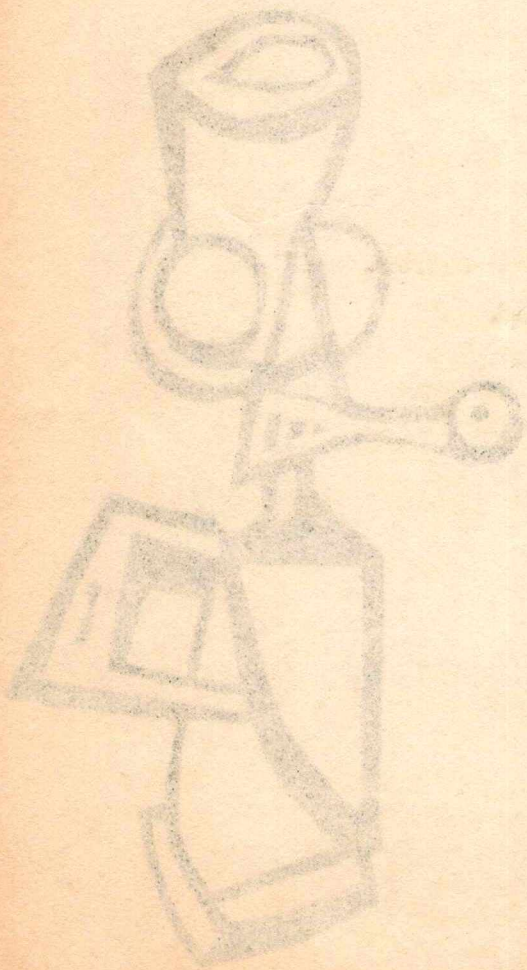
Edited by

CHABOT & PESETSKY

ASMODEUS

18 cents

Spring 1923



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CHARLOT & PERETSKY

Asmodeus

Number Three - Spring 1952

"Take an interest in the future,
that's where you'll spend the rest of your life."

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ASMODEUS MODULATIONS

If I may pervert the wise words of Thomas Campbell we might say that ASMODEUS comes like angel visits, few and far between.

As you may notice the mimeography in this issue is not up to par with the last. This is due mainly to the slow-drying ink the New York Board of Ed. supplies the schools with (I ran this issue off of the Bronx High School of Science electric A. B. Dick) and my ill thumbs.

While running the last stencil a bolt fell out of the machine. In order to keep the machine running and save the stencil I quickly put my finger in the machine in place of the bolt. While standing there, the machine rotating about my finger, I suddenly realized that I was a C.I.T.G.S.F.A.P.M. I Alan H. Pesetsky a Cog In The Great Science Fiction Amateur Publishing Machine. What rapture, what joy supreme. Venable was right.

A few notes about the contents: The Rothman article is the text of a talk given at the 1951 Philly Conference. We are trying whenever possible, to have our contributors illustrate their own material; in this issue Gross, Rosen, and Bixby obliged. Some of the letters in QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS were cut down a bit in order to save space, we were very careful, tho', not to alter any contexts. Bob Silverberg seems to take great delight in killing off Rog Phillips, this issue is the second time. Only 7 more to go Bob. ASMODEUS is getting better all the time. Nuff 'bout contents.

ASMODEUS in its short life has had more editor's than any fanzine I can think of. It would appear that I'm about the only permanent fixture. Chabot says he'll stick and he should know.

I'd like to express our gratitude to Mike DeAngelis my former co-ed for assistance he gave us in preparing this issue. Thanks also to Joel Markman for the use of his mimeoscope. Also thanks to Ken Beal for his little realm of help. To Mort Paley we give thanks for nothing.

If some typo's escaped us like in the last issue, don't worry about it. We don't.

In case you might think other wise, ASMODEUS is still soliciting good fan material. I wouldn't want you to get the idea that you have to be a pro to get into ASMODEUS. (If you reverse that statement it would apply very well to your, and my, favorite mag: OTHER WORLDS: You don't have to be a fan to get into OTHER WORLDS.

Fanzines I like and you might too dept: Let's see now, there's QUANDRY, put out by a good looking gal (they tell me) by the name of Lee Hoffman, who for some odd reason lives in Savannah Ga. 101 Wagner St. to be exact. And of course, SLANT which is about the best fanzine around (present company excluded). Money and such to Walt Willis, 170 Upper Newtownards Rd., Belfast, Northern Ireland. QFUS and S-F DIGEST-COSMAG aren't bad either, you will have to look up the addresses in a promag review column, I seem to have mislaid them.

There is a deal being cooked up to get Walt Willis to Chicago, for the 52 con. The Tasfic is it? Anyway it's a good cause. Send money or queries to: Willis Campaign, Box 493, Lynn Haven, Fla.

Let's dirty up the Clean Up Fandom movement. Rid fandom of this new and terrible perversion. Join the W.L.W. Proclaim with us: We Like Wallowing!

— a.h.p.

CHABOTAGE

When you plan a magazine very minutely, so that it is exactly what you would wish it to be, and then, when something comes along and shatters your pretty dream... well, it can be damn annoying. But, we regret to say, that is precisely what happened to this issue. As we write this, almost half of this issue's pages have been run off, and it is too painfully evident that the reproduction of ASMODEUS #3 will not be nearly so good as we could wish it to be. The reasons— ASMODEUS #2 — whose mimeography all admired — was run off on what we consider one of the finest mimeographs produced in America; the electric A.B. Dick 45. Unfortunately, our access to this machine was cut off and the current issue is being run off on an older and somewhat inferior model. At least this issue is readable. Again we must comment on the poor mimeography, although no one feels this as deeply as we, we must apologize to our contributors and readers.

If, however, the reproduction is below par, the contents are certainly superb. Only a glance at the contents page will tell you that. In reference to the contents we present some random notes here concerning some of them. Everyone who wrote to us about last issue, raved about the Silverberg HISTORY OF FANDOM and wanted more like it. In compliance with these requests, we're glad to present Bob's latest masterpiece, which shows how good a prophet he actually is. You see, Bob wrote the article several months ago, before Marvel decided to go back to large size. H.B. Fyfe's story affords an example of how a writer often bases a story on an article in ASF. The article in question appeared during the latter half of

last year, and was written by one of our contributors! It's entertaining to note the number of stories taken from the legends cited in Bob Rosen's article. Bob is only a passive stf reader. Jerry Bixby was once a professional cartoonist, which explains the excellence of his illustrations. We hope he approves of our job of stencilling. We could go on like this for the rest of the page, but had better stop here.

However, as they say in GALAXY, if you think this issue is stupendous, wait till you feast your eyes on our next issue, it'll be colossal! But all joking aside, we do have something pretty large scheduled for ASMODEUS #4. On hand right now, ready to be dummied, is an original Clark Ashton Smith novelette. It's over fifteen thousand words long, and its title is THE RED WORLD OF POLARIS, 'nuff said. Also lined up is something extra-special in the way of a cover; negotiations haven't been completed yet, so we can't tell you more. We'll also try to have a Steiner story, a comic strip by Sol Levin, and many other fine items.

Just as this issue was prepared with the big March meeting of ESFA as a deadline, we expect to get #4 out by June, so that it can be sold at the Chicon.

And don't forget! Our companion magazine ASMODEUS SCIENCE FICTION NOVELS features None But The Elder Gods in its current issue. None But the Elder Gods is a novel of gigantic scope, of breathtaking, spinechilling, hairraising action, of tremendous concept, and sweeping conception. It is magnificent and utterly stupendous. Only 35 cents.

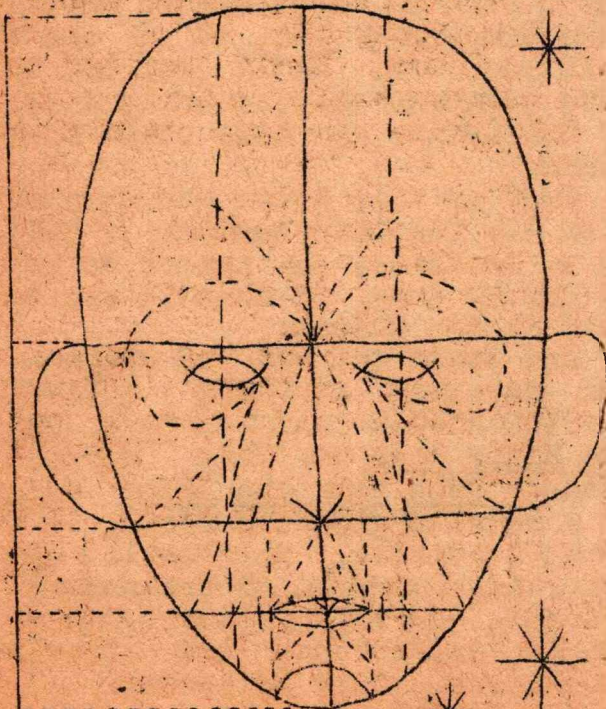
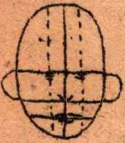
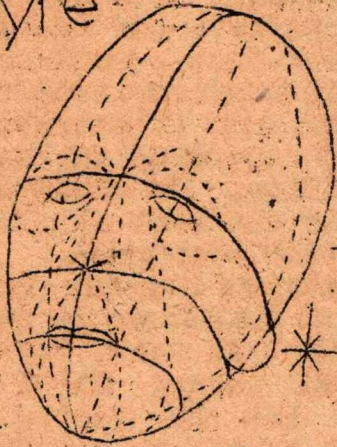
See you at Chicago?

—H.W.C.

