



FOCAL POINT

FOCAL POINT Volume 2, Number 4, a fanzine of news, views and reviews, is edited by Arnie Katz (Apt. 3-J, 55 Pineapple St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201) and rich brown (410 61st St., Apt. D4, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11220) with help from Colleen Brown. Editor emeritus: Mike McInerney. Joyce Fisher, Indian Agent. Published bi-weekly, it is available for news, all-for-all trades (both editors, please) or 8/\$1. Illustrations by Jay Kinney, William Rotsler, Steve Stiles and Joe Staton. May 11, 1970.

HEICON CHANGES Lester del Ray had to resign as toastmaster for the Heicon; John Brunner will serve in his stead. Also, committees wishing to place a worldcon bid of their own at Heicon must a) notify the Heicon Committee of their intention by May 20, and b) have an ad in Heicon's PROGRESS REPORT 3 (deadline: May 30). Mail ballots will be sent out with that PR, and the ballots will be counted at the con. Finally, those who intend to attend should be warned that June 15 is pretty much the reservation cut-off date.

NONCON A non-con is being planned for the BArea during the July 4 weekend for those who don't wish to travel down to the Westercon. It will probably be a continuous party at Bill Donaho's. Exact details when available.

THE INSTITUTE FOR SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY From June 22 to August 15 Stanford University will present an academic program in science fiction. Four courses will be offered. "Explorations in SF" for example, will consider the relationships between man and his environment as expressed in such books as "Canticle for Liebowitz," the Foundation trilogy, "The Left Hand of Darkness" and others. The other three courses will deal with sf as future history, utopian sf, and a Marxist view of science fiction. A series of films will also be shown during the semester, among which will be "1984," "The Day the Earth Stood Still," and "Invasion of the Body Snatchers." Harlan Ellison, James Gunn and Jack Williamson, as well as others are scheduled for special lectures. Tuition is \$360 for 8 units, and those interested in attending should write to Stanford.



SECONDARY UNIVERSE III will be held at Queensborough Community College, Bayside, L.I., Oct. 16-18. New areas of interest will be explored in more than 20 meetings, panels and seminars, including the impact of science on language, the teach-

ing of science fiction and technical writing. Like the first two Secondary Universes, this will be designed to serve the scholars, bibliographers, librarians, teachers, writers and readers concerned with sf and fantasy. For further details write: Virginia L. Carew, English Department, Queensborough Community College, Bayside, L.I., N.Y. 11364.

NEW PROZINE Health Knowledge, Inc., will publish a new prozine, entitled BIZARRE FANTASY TALES. The first issue, dated Fall 1970, should be on the stands in June. Doc Lowndes, who'll be doing the editing chores, announced the new prozine as part of Health Knowledge's move to raise the price on all their titles (including MAGAZINE OF HORROR) to 60¢ and to shift their frequency to quarterly; the policy change left a hole in their schedule which will be filled by the new title. Serials will be discontinued in MAGAZINE OF HORROR. The first issue of BIZARRE will contain "The Great Circle" by Henry S. Whitehead, "The Doom That Came to Sarnath" by H.P. Lovecraft, "Never Bet the Devil Your Head" by Edgar Allen Poe, "A Taste of Rain and Darkness" by Eddy C. Bertin and "The 'V' Force" by Fred C. Smale. The first two issues may be ordered in advance by sending \$1.20 to BIZARRE FANTASY TALES, Health Knowledge, Inc., 140 Fifth Ave., NY, NY. (Source: LOCUS)

CORRECTION Rick Sneary wrote to correct last issue's item headed "THE N3F". The item claimed that Sneary, acting as a Director of the N3F had rejected a proposal to use club funds to make a \$200 donation to TAFF. One thing is that Rick delivered his comments in a private letter to our source, rather than in any overtly official manner. Rick was good enough to give us the actual text of his remarks: "Regarding TAFF... while I view it as one of the highest points in Fandom, I don't think the NFFF can come up with \$200.. At present that would be nearly 50¢ per member, and many may feel that they want something personally returned for the money.. As a regular supporter and frequent nominator, I'm behind TAFF all the way, but more than a token contribution of \$5-10 I wouldn't support...Not without a clear mandate from the membership." Far from wanting to keep the N3F aloof from TAFF, Rick adds that he's trying to start a campaign of sorts to encourage N3F members to contribute and vote for TAFF.