Incomplete *

* Data *

h.b. fyfe



I walked into Tukanin's lab mainly to buttonhole Peterson, who turned in there ahead of me. Pete is director of our branch of Universal Research Labs, and if he cared to walk in on Jan Tukanin I guess he can. Personally, I don't like to do it.

Not that I have anything against pure genius like Tukanin's. It's just that you never know if one of the wires strewn across the floor is alive, or whether the latest gadget under construction on his workbench will explode if you speak out loud.

Tukanin has something inside his skull, all right, that's why he gets that fancy salary. Only — he lives inside there with it.

"Oh, hello, Klinghoffer," said Pete, seeing me in the doorway. "Come on in; I'll be right with you."

I edged in gingerly and stood looking at the latest of Tukanin's nightmares. According to rumor, he had started with the idea of experimenting in time. One thing had led to another.

"Is that what's going to probe the microcosm?" I asked.

"Maybe," said Pete laconically.

"No maybe about it! I've got something this time!" yelled Tukanin, running lean fingers through his mop of dark hair.

Looking up to meet Jan's snapping black eyes was somewhat like facing an emaciated gibbon, except that he wore faded dungarees and a very sharp, light green sport shirt. Every pocket bulged, and the green of the shirt gave him a sea-sick appearance.

"Of course," commented Pete drily, "he isn't quite sure yet if it's the microcosm or the macrocosm. Which didn't prevent the damfool from trying a jaunt in that contraption yesterday."

I examined the "contraption." It was like all the crazy attempts at time machines ever heard of — plus a few twists that were

strictly Tukanin. With banks of dials and controls and vacuum tubes, patched-together metal framework, and a maze of sloppily soldered connections, it took up nearly all of the lab.

There was a small open space inside the door of the lab, and a cluttered desk beside the window; even Tukanin can't figure everything in his head. Inside the tangle, there was a tiny, square platform, furnished with two long-legged stools. On one of these, flat, lay a crude control board.

I turned to Tukanin, who was glaring exasperatedly at Pete.

"How can I find out what I'm learning without poking into it a little?" he demanded hotly. "Besides, I only used a smidgin of power. Five minutes' worth."

"How do you go five minutes' distance into the atom?" I asked.

"That dates from when he thought it would invert time relationships," Pete told me. "He still talks of it in minutes because his controls and meters are rigged that way."

Jan snorted and waved one bony hand in the air.

"May still be so," he declared. "I went somewhere for that little while!"

I gaped at him.

"Pete! Is this nut telling me he actually got inside that mess and put juice to it?"

Peterson nodded. He sighed.

"Maybe you think it didn't give me a turn when I walked in here yesterday to find nobody in sight — and then Jan condensing right before my eyes, like a cloud of fog turning solid! Sure, he'll try anything — except recording a few data likewhere he went or what he saw or what he was trying to do just before the thing blew up and killed him!"

My own line being microphotography, I was still in the grip of a sudden excitement at the thought of coming into contact

with the ultra-minute.

"What was it like, Jan?" I demanded.

"Oh... how do I know?" he answered jerkily, and began running both hands through his hair. "At first, I was too busy with the controls. Then I felt... very peculiar... as if an indefinite force were twisting and kneading me."

"What did you see?" I was still eager, until I glimpsed Pete shaking his head sadly; that must have been his first question also.

"Well... nothing," Tukanin shrugged. "When I looked, there were just flashes of colors shooting through what was like a gray fog... or gray distance... as if the sky were gray... and you stared up into it... trying to see how far you could see... but found nothing to focus on..."

He ran down.

"And then I was back, with Peterson staring at me."

"Listen!" said our director. "I can't stop you from taking your head in your hands and turning it inside out. But there's one thing I insist on!"

Their stares locked, and I place a small mental bet on Pete. He draws the line about twice a year, but when he does it's etched for the ages.

"Oh, all right," muttered Tukanin sulkily. "What do you want — a scale drawing of the whole works by five o'clock?"

"No; we can't risk losing this, but I guess the rest of us could decipher your notes in not much over a year. Right now, I want some record of what you do each time, just in case you lay one of those ten thumbs of yours on a bare wire!"

"Or if it melts around your ears," I suggested helpfully.

Tukanin flung me a split-second sneer.

"Okay," he agreed with an ill grace. "I'll leave a note every

time of how many minutes I try. Then you'll know how far is safe before it melts the way Klinghoffer hopes!"

After that, we put his hat and coat on him by force and dragged him down to the corner, where we poured beer into him until he was willing to speak to us again.

Two days later, Pete dropped into my lab and said he had photos taken of the set-up, being doubtful about the clarity of our genius's sketches and wiring diagrams.

"He's behaving like a little gentleman," he admitted, pulling some graph paper from his pocket to show me.

There were four or five pieces, strips torn from an eleven-by-seventeen sheet. Scrawled across the green millimeter lines were terse pronouncements such as: Dear Pete— Am trying fifteen minutes this time— J. T.

"He's been... somewhere... at least twice," said Pete. "A couple of times it didn't work, but once he saw things."

"What things?"

"You expect a clear description from Tukanin? Ask for the moon, boy!"

"What did he say he saw, then?"

"From his description, it sounds like stars; but for reasons that elude me, he thinks he saw electrons. I can't decide without seeing for myself—which I wouldn't try for a million dollars and a new hat!"

"Is he working today?"

"Yes," answered Pete, moving toward the door. "I'm on my way there now. Come down the hall when you have time, and we'll see what he has to say."

I fiddled around for ten or fifteen minutes, then realized nothing pertinent to my current project was getting done. Thirty seconds later, I pushed open the door to Tukanin's lab.

Pete sat on a cleared end of the workbench, idly swinging his

feet, leaning forward a little with his hands braced on the edge of the table beside his thighs. His expression made me look about hastily.

"Where is he?" I asked, whispering in spite of myself.

"An excellent question," said Pete grimly.

A low hum came from the apparatus. Lights glowed where some of the tubes were not enclosed. The control board which had lain on a stool on the platform was gone. The cable to it hung down into empty air...at an odd angle, and with a curiously fuzzy, fanning end.

"I thought at first," murmured Pete, "that we'd pump out this room and examine microscopically the air we took out. Then I decided it might be better to call up Palomar and ask if the Hale 200-incher is very busy tonight.

"What the hell are you talking about?" I demanded.

"It's too bad," he said, in the same faraway tone, "That we don't know yet if it goes up...or goes down...or to next week!"

"Stop gibbering!" I snapped.

"I thought you said he was leaving notes like a good boy, every time he blew his nose!"

"Oh, he did, he did," said Pete, eyeing the apparatus. "I won't really worry until the day a fuse blows, or the power is interrupted some other way. After that—we'll never be sure!"

I think I choked or moved toward him about then, because he raised his right hand and shoved the graph paper at me.

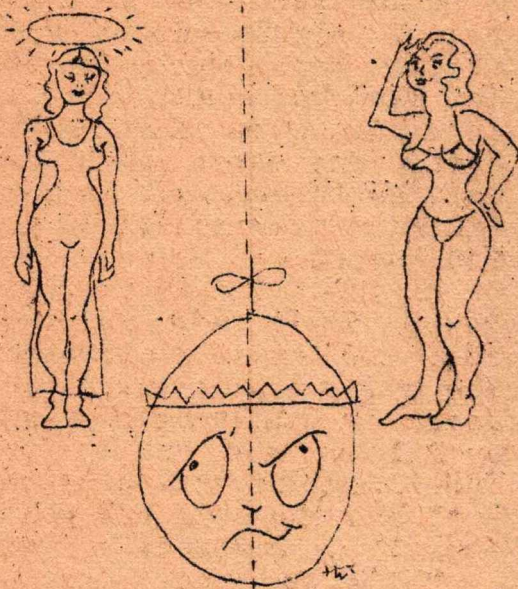
I took it and read Tukanin's scrawl, since which time I have lost considerable sleep. Some days, I catch myself holding my breath while I examine the air before my nose; and on clear nights, I keep peering over my shoulder at the stars.

The note said: Dear Pete— Am going all the way— J. T.

— H. B. Fyfe

MILTON ROTHMAN

Is there a PSYCHIATRIST in the house?



Recently my wife obtained a degree in psychology. This, of course, makes me an authority on the subject — which is as much as one can say about certain other people in science fiction circles. Keeping in mind my extensive research, my vast experience in the field, let me speak of the mind and its function.

For many years it has been a moot question: Do science fiction fans read science fiction because they are nuts, or do they become nuts because they read science fiction? You will agree — a serious question.

After extensive study and research, my conclusions have become definitely conclusive. My discovery is this: Science fiction magazines are written for the express purpose of driving their readers insane. There is a deep and secret plot of the editors

afect to drive fans off their rockers

The proof of this may be seen by all right-minded people if they will make a careful semantic analysis of the magazines.

Consider, for example, a phenomenon which I call "Cover-girl Schizophrenia." This is characterized by innumerable magazine covers filled with nude and nubile young ladies garbed in various lecherous-type garments. Yet within the pages of the magazines, the females are all virtuous and virginal, and a girl and a boy can be marooned together on an asteroid for months on end without doing anything that they might not do at Sunday-morning bible-reading class.

What effect does this have on our younger generation? What does this give the young men of our community who avidly read the magazines day in and day out? The answer is obvious: it gives them hot pants and cold feet. The result is chaos, and another victory has been won for the moral confusion of the day.