FANTASTIC truly is, sometimes. The August issue, which should be on the stands by the time this reaches you, lists the new feature, FANTASTIC ILLUSTRATED "2000 A.D. Man" by Jay Kinney on the front cover -- but that's all. Publisher Sol Cohen inadvertently left it out. It'll appear in the following issue.

MINICON was held April 3-5 at the Dyckman Hotel in Minneapolis. Total registration was 180 with about 160 on hand for the various festivities. Program highspots were a panel on the creation of the Hoaka stories with Poul Anderson and Gordon Dickson on Friday; Anderson and Dickson, with Clifford D. Simak, on directions in sf, followed by a Morris Scott Dollens slide-show. The beef strogenoff banquet drew 65. A MFS panel, with old-time Minneapolis fans holding fort, regional con reports and an open forum on how to improve the Minicon rounded out the programmed events.

HARLAN ELLISON will be guest of honor, and Robert Silverberg will be Guest Emeritus at PgHLANGE 2, July 17-19, Chatham Center Motor Lodge, Washington & Center, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15219. Registration is \$2.50 at the door or \$2 in advance from Suzanne Tompkins, 5830 Bartlett St., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15217; banquet is \$6.50 for an all-you-can-eat buffet dinner Saturday night.

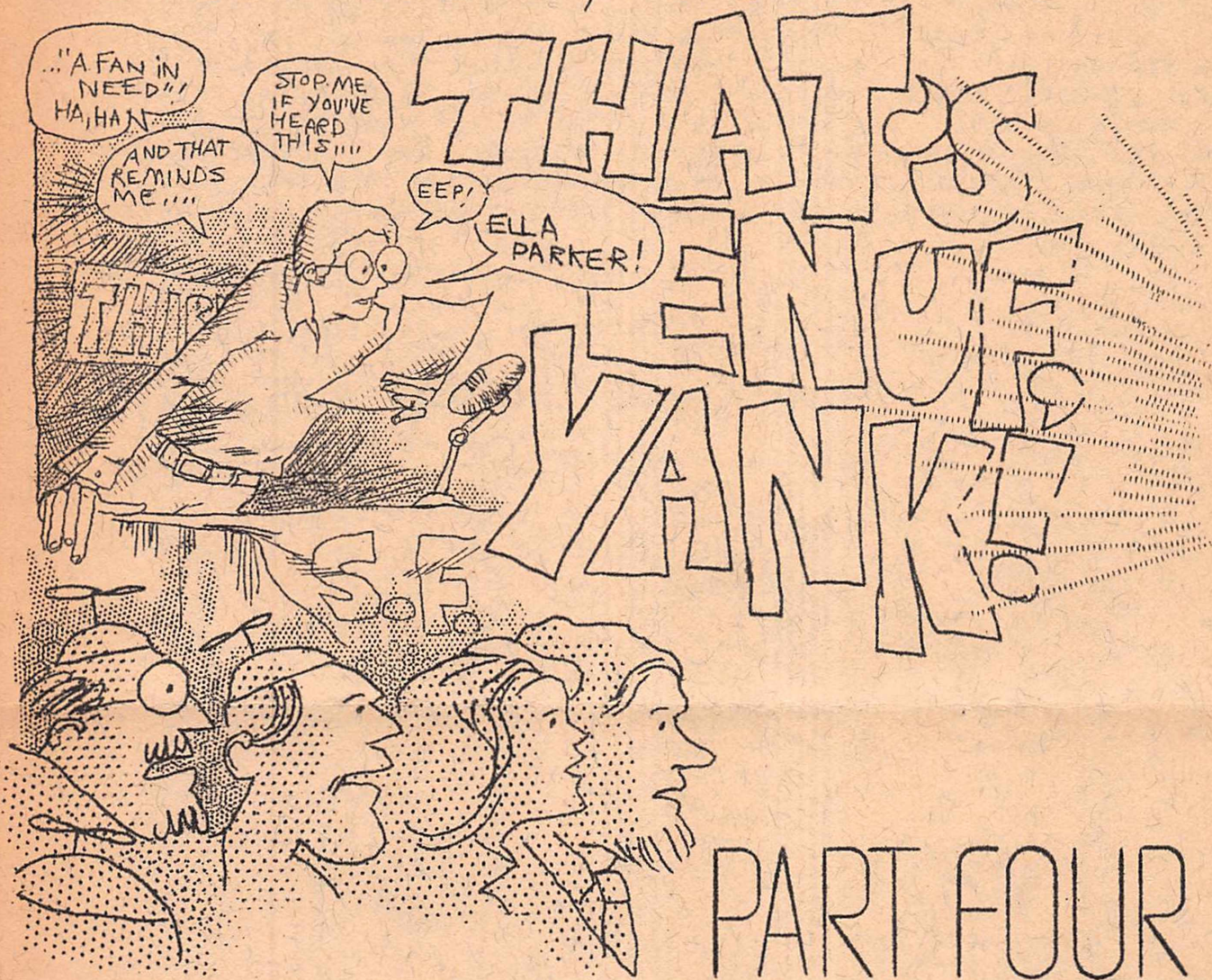
WSFA NOTES

The Annual Meeting of the WSFA was held May 1, with election of officers for the coming year resulting in Jay Haldeman being elected president, Ron Bounds vice president, Gay Haldeman secretary, Bill Berg treasurer, and Dave Halterman, Alexis Gillilan and Phyllis Berg being elected trustees. In a note accompanying the above news, the new WSFA president adds as a point of correction that the Disclave's "art show had been planned long before the Boskone. Before, in fact, we knew that Boston would have one. Our decision to have an art show at Disclaves was made at the time we decided to start our worldcon bid -- Before Baycon. Miscellaneous problems prevented us from having one 'til this year." We apologize for the not-intended insinuation that WSFA was in any way a "me too" club.



ST LOUIS Wayne Finch, former OSFA president, is filling in as a disc jockey Saturday afternoons on KDNA ;; The Teamster's strike, centered here, has had the small side effect of making it impossible to buy fanning supplies. Of course, since food is also getting scarce, the townspeople are incapable of being mobilized behind a shortage of stencils. :: Chris Couch will be coming to New York City in September to follow a course in Asian studies at Columbia.

harrison country • steve stiles



April 13th

I woke up at ten that Saturday morning. It seemed the thing to do -- and besides, my meter heater had shut itself off hours ago and the small room had developed a patina of cold that crept under the covers and wormed me out. Dressing hurriedly, I left my room. The Liverpool suite -- a room shared by Eddie Jones and Norman Weedall -- had its door open, and as I paused to lock my own door, Eddie called out for me to come on in.

Norman Weedall was stretched out upon his bed, a smile of bliss on his sleeping face. Eddie, however, seemed bright eyed and bushy tailed, despite the fact that he had retired to bed hours after I had. "Say," said Eddie, beaming, "care for a drink?" It seemed like a good idea; I Am Not A Drinker -- he said in prudery -- and it was ten

in the morning; but wothell, Liverpool fandom, and Norman Weedall in particular, makes mighty fine brew.

Eddie leaned over the sleeping Norman Weedall who was stretched out on the bed in full suit and tie, seemingly in a coma. "Norman," Eddie called out softly, "care for a drink?"

Norman Weedeall's eyes sprang open. Taking a key from his suit pocket, he went to a large closet and opened it. There, row upon row, stood plastic gallon containers. It seems that these had been carefully smuggled into the hotel through a laborously clever procedure to supply this convention, as at many other British cons, with booze when the bars closed down. Another fine old Liverpool custom. We each had a glass of some excellent coffee-flavored wine. I would love to become a Wine Fancier, building up a varied collection of fine wines to astound and impress my friends, but, unfortunately, pepsi's the thing here in Fanoclast circles.