As example number two, consider a story which recently came to my unhappy attention in a magazine called "Imagination." The only reason I could find for this title is that it takes imagination to understand why people should pay money to read some of the stories in this magazine. This particular story concerns a mutant: a young child who has the power to cure diseases in the people around him. People think he is queer when he goes around saying he can cure people, and he gets into an institution where he keeps on healing people under the counter. When he finally gets out of this place, he continues the healing act. People come from near and far, and somebody gets killed in the rush. So they take him to court, try him for inciting to riot, and sentence him to be cured of his delusion. So they give him

shock treatment and he gets cured all right, and he can't heal anybody anymore.

Let us examine the author's motivation. You can just see him wallowing in self-pity. All doctors, lawyers, psychiatrists, and everybody else who went to college are stupid people who can't appreciate a wonderful thing like the power to heal. Only the author never having gone to college and spoiled his untrammelled imagination by studying cold, specialized facts — only the author can appreciate the wonders and strangeness possible in the world. So then the reader gets on the same wagon — what a strange and unique person I am, he says. The rest of the world, wallowing in materialism, cannot appreciate me.

So he ends up with as fine a case of paranoia as you ever saw — but that's all right, because the subscription departments of the magazines have special delivery service to all the better mental institutions.

Going from schizophrenia to paranoia, we dally a bit among the pleasures of sadism. Hardly a month goes by without its full quota of deaths in our magazines, ranging from the gory end of a villain to the complete destruction of a planet, with all its inhabitants. Even in our erstwhile favorite magazine, Astounding Science Fiction, one issue a few months ago contained in nearly every story the most morbid collection of torture, beatings, and other forms of painful violence. One might wonder what subconscious motivation in the mind of the editor caused him to gather together such a combination of sadistic case-histories under one cover.

The puzzle ceases being a mystery when one fits it into the general conspiracy whose purpose is to drive the readers insane.

The general direction of this campaign is clearly marked in the

propaganda line which Editor Campbell has been dealing out for the past several months. At least twice, he has blossomed forth in his editorials with something like the following:

Psychiatrists, he says, are giving you a bum steer when they tell you to be well-adjusted, because this business of adjusting to your environment is a lot of hokum. Adjusting to your environment means following the path of least resistance, conforming to all the rules, living like a vegetable. The great men in history — were they conformers and adjusters he asks? No — by psychiatrists' standards they were not well-adjusted at all, and according to Campbell if they would get treated by a psychiatrist they would lose the qualities which made them great men. The really alive man adjusts the environment to suit himself.

The clinching argument which Campbell gives is this: Take a person who wants to be the first person to go to the moon and who is willing to die in the attempt. Do you call him adjusted to his environment? Obviously he is not adjusted — but isn't he wonderful and brave and adventurous, laying down his life for the purpose of advancing science?

Here we have the picture of a magazine editor praising the virtues of suicide, even though it is glorified under the title of scientific advancement. Now a person who attempts suicide is going to end up in a mental hospital, if he doesn't land in a coffin first. And this is where the magazine editors are trying to put all you people.

It would probably horrify Campbell no end if he were told that his argument was advanced at least ten years ago in a book called "Be Glad You're Neurotic." This book was written by a psychiatrist. Campbell has no use at all for psychiatrists, and he

would surely slit his throat were he to find himself agreeing with one.

However, this is not too paradoxical, for the truth is that most psychiatrists don't agree with the Be Glad You're Neurotic attitude. Being glad you're neurotic is like being glad you're not a millionaire because if you were, then you'd have to pay too many taxes. I don't see anybody refusing to become a millionaire, and yet people like Campbell tell us to be glad we're neurotic, because life is so much more alive that way. It's like telling a sick man he shouldn't get healthy, because it's so much more fun staying in bed.

Take this space-travel fanatic who wants to go to the moon so bad he doesn't think about coming back. What's he proving? That he can die with a bigger splash than anybody else? Dying is not unique. Anybody can do it. The real trick is to get there and to come back alive, and the smart well-adjusted operator waits until people have sent remote-control space-ships to the moon before he tries it himself.

If you have this powerful desire to fly to the stars; you can utilize it without being neurotic about it. Being adjusted to your environment does not mean that you sit on your fanny and let things happen to you. For your desires are part of your environment. You must be adjusted to yourself as well as to the things about you. The healthy response to a desire to fly to the moon is to learn how to get there with the most satisfaction to yourself. And you don't get the most satisfaction by killing yourself. That's the psychotic way of doing it.

So here we have it out in the open—this deep and secret plot of the editors to land their readers in the booby hatch. Indeed, so deep and secret is this

plot that not even the editors know about it. For now the truth comes out—the conspiracy was not hatched in a dark room lit by candles with the editors sitting around a table. It is not a conscious conspiracy at all, but is simply a natural and unconscious development arising out of the generally screwed-up nature of our society. Sadism, paranoia, confused morals, frustrations of all sorts are common enough events in the world. Little wonder that they make themselves shown in the stories written by human beings. The stories themselves are only as neurotic as the culture from which they arise.

By the same token, the magazines are powerless to drive their readers insane, or even to make them a little bit screwy. By the time a person is old enough to read magazines—even if he starts at the age of ten—it's already been decided how he's going to turn out. The magazines can do no more than give him suggestions about how he's going to do it. So if a person becomes too engrossed with science fiction and spends all of his time at it, to the exclusion of his normal job and social life—it's not the magazines fault. The anti-social pattern was already there, just waiting for something to latch on to and make it visible.

Therefore it is not my aim to view with alarm, demand censorship of the magazines, or ask that the editors be psychoanalyzed. They can't bother you if you're not already screwed-up. It's just a question of who's to be in control. Are you going to be in control of your liking for science fiction, or is your liking for science fiction going to control you?

Remember—sticks and stones may hurt your bones, but words can't hurt you—if you are—pardon the expression—well-adjusted.

—Milton A. Rothman

LYCANTHROPY

by ROBERT ROSEN



Lycanthropy is the technical name for the pathological condition of a man who believes he has become an animal. The word literally means "Wolf-man"—since the wolf was the most dangerous animal known in the European countries where the superstition originated. The superstition itself is very widespread and seems to have originated in several widely isolated places almost spontaneously.

For instance, in Norway, there were a class of warriors known as the Berserk, who were capable (supposedly) of turning themselves into various animals. When in animal form, they were possessed of enormous strength, and were invulnerable to fire and steel. That is the origin of the English word "berserk", which means crazy with rage.

The most common method of effecting a change was to wear the skin of the animal in question. It could also be done by wearing a girdle of human skin, by drinking

water out of the foot prints made by the animal, to eat of its brains, to drink of certain enchanted streams, to eat his food, or to come into personal contact with him. The transformation might be permanent or temporary. Generally, the devil was supposed to have influence over these practices.

Among the cures for lycanthropy were: being saluted with the sign of the cross, being called loudly by the baptismal name three times, to be struck three blows on the forehead by a knife, to have three drops of blood drawn from the body, etc.. It is interesting to note the recurrence of the allegedly mystic number three. A somewhat slower method was to kneel in one spot for one hundred years.

One of the earliest werewolf tales is to be found in the Satyricon of Petronius. The tales abound throughout the middle ages. It was believed that on Christmas Eve great numbers of werewolves gathered together at a



certain pre-arranged spot and attacked humans and animals unfortunate enough to cross their path. There is the story which comes from a small village in the mountains of Auverne which is alleged to have happened about 1588. A hunter was attacked by a large wolf. His gun misfired, but in closing with the animal he severed one of its paws with a hunting knife. The animal fled. The hunter, wandering in terror came upon a castle, which he entered, and told its owner of his strange fight with the wolf. To prove his story he opened his knapsack, in which he had placed the paw, but to his horror found not a paw, but the hand of a woman, with a gold ring on one of the fingers. The castle owner recognized the ring as one belonging to his wife. Seeking her out, he found her with one arm concealed under a shawl. Removing the shawl, he saw the bleeding stump where she had lost her hand. She was arrested and

burnt before thousands of spectators.

The town of Ansbach, Bavaria, was the scene of a remarkable werewolf story around 1685. A dead burgomaster was supposed to have returned from the dead in the form of a wolf and was ravaging the countryside. The huge animal was finally cornered and killed. Its carcass was wrapped in flesh colored cloth, adorned with a white wig, bearded and a mask of the dead burgomaster was placed on the face after the snout was cut off. The animal was publicly hanged, later stuffed and preserved in a museum to prove the existence of werewolves.

During the Middle Ages, werewolf trials were held regularly, since lycanthropy was looked upon in the same light as witchcraft and sorcery. For a long time its victims were burnt, but after 1650 medical men were enlightened enough to say that lycanthropy was a mental malady and should not be treated as heresy.

Closely paralleling the werewolf are the werefoxes and the werevixen, but less frightening, since the fox lacks the ferocious nature of the wolf. Eastern literature is especially replete with stories of the werefox, which invariably takes the shape of a beautiful and seductive woman. Among other peoples, there are other were-animals, such as the were-cat, dog, black sheep, hare, gull, crow, raven, magpie, snake, etc.. In Africa there are such things as were-lions, leopards, hyenas, apes, etc..

The belief in these creatures goes back to the dawn of man. These tales are very affecting, and many with weak minds have thought themselves capable of similar transformation. These unfortunates, the lycanthropes, may now be aided by psychiatry instead of being burnt at the stake for something which is in no way their fault.

--Robert Rosen

POEMS of
SCIENCE FICTION

by RAYMOND L. CLANCY

FARTHER WORLDS

There is on farther worlds so much to see
That I shall never live to drink my fill
Of rare and lovely sights that stretch away
World after world to where the cosmos pales.