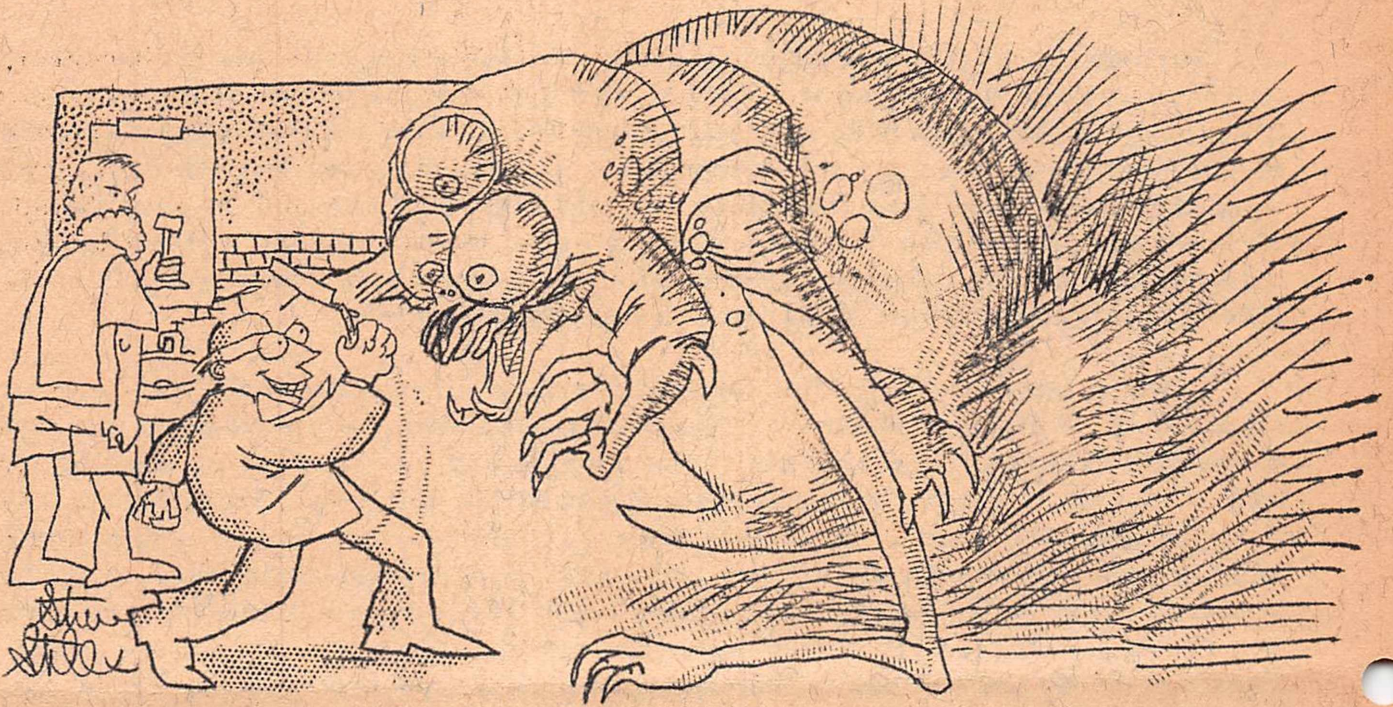
Down in the lobby a few fans drifted about, and I met Ethel and Ella sitting in a cozy niche. We talked about the Presidential elections for awhile over tea, and of Bob Kennedy's chances. The consensus was that McCarthy, good man though he was, didn't have a chance, and that Booby Kennedy might be the only man able to depose the dismal Nixon-Humphrey choice. If we only knew... Ethel is, of course, a Kennedy fan, and she told the story that, shortly after President Kennedy's murder, a US fan had achieved the peak in bad taste in sending her a JFK silver dollar with a hole punched in it. Plus a note to the effect that "now it's more authentic". I forgets whether it's Fan X or Y, so rather than taking a chance of damning an innocent, I'll forgo the pleasure of naming the schmuck.