But of all the sights that I am fain to see
There's one that never fails to thrill my heart
When the spaceship settles down most like a swan—
The same, the old familiar sight of you.

Not all the winking planets or far stars
In ev'ry glory decked can match your face,
The graceful swaying of your form so fair,
My darling girl of our own planet Earth.

THE ULTIMATE DISCIPLINE

March in! There are many roads to the stars.
We travel the shortest known to man,
An elliptic curve cutting across the orbit of Mars.
Stations post! Gentlemen, hold your places firmly.
There are things to do, and things to be left undone.
Here are 'scopes—please, take your last look now.
Oh, no, you cannot see the earth, I meant your last
look at our sun.
We travel far, and there is no returning.

FAIR RIDERS

There swim by the side of a ship in space
Fair forms of a beauty divide.
They ride with the speed of light by its side,
As the porpoises over the brine.

They keep fast watch on the plunging rocket
Like guardian fish of the sea.
They are forms of light which swiftly speed
A comfort and help to me.

As long as the fairy forms keep pace
No harm can come to a ship,
Though it wander a hundred light years out
From its home rocket slip.

But when the riders spurt ahead
Or mournfully fall behind,
It's time to leave a ship that's doomed,
And swim in the stellar wind.

THE OLD FAN'S ALMANAC

B O B S I L V E R B E R G, Asmodeus' crack future historian presents the second of his History of Fandom series. This one is in the nature of a prediction for a year of stf activity beginning with April the first. For maximum enjoyment, try reading it aloud, to another fan if possible.

APRIL — Galaxy strikes another blow in its war with Campbell by initiating a letter column and calling it "Sharp Points." Astounding retaliates by changing the name of its book section to "Three-Planets Bookshelf"...Marvel now pulp size, changes its title to "Marvel Stories of Science Fiction"...Other Worlds goes monthly...L. Sprague de Camp sells a novel to Planet.

MAY — Astounding hits below the belt, coming out with another mag called "Astounding Science Fiction Novels." Galaxy comes right back, as H. L. Gold waylays an agent on his way to Campbell's office and makes off with a Heinlein serial...Marvel returns to digest size and changes its title to "Marvel Science-Adventure Tales"...Other Worlds now appears every three weeks...L. Sprague de Camp sells a novel to Imagination.

JUNE — Galaxy lures Rogers away...Campbell goes one further and hires Evelyn Paige from Galaxy...Imagination goes six-weekly...Other Worlds now twice a month...the first 50¢ promag appears, "Stellar Science Stories". It is digest size, 126 pages...Two Complete Science-Adventure Books proclaims its neutrality by reprinting "None But Lucifer" and "Mightiest Machine" in the same issue...L. Sprague de Camp sells a novel to Amazing.

JULY — Galaxy Publishing Corp. attempts to change name to Smith & Street, but is prevented by the Better Business Bureau...Avon Readers follow the lead of "Stellar Science Stories" and raise their price to 50¢ each...Other Worlds goes weakly...Imagination monthly...Marvel changes its name to "Marvel Tales of Science and Adventure" and stays digest size...L. Sprague de Camp sells a novel to Future.

AUGUST — Galaxy brings out third mag, "Clyde Crane Campbell Fantasy Stories", and Astounding follows with "The Campbell Mystery Magazine"...FFM purchased by Ziff-Davis...Mary Gnaedinger retained as editor, but now policy allows only reprints from Ziff-Davis mags...Other Worlds now appearing every Wednesday and Saturday...Imagination twice-a-month...Suspense folds after raising its price to 50¢...L. Sprague de Camp sells a novel to Startling.

SEPTEMBER — Street & Smith enters suit against Galaxy—restraint of trade...Weird Tales goes up to 35¢ no change in format...FFM now limited to Shaver stories...Avon issues "Ten-Story Outworld Adventures," a comic-book with fiction inserted...sells for 50¢, and folds after one issue...Other Worlds raises its price to 50¢...Thrilling Wonder now monthly...L. Sprague de Camp sells a novel to Fantastic Adventures.

OCTOBER — Campbell and Gold are both on vacation, and no new developments there...Fantasy & SF goes to 50¢...Other Worlds becomes first science-fiction daily prozine...Weird Tales cuts to 75 pages...Imagination now 50¢...Marvel changes title to "Marvel Wonder Stories" and goes back to pulp format...Worlds Beyond is revived by Ziff-Davis as a companion to Amazing...L. Sprague de Camp sells a novel to Science Fiction Quarterly.

NOVEMBER H. L. Gold tries to rub it in and buys a novel from George O. Smith...Campbell turns around and runs a serial by Evelyn Paige...FFM becomes the "Howard Browne Fantasy Magazine"...Other Worlds is now published at eleven in the morning and four in the afternoon, every day. Rog Phillips, as a result of this, buys American Tel. & Tel...Fantastic Story Magazine goes monthly...L. Sprague de Camp sells a novel to Thrilling Wonder.

DECEMBER — Street & Smith tries to bomb Galaxy during a birthday party for the magazine...Galaxy protests when Astounding adopts Kromekote covers, and then adds 8 rotogravure pages...Marvel is now digest size again, and the new title is "Thrilling Marvel Stories"...Other Worlds now appears every hour on the hour...Rog Phillips buys Rockefeller Center...Wonder Story Annual goes monthly...L. Sprague de Camp sells novels to Astounding and Galaxy.

JANUARY — All Quiet on the battlefield, Campbell and Gold fighting New Year's Eve hangovers...Imagination now weekly...Palmer announces that he feels the paper shortage and Other Worlds goes back to daily...Fantastic Novels revived and becomes the "Lila Schaffer Fantasy Magazine"...L. Sprague de Camp sells a novel to Marvel.

FEBRUARY Galaxy begins bombing New York with leaflets urging fans to boycott aSF...aSF takes a full-page ad in the Times urging fans to boycott Galaxy...Marvel goes monthly and returns to pulp, this time without changing its title...Other Worlds still having trouble, and goes back to twice-weekly publication...L. Sprague de Camp sells a novel to Two-Complete Science-Adventure Books.

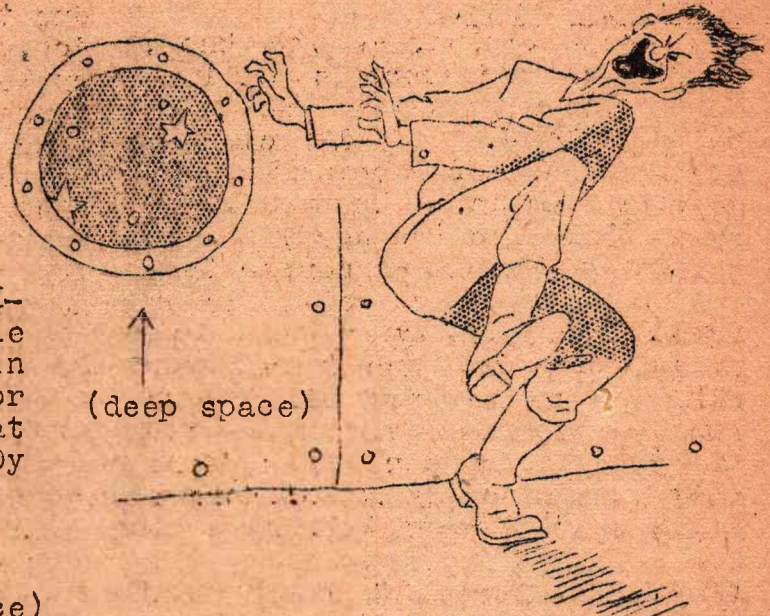
MARCH — Campbell calls Gold and asks for a merger...the two mags combine and are known as "Astounding Galactic Fiction" with Gold and Campbell as co-editors...Other Worlds goes quarterly and Rog Phillips shoots himself...Marvel goes digest size and returns to its original name, "Marvel Science Stories." This is followed by angry howls, and Erisman is forced to take an ad in the Times explaining that there are no more possible changes he could ring on the title...L. Sprague de Camp is now so rich that he founds his own promag and immediately sells himself three novels and a bunch of Krishna stories...Walt Willis is revealed to have been Lee Hoffman all along.

— Robert Silverberg

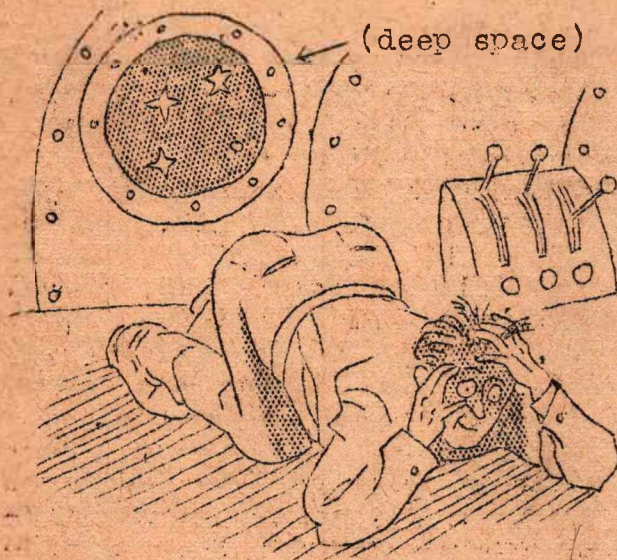
SPACE-MADNESS...

"THE PSYCHODYNAMIC IMPACT OF DEEP SPACE UPON THE HUMAN MIND..."

by *Jerome B. B.*



1. (right)
The "Holy Jesus!" or "Had-I-but-known" response, notable for its similarity to certain oriental dance forms, and for the tiny moaning sound that accompanies it: "Oy vay! Oy vay! Oy vay!"



2. (left)
One common response to the psychodynamic impact of deep space... as Dr. Engram puts it: "It might be termed a foetal position—if you had a peculiarly shaped mother."

Within several years, if not sooner, space flight will have become an actuality. Thanks to Dr. W. S. Szokowitz's revolutionary Theory of Improbable Coefficients, which makes possible a manual application of the Heisenberg Principle to ram-jets, the way has at last been pointed to the solution of the problem of variable mass-ratio. A newly developed fuel formula ($Mu_9-Oz_4-NaCl/69$) = Taenia solium/thiotimoline) promises to triple exhaust velocity as soon as the bugs are worked out

of it. Thus we are left with but two minor problems: where to put "remaining mass" (here recent physiological research indicates a startling solution); and the aberration of trajectory caused by the oscillating Brennschluss. These should be quickly and easily solved.*

*Lately it has been discovered that the oscillating Brennschluss can be temporarily averted by the introduction of 40% brenn flakes into the fuel mixture. Certain authorities maintain that rocket performance might be further improved by a healthy kick in the osc. The value of this procedure is debatable.

With such familiar difficulties at last aside, we feel the time has come to explore a somewhat less concrete problem—a problem, however, which will assume the utmost importance on that great day when mankind first sets foot off the Earth: the psychodynamic impact of Deep Space upon the Terrestrial mind.

Science-fiction, as you know, has produced numerous stories dealing with this phenomena, of these Merwin J. Samuel's classic I RODE UP SCREAMING being perhaps the most famous. In I RODE UP SCREAMING Samuel's hero, Matt Blotz, who has been constrained to make the first circumlunar flight, lies firmly strapped in his acceleration couch as the rocket roars up—up—finally to burst out of our atmosphere into the splendid yet terrifying glory of the unrefracted heavens! Horror blots Blotz's brain; he begins to struggle wildly against the straps, wailing and foaming at the mouth as the cold, unwinking stars fill the tiny control-cabin with eldritch glow; but soon despair grips him and he sinks back weakly, knowing his doom, cursing the one fatal oversight on the part of the ship's designers—i. e., with no means provided to free himself from the straps, he will starve to death.

A very different type of reaction is suggested in L. G. Horace's ATTRACTION, BUT NO COMING, wherein the hero, a young scientist named Glotz, travels to Betelgeuse in the company of a lovely professor's daughter. They are alone in the ship. The trip to Betelgeuse takes four years, during which Glotz and the girl play 1,237,093 hands of high-low, work 3,995 crossword puzzles, and never so much as fling a fang at an ear-lobe. Their conduct on the return trip is equally implausible. Once landed, they hasten to marry. It is therefore logical to conclude that during their eight years in

space, they were afflicted with a severely depressant form of space-madness. Or else they were schlemiels to start with.*

A final example is Thimble Thinnison's great short-short, SPACE WART. This, you may, remember, caused a great deal of comment upon its appearance, which, due to an inordinately bad print job, was that of a long-defunct oyster. In it, the hero, again a young scientist, blasts off in a special screw-headed ship designed to bore a hole through the asteroid belt to permit commercial routes to be later established. He too is accompanied by a rich, lovely professor's daughter; but since he is characterized throughout the body of the tale as a helluva sharp cooky, one is inclined to expect a development of the end. However, Mr. Thinnison very shrewdly turns the tables on one: deaf to the girl's coy indifference, the young scientist performs his mission, returns to Earth and marries the rich, lovely professor. No space-madness there!

Space-madness! The very term brings to mind the picture of a twitching shred of a man, his eyes those of a cornered suslik, gnawing on the walls of his stuffy little cabin while outside the eternal stars look inside; or perhaps, as in L. Spray de Clump's recent FINDERS KEEPERS, it connotes a shipful of stealthy lunatics, each bent on devouring the next, creeping through bulkheads and down companionways, silence and darkness over all, save for the sibilant rustle of clothing, the harsh flare of a vitamin-gun, an occasional haunting shriek...

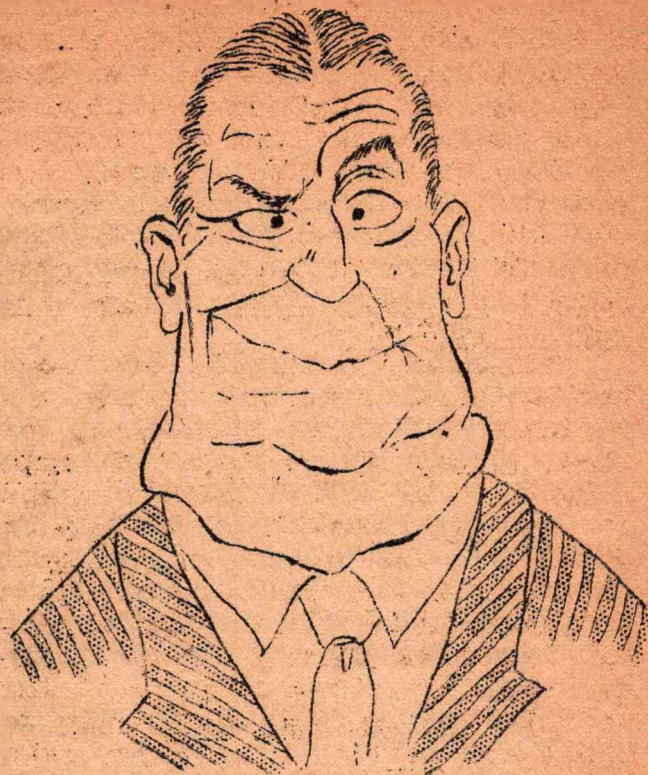
Very well then, you may ask—what can be done to prevent such horror? Let us examine the problem more closely.

Space-madness occurs when the *It is also possible that they were dead. The author's characterizations would tend to confirm this.

cerebral cortex becomes inverted, its neurokinetic impulses thus impinging upon and stimulating ganglia situated in diametric opposition to their intended destinations.* As a result, "A" often appears as "B" and "B" often appears as "A." Thus, to such a madman, the word "abnormal" might appear as "banormbl," which, as you can readily see, would give rise to major difficulties in any attempt to convince him that he is potty. Moreover, with his tendency to act irrationally in even the simplest matters, the madman might resent such an attempt, however well meant, and in his athwart manner unexpectedly lead with his right and knock you cockeyed.

Nevertheless, a method for coping with space-madness must be found if we are to enter the era of space travel with impunity. Dr. J. Hubcap-Engram, in his excellent book entitled KEEP YOUR EYES ON YOUR NERVES, puts forth what seems to us to be a most ingenious and practical solution; a solution all the more striking for the fact that his book was intended primarily as a boon to harassed housewives. In his chapter headed WHAT TO DO WITH THAT GAPING SPACE, Dr. Engram analyzes, with skill and understanding, a dilemma familiar to all homemakers: what to put over the fireplace, and what to put over the sofa?

How many housewives have fallen prey to neurotic conflicts engendered by the grim necessity of making these decisions? How many have found themselves at a loss to decide between "A Yard of Pansies" and Uncle Degler's portrait, and, eventually, at a loss to decide about anything whatsoever? A common instance of this can be found in the behavior of certain unfortunate individuals who, on seeing a well-filled Bikini bathing-suit, primly lift their eyebrows. This is obviously a misdirected neurokinetic impulse.



Dr. J. H. Engram

Photographed in the act of demonstrating his famous "Confidentimorous oggle," which has proved so successful in dealing with schizophrenics and manic-depressives. In his own words: "It is much similar to the expression of a man who, for the first time in his life, is undressing a \$100 call girl.

ever? And all the while those gaping spaces, just clinging there, seeming to follow every movement about the room with sightless, mocking eyes! Is it any wonder that the unfortunate husband may one day return from his pitch to find a grimy, sweating crew noisily rearranging the walls of his living-room, plaster and tools and tarpaulins all around, and his wife sitting in the middle of the floor, sobbing again and again, "They glommed me... they glommed me..."

To avoid this, Dr. Engram sagely advises the housewife to put anything at all over those gaping spaces. In his own words: "Cover them up! Destroy their hideous

power before they key in and latch onto the time-track! Hang, if you must, your mops and pail over them; paste up old magazine covers (in this connection, we are pleased to say, the good doctor recommends covers from STARTLING AND THRILLING WONDER for their pleasant and stimulating color effect); hang up that old gilded rolling-pin; anything!"

There is no doubt that Dr. Engram's point is well taken, and we know personally several otherwise-normal house wives who have benefited by his wisdom.*

But now, to continue and further implement our present discussion, let us extract several elements of Dr. Engram's logic and bring them to bear upon the problem of space-madness.

WHAT TO DO WITH THAT GAPING SPACE!

First we shall consider the psychodynamic effect of emptiness. Picture yourself, if you will, in a rocketship in Deep Space; you are floating comfortable about, pulling levers and pressing buttons, when suddenly you look out the port! You gasp in horror. You shrink and cover; for you have seen emptiness, and never in the history of humankind until this blood-chilling moment has anyone seen utter, soul-searing emptiness! With no neurocultural preparation for the terrible sight, your stomach turns upside down; your cerebral cortex turns upside down; and you are doomed to an eternity of searching, searching vainly for a planet named Ebrth.

But . . . the essence of Dr. Engram's argument, which we have borrowed cum grano salis, is that such catastrophe may be avoided—yes, the terrible, insanity-producing impact of sheer emptiness may be circumvented—by filling the emptiness up! And there, in

*We have noted, on visiting days, that the walls of their padded cells are covered with every manner of thing.



Above is an excellent example of "empty space" . . . as you can see, it would look a helluva lot better filled up. Below are a few simple figures which you may wish to cut out and paste in the space, to destroy its aberrative powers.



all its simple perfection, lies the answer to space-madness.

For if (you are still in your rocketship in Deep Space) you look out the port and see something, — anything — then does your reason have reason to totter? It seems improbable. For in this age of unreason people are accustomed to seeing damned near anything . . . and if only science could figure out a way to send zipping off into space about half the crap we see, then perhaps by the time we ourselves got out there it would all have been roasted or frozen or have blown up, and wouldn't the sight of such debris be heartening?

— Jerome Bixby

Poems of

FANTASY

CLARK ASHTON SMITH
ROBERT BRINEY — LIN CARTER
JOSE MARIA MAESTRE — JERRY F. CAO

STRANGE MUSIC

A soft, half-stifled strain of silken sound
Swims in secretive sibilance of song,
Stirring like storm-swept stars from seas unbound
The slow and silent seeds that spread along
In stealthy showers where the scents are strong,
And settle to the **small depressions** where
There sway the sullen blossoms of despair.

Low in the leaden loam the lilies lie,
Whose lidded eyes of lazuli are lost
Upon illimitable leagues of sky,
Where lissome limbs of light are lightly tossed
Down labyrinthine lanes of lucid frost,
And where the laving labials and trills,
In lilting lyrics, sing a thousand thrills.

— Robert Briney

THE ISLE OF CIRCE

Its final petal gone,
the garden of Circe decays;
mute and mournful oblivion
has drunken her philters at last.

The tresses of the enchantress
change their poppies
for a flower that lingers
and whitens in a snowy close.

The boars wander in the frost
and cannot dig
any root; to the vain sky
bellows the vain and crowless sea.

Circe dreams not where
Ulysses is in the black years,
and knows not whither has flown
any sorrow of yesteryear.

— Clark Ashton Smith

MATCH-FLAME

A sprinkling of stars formed the heavens at dawn,
And at twilight, the mixture had changed. . .

In the moment between,
A planet was queen
Of dominions through all that Space ranged. . .

A race had exploded and scatter'd the void;
Mighty craft plied the long stellar routes;
For one nebular turn,
Live was "live and let learn". . .
Then the seeds of strife blossom'd their fruits.

A sprinkling of stars formed the night and the sky
And a gaunt, hooded Scytheman had watched a flame die.

-- Jose Maria Maestre

ONCE IN FABLED GRANDEUR

Once in fabled grandeur, I
Ruled beneath an Orient sky.

And once I sat in gorgeous halls
That only memory recalls.
Another life, another land,
When I was King of Samarkand.

My Kingdom now is dust and stones,
But I rule on from newer Thrones.

-- Lin Carter

VAMPIRE

Ghostly, bird-like hunters fly
About the darkening, haunted sky,
And take their game without a cry:
Without a sigh or sound.

Wanderers homing after dark,
Lovers strolling through the park
Often are their fatal mark:
Are. . . gone. . . and never found.

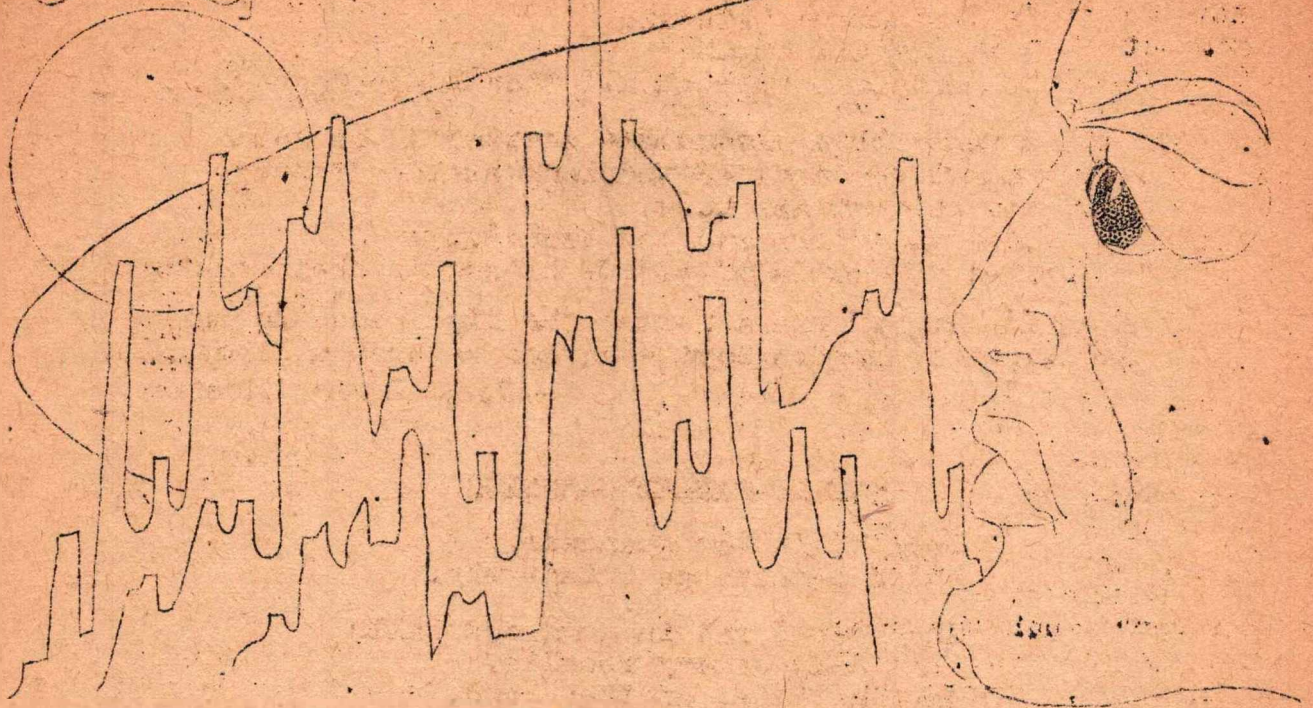
They join the scattered hunters there,
Who spend eternal lives so rare
In stalking game from fields of air:
From fields of cloudy ground.

No longer game, now hunters, they
Encircle Earth in search of prey
Til Night is brushed aside by Day,
And they are helpless. . . bound.

-- Jerry F. Cao

the Wonder of Creation

Joe Gross



This city is indeed the most beautiful creation man has accomplished. The intermingled threads of roadways and needle-like towers bespeak an æon of skill and vision. The huge, co-dependent structure is truly a masterpiece of architectural engineering.

From the green-hued hills beyond the spires of the city, a thin white line curves gracefully up and down and around the grassy slopes to meet the city. Further, beyond the low hills, shrouded in the mist of faraway, the mountains rise, forming a protective rim around all of the city. . . .

And up. . . Up above, a most perfect finish to the setting of the city, a cold blue sky. The sky is very beautiful to see.

And beyond the blueness, the utter dark of space. From beyond out there, come the ships, winging in from the Moon, from Mars, from the planets beyond the Sun. The ships, so macroscopically tiny, and yet so microscopically huge,

all dependent upon one's point of view. The lifeline of the city, the couriers of the universe, and in the shelter of their hulls, the men who wield the lifeline.

The city. . . and the men who know it, . . . or think they do.

* * *

The day that has dawned, a few hours ago, is very flattering to the city. The sun sparkles those towers like fairy wands. And down into the city's ports, the ships stream on, into the city. The blood of trade flows thick and unceasingly throughout the huge metropolis. The men of the city call their home of the name "Rallorok". Languages are many in the world of men, and therefore, there are many different meanings to "Rallorok".

Beneath the city, men also live. And these are of a different breed. The surface men know of them, and they know of the surface men. Perhaps here and there they make contact, and

nothing comes of it. Neither race has the ability to see the other, and yet there is an alien sense whenever opposites converge. There is nothing hostile between them. The Upper men live in the city and supply provisions to the Lower men, and they in turn keep the city operative. Each is aware of its dependence upon the other, and yet they rest easy, for all is peace.

All was not peace in the dim past, however. But that is a long story, and I am tired.

All the men of this globe live in the city. For there is only one city on the entire planet. The government of Man has decreed that only one city can support itself upon this world, and hence the solitude of this one city. The road is an anachronism, kept by man as a path through their planetwide park. And there are no farmers. The men of Earth have found much more fertile worlds. And there are the ships, the endless stream of ships, counted by the millions, in the measure of man. Then why farms?

And all is very much the same as a thousand years ago. Men still live and die, create and destroy. All is very much the same as a million years ago. Time is long. And I am immortal.

And, ah, you ask, "Who am I? I am the Being who knows this planet. I am the Being to whom this planet was assigned, in the beginning, I am responsible for man. I keep the Sun burning, the Stars shining, Space infinite, the atoms orderly, and . . . I keep myself. I am bound to this space as long as there is a spark to pierce the quiet. I cannot rest, not as long as Eternity lasts. I am the Creator, the giver of life, and yet I am responsible. I have agreed to watch my creation. And I cannot destroy it, without forfeiting my place in the Scheme. And sometimes, I wonder whether

my Place is worth the time I have bound myself to.

I have amused myself with life. I was very intense, long ago. I was here and there, creating for my children, and sending them out, pleasuring in their conquests, dying with their hopes and dreams, thrilling in their joy of life. I have trod the fields of battle as Conqueror and Conquered, alike. I have felt the cruelty of my fellow creature, and I have loved every love in the long course of Time. This was my dream, these were my vicarious lives.

And now, I am satiated. I am done. And I cannot rest. I have wearied of life, and have been long weary of repeating and re-repeating the same things. I have torn worlds apart, I have rent the Spaces, shattered the Dimensions, and twisted time to the straining point. I have shorn the galaxies of their light in controlled orgies, and lay, quiescent as long as a sun burns up and out. And I cannot alter my fate.

For awhile, I was full in the pleasant worship of life throughout my Dominions. For I was Their Lord. And they built alters and temples, and in their way, loved Me and My works.

And I grew tired, and sent them to rest, feeling a sense of rest myself, as I did so.

And, yet again, I have brought life to sit in My Gardens, and have wearied, again.

And, now I look down upon My latest works. And I grow tired more easily each time. Each successive life form is gone more quickly than the one before. And it is not their fault.

And I shall create more, I suppose. And they, too shall rest. But, I . . . never do I see rest for Me.

And yet, the city is beautiful in the Sunlight.

— Joe Gross

THE LITTLE BROWN MAN

BY MACK REYNOLDS

Fred Brown said, "I wish you'd stop nagging me; I can't make a living writing science fiction. I've got to support two wives, two sons, a dog and three bartenders—and science fiction doesn't pay off that well."

"Listen," I told him, "I'm not asking you to cut out your detective stories altogether. I'm just saying you oughta write enough science fiction to keep your by-line before the fans. You've built yourself up a name over the past ten years or so and if you don't turn out a top level stf yarn once in a while they're going to forget you. How many detective novels have you written anyway?"

Fred took up the first jug and poured a third of a glass full of Tokay, then picked up the second jug and finished filling the tumbler with Claret. He tasted it cautiously and made a face. "Wrong proportion," he muttered. "What?"

"I said, how many detective novels have you written?"

"Uhhhhh. Well there's THE FABULOUS CLIPJOINT, my first."

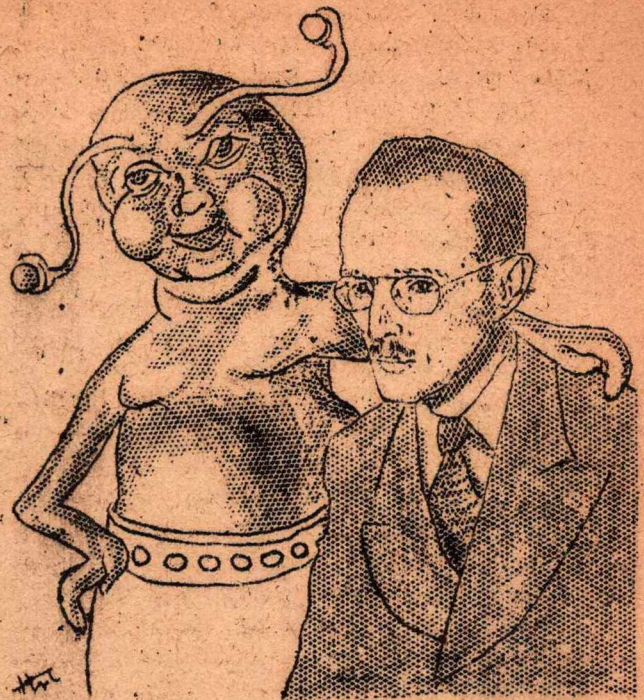
"Yeah, that's the one you won the EDGAR with, the Mystery Writers of America award," I said, buttering up his ego in preparation for the assault I was planning.

"Then there's THE DEAD RINGER, MURDER CAN BE FUN, THE BLOODY MOONLIGHT, THE SCREAMING MIMI, and HERE COMES A CANDLE, only of course that last one isn't a mystery; it's a serious novel."

"Okay," I pressed, "and how many science fiction novels?"

"Well, only one," he admitted, "WHAT MAD UNIVERSE."

"All right," I said. "That's what I'm driving at. You write half a dozen mystery stories for one science fiction. Holy Jumping Wodo, Fred, the detective story has passed its peak and science



fiction is on the way up. Why don't you jump on the bandwagon?"

"Who?" he said, finishing his wine and picking up the first jug again.

"Who, what?"

"Holy Jumping Who?"

"Oh," I told him. "Holy Jumping Wodo. Sometimes I forget and it runs over into my conversation."

He poured his glass half full of Tokay, set the bottle down and picked up the second half gallon and finished filling the glass with that.

"What runs over into your conversation?" he asked patiently.

"My interplanetary profanity."

He sipped his drink and made a face, muttered something to the effect of wrong proportions, then looked at me again. "You know, Mack," he said seriously, "I'm continually getting the impression that I came into this conversation late."

I explained more thoroughly. "Interplanetary profanity. Sam Mervin won't let my characters say damn: Howard Browne cuts it when I use hell; Ray Palmer blue

pencils Jesus Christ, and so on. So I've made up an interplanetary profanity that I use in my stories. Stop avoiding the issue; why don't you write more science fiction?"

He frowned lightly and picked up the flute that had been standing against the wall. He put it to his mouth and blew a half dozen discordant notes. "Did you know I'm the best flute player in Taos, New Mexico?" he asked.

I shuddered.

"The only one, in fact," he added. He put the flute down and picked up his wine glass. "To tell you the truth Mack, I'm more of a science fiction fan than I am a science fiction writer. I've often been in a spot where I really had to hack it out. But never with science fiction. You see, I write detective stories for my bread and butter, and very well I'm doing at it to; but every once in a while I get a science fiction idea that I can't get out of my head. Good, I sit down and pound it out. Maybe I'll get two or three a year; maybe more; sometimes less. But I make a point of never writing a stf story unless I think it's a good one.

It was a long speech, he finished off his wine and picked up jug number two...

"Yeah," I said bitterly. "To hear you talk you'd think you did stf only for charity. How's you make out with, well, KNOCK for instance?"

He'd finished his new mixture and tested it, with disgust. "Oh, all right. Let's see, first it appeared in THRILLING WONDER, then it was printed in THE BEST SCIENCE FICTION STORIES OF 1949; then Judith Merrill put it in her anthology, SHOT IN THE DARK; and a little later the National Broadcasting System ran it on their Dimension X program. I think maybe it sold British and Swedish rights too, but I don't remember."

I pressed my point. "And you say that the detective field is

better: Listen you little makron, you don't know a good thing when you see it. You oughta write more..."

"Little what?" he said coldly. "Just what did you call me?"

"It's more of my interplanetary lingo," I said hurriedly. "Are you coming out with any more novel length science fiction?"

"Shasta is bringing out a collection of my shorts soon," he said. "What does makron mean?"

"It's just another word that Sam Merwin won't let me use," I said, trying to change the subject. "Any more book length plans? I know you've got quite a few shorts out that'll be appearing soon in the magazines."

"The current detective novel I'm working on has a stf slant," he said ominously. "The girl thinks that the Martians are trying to kill her." He filled his glass again, half and half this time, without taking his eyes from mine. "What does makron mean in this gobbledygook language of yours?"

I cleared my throat, "Now listen, Fred, that just slipped out in the heat of the argument. I'm just anxious to get you to writing more science fiction..."

"What is a makron?"

"Well...to tell you the truth, it's a...er, Venusian Bastard."

* * *

The last thing I remember distinctly was his picking up the flute, club-wise. Then the fog rolled in.

When the fog rolled out, I found myself running down Governor Bent street, a lump on my head and Gimmick, Fred Brown's dog, hot after me.

I give up, see? I don't give a nork anymore. If that little wino wants to waste his time turning out detective stories instead of a larger amount of science fiction, okay. What a kert! Let some of the other fans work on him for a change.

—Mack Reynolds

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS



Please send us your letters, we value them as precious stones. For (as W. S. Gilbert said) like precious stones, they derive their value from their scarcity.

from Arthur Levine:

Asmodeus 2 has a good crisp tone, both text and illustrations, that makes it interesting, -- to this reader, at least. Fanzines, unfortunately, have a tendency to get soggy with adulation of a literary idol or of the editor's self-perceived brilliance. But you and your contributors have avoided that danger.

I especially liked Bob Silverberg's BRIEF HISTORY OF FANDOM, C. S. Blinderman's RELIGION AND SCIENCE, DeAngelis' REVALUATION OF H. P. L., and H. W. Chabot's sketches.

Here's my fifty cents for a renewal of my sub. I hope you contacted the proper person in charge of the Ms. Bureau. As Director of the Copyright Bureau, all I can do now is warn other prospective users of "ASMODEUS" as a title that you have pre-emptive right to that particular devil.

Those "soggy" mags are usually published by drips. (No thank you, we'll face the firing squad without the blindfold.)

from L. Sprague de Camp:

You asked for comments on ASMODEUS, so here's one: Mr. DeAngelis's attribution of Southern race-prejudice to the economic motives of the Southern reactionary bourgeoisie is the usual Marxian pseudo-scientific fertilizer, based on the ludicrous assumption that people mostly act in accordance with economic class interests. If he'd lived in the South he'd know that the strongest such prejudice is found among the Southern

white proletariat, & that it's based not on economics but on a psycho-cultural attitude imbibed in childhood and derived from the former Southern caste system. Actually Southern segregational practices are highly unprofitable to all Southerners, but most Southern whites take the view they'd rather be poor than suffer what they consider spiritual defilement. I don't approve of their attitude any more than DeA, but to drag in Communist twaddle merely confuses the issue.

It's amazing the way even El Sprague's postcards are little gems of writing.

from Gene Ellis:

I read your fanzine, the ASMODEUS; the first one I ever saw, and I liked it. I'm an inactive fan but I try to keep up with the fan activities through the pulps. I'd like to become active but I can't write and all I have to offer is my talent in art. So if you have room on your staff, how about trying me out.

I looked up the name, ASMODEUS, in the dictionary and I don't get the connection between the Hebrew King and the ASMODEUS-combined-with-Gargoyle. I like your policy as you stated in the editorial. (Oh yes! I read editorials, introductions, prefaces, and even the copy-right. I'm afraid I might miss something.)

Hurray for the editor! Did you go to the "Convention" and find out about the racial problem

in conjunction with the convention? I'm already saving my money to go to the next convention in Chicago.

A round of applause for Henry Steiner and Henry W. Chabot on the way they handled OUTSIDE. Ditto for Jay Opal.

Welcome to our wacky fold, Gene. We delight in discovering new fans in our fair city.

from Walter Willis:

Congratulations on your first Anniversary Issue!

I am pleased to see that you have adopted the editorial policy of Slant "This is OUR magazine, not yours, and we print what we like!"—but you could hardly do otherwise with the obvious difference in outlook and taste between yourself and your co-editor. I've never seen a magazine yet with such a dichotomy of material.

The best thing in the issue I thought was Bob Silverberg's brief history of fandom. It was really delicious, especially the digs at the Futurian Club. I hope there is going to be more of this wonderful stuff.

Liked your editorial too, but I'd put Michael DeAngelis' (I will henceforth refer to him as Mike. I know if I had a name like that I would hate anyone to contract it, but life is short) column next best, if only because it whipped my emotions up to a positive state of petulance. Before this, I had absolutely nothing against Mike but those little dots he puts under his signature. but he Has Now Gone Too Far. What's wrong with GALAXY'S material? It's published more good sf per square inch than any magazine in history, and after all you don't HAVE to look at the artwork. Mike puts himself back in my good books—just between the bible and the works of Shakespeare—by his inspired remarks on the subject of dianetics. That's telling them, Mike. Also read with interest the attack on the South.

I always enjoy reading this kind of stuff from outside the ring and speculating on exactly how angry Harry B. Moore will get about this 'holier than thou' advice, which, however reasonable, must be intensely annoying.

I look forward to the next ASMODEUS. Er... just when IS Thanksgiving day?

Thanksgiving? Well, er-heh-heh—We're afraid that Thanksgiving came along about November of last year, and just went on without us.

from Robert Edward Briney II:

...Liked the cover especially. Looked at first glance like a block print, or anything except mimeo.

The article on the history of fandom was amusing. Reminded me slightly of one of r-t Rapp's "Morgan Botts" stories in SPACE-WARP of a couple years ago.

Would write more, but am too busy preparing for term exams to take the time.

"...And bear the thrones of Asmodai and Set Above the seventh paradise..."

How does the throne-bearing suit you?

Oh, we've bin a-bearin and a-settin' for so long, that we cain't rightly say.

from Redd Boggs:

You may be able to infer something about my reaction to Clark Ashton Smith's stuff by noting that I sold my copy of Out of Space and Time to Jon Arfstrom a couple of months ago. Still, I rather enjoyed Asmodeus, tho it was permeated by Klarkash-Tonism.

Your format was excellent; it's a much better looking magazine, this Asmodeus e/w Gargoyle, than Gargoyle was. Chabot again shows he is one of the top fan illustrators with his cover and several interiors. Maybe the cover pic illustrates one of the stories inside; if so, maybe it fits better that it seems

to on a magazine of this type. Otherwise, I like it but don't think it's appropriate to your more-fantastic-than-science-fictional atmosphere.

The interior format shows that you went to a lot more trouble and used a lot more care in dummies and stenciling this issue than most fan editors nowadays would have. Almost the only thing I'd criticize would be the lack of skipped-lines between paragraphs in the double columned pages. They are much less readable this way than they might have been with those skipped lines. The headings and little filler pix were neat.

I see a number of typos scattered through this issue. That being the case I'm sure as hell going to keep my copy out of C. A. Smith's hands, for if I know anything about that man I know he insists on correcting in ink all errata in every book of his that he gets hold of.

DeAngelis seems to be belaboring a dead horse with his remarks on the Nolacon. And after all, it was not the fault of the Southern fans themselves that Jim Crow exists down there. I might think more of them if I know they were doing what they could to break down racial barriers, but I don't think less of them for putting on a convention despite the segregation that had to be observed. What else could they do? Should we have allowed the South to have a convention? I think we should have. They deserved the chance to to have one, and to deny them one on the basis of racial prejudice smacks of another kind of prejudice. Sectional discrimination is almost as bad as racial discrimination. I don't think fandom should ever allow a con to be held in a hotel where anti-Semitic rules are found, or — if it is anywhere but the South — where Negroes are barred, but if we go to the South there is little or no alternative. If there is an alternative, as there will be almost anywhere

north of the Mason-Dixon, I trust we'll take it. Otherwise, DeAngelis' analysis of the economic basis of segregation leaves much to be desired. I fail to see how an end to the tourist trade, if it affected the South very much, could accomplish anything but the opposite effect Mike desires: making the whites poorer and thus more in competition than ever with the Negro.

Mike's remarks on dianetics fail to take into account the fact that the "personal disturbances" among "leading dianeticists" might be adjustments for the better. Certainly divorce is not always bad, is it?

Well well, Bob Silverberg mentions my name in "A Brief History of Fandom." That alone makes it worth reading. Naturally, though it is rather typical — many fans write this type of zany "history" sometime or other, (c.f. my own "Tomorrow's Starry Track" in 1941 or '2) — it was amusing. One thing that Silverberg has that many fans of today do not have (amazingly enough) is a good background in the history of the prozines. Not many fans nowadays can tell you what the policy of Marvel was in 1939-40, whereas ten years ago, most fans could tell you all about the 1929 Amazing.

I expect more from a biography in a fanzine than a rehash of notes from the back of a dust-jacket, as "About C. A. Smith" seems to be. FooFoo knows that I know little about CAS, but none of this was new to me. The Chapter on Smith in Ah, Sweet Idiocy! is more interesting than any of this. The thing that occurs to me when reading a biography that says "... have drawn high praise from Parisian art reviewers" is, Well, what did they say? And who said it. Who said, for instance, that Ebony and Crystal compared with Hugo and Baudelaire? It occurs to me that the Book Review Digest might be a good place to

find out but on the other hand, I guess E&C was probably privately printed.

Of the various verse tributes to CAS, I liked Evelyn Thorne's the best. Nothing sensational, but better than the run-of-the-mill tribute that the others are. Maybe I'm cynical, but I've a hunch that Thorne and maybe one other of those paying tributes never read more than a verse or two by Smith.

What the hell is "Religion and Science" — a term paper for a Freshman English class? It sure is dull as one "...the pecuniary aggrandizement immanent in the sale of the relics" indeed! Blinderman seems to have some good ideas, but most of it might have been dredged up from reference books, and none of them handled originally.

DeAngelis again. Mike has something of a point in his evaluation of HPL — That attitudes pro and con have been ridiculously extreme. But I don't see how he justifies his own admiration for Lovecraft. So a few men like Benet, Scott, Starrett, have admired Lovecraft. If one grants that these are "reputable and experienced writers and objective critics," one must still wonder whether the apathy of other writers doesn't considerably out-weigh the praise of these critics. I've seen a few critiques of HPL in newspapers and popular magazines, but I have never seen nor heard of any serious literary journal or any scholarly work on contemporary literature that gave HPL so much as an unfavorable mention. Maybe there have been some, but certainly damn few literary critics (as opposed to book reviewers like Scott and Starrett) have ever heard of Lovecraft, let alone "recognized his genius." Let's face it: HPL was an important figure in fantasy and was perhaps even a great fantasy writer, but as far as achieving any recognition by the literati,

Ray Bradbury has come far closer already.

"Modern aspirant to the mantle of Poe"? Maybe HPL aspired to Poe's mantle, but his works seem only outwardly Poesque. One can read HPL's analysis of Poe in "Supernatural Horror, etc." and find no hint that HPL understood Poe's supreme achievement: the revelation of ambivalence, long before psychology recognized the phenomenon. Such Poe items as the poem "Dreamland" and "The Black Cat" show Poe's understanding of this mental process, but I've never seen it handled by Lovecraft except, perhaps on an obvious level ("Shadow Over Innsmouth," where it is explicit but not implicit).

Difficult to feel lukewarm about Lovecraft? That's the way I feel about him. I like some of his stuff, but I also like some of Warner Van Lorne's and Clifton B. Kruse's stuff. HPL rates on a par with them, I think.

This fellow Herrick seems like an up-and-coming poet!

A few more letters like this one, and we wouldn't have to run anything else in the issue. Religion and Science was a sophomore philosophy paper.

from G.M. Carr:

ASMODEUS #2 received, persued, and enjoyed. The full subtlety of the "Brief History of Fandom" will probably be enjoyed only by readers unfortunate enough to have ploughed through one or more chapters of The Immortal Storm. Having just finished typing 20 stencils (8x11) of a mere fragment of said Storm, I was able to appreciate it. Fully.

...The poetry, "interior decoration", and fiction were all of a high level of excellence (as you doubtless know, having selected them yourself). However, the article "Religion & Science" by Blinderman really deserves first place. It is a serious attempt to discuss intelligently one aspect of a problem which must be solved,