Chuck Partington ran into me and asked if I had anything for the Art Show. As it happened I did have eight pages of a "Doctor Strange" story that I had taken to Marvel as samples a month earlier. Quite a few people over at Marvel seemed to like them, and Marie Severin had, in fact, passed the word that I had been hired. This, unfortunately, had turned out to be a case of mistaken identity (it was the short-lived Frank Springer who had been hired), and after getting my old job back, I decided to take the samples over to the Buxton convention. I guess it was a good move; there were a lot of young marvel fans at the con. I was the closest thing to a comics professional they had, so I gathered a small audience for the rest of my stay at St. Ann's.

"What are YOU doing in Buxton??" asked Don Wollheim in the corridor. He raised his eyebrows. His steely eyes took in my loud nehru shirt with the gold pleats and buttons. Unable to provide an answer, I fled into the program hall -- in time to catch a very dry lecture on astronomy, the aurora australis and like that... It beats astrology, but Mr. Alan Whittaker F.R.A.S. (I don't know what it is either, but that's what it says in the program booklet) was the type of lecturer accustomed to earnest little old ladies clubs and Boy Scouts, and most of the fans, save a few little old ladies and boy scouts, were fidgeting in their seats as he droned on and on. To make matters worse, the program hall was illuminated by a sky light -- it was very difficult to make out any of the astronomy slides on the screen. I went out and got some Guinness Stout to carry back to my seat, met Hans Heinrichs and Molly Auler, and talked about

Heicon again.

As I mentioned Ken Bulmer was the Pro Guest of Honor at the con, and as Fan GoH I sweated as Ken produced some twenty-one single-spaced pages as his speech -- I had one and a half and was vaguely wondering how to spread it out over twenty minutes.



"Ladies and gentlemen," Ken began, "I am very pleased indeed to have been asked to be GoH at Buxton. It is an honor and a privilege. As I said to Pamela, 'I'll be meeting top people and exchanging ideas.' And she said: 'Well, you can't lose.'

"And she's right, of course. This led me on to wonder just what is the function of the GoH's speech, and although this speech could be subsumed in the large question 'What is the function of the GoH?' I will leave that research for an anthropological survey of others less well qualified. I can hear a mutinous murmur from the body of the hall that 'That drunken bum Bulmer couldn't even keep himself sober to deliver a speech,' to which I will reply that I know very few drunken bums who do keep themselves sober."

Well said! Of course the speech wasn't all in that vein. The bulk of it, in fact, covered the serious distinctions between sf and literature, present day sf and the brand produced by HG Wells, plus the sugar-coated "science" of Hugo Gernsback. HG Wells' works were, in the mian, optimistic projections of himself -- for reasons of propaganda. With the exception of his last few works, like the pamphlet "Mind at the End of Its Tether" Wells believed in a man-dominated science working for the betterment of man. Anyone who has been on the Long Island Railroad knows that things have worked out quite the opposite in many cases. And so we have writers like Norman Spinrad, Ken said, who have turned from hard science to writers like DH Lawrence -- and inner directed visions. There are of course exceptions like Larry Niven who knows

how to detect antimatter stars (Yes, I've been to the St. Louiscon!)

Personally, I don't look for soul-baring and breast beating in science fiction. Henry Miller did it, did it well, and I dug and read all his works. If he ever finishes the Rosy Crucifixion series, I will read that as well. Because I happen to like Henry Miller, or the picture he presents as himself. But Miller was never a science fiction writer -- and if I resent this tack in sf it is because it has until now been curiously divorced from the science fiction environment. Conversely, or oddly enough, I prefer "inner vision" science fiction to, say, the Skylark series; too many sf writers project present day consciousness into the future: too many more ignore the implications altogether. We are at the point where we can reliably predict what forms hard technology will take in the next century. We know what our hardware will be; whether the environment created will be a symbiosis with man or a Procrustean bed remains to be seen, but man will change, and extrapolating that change is more exciting than making a hot crossing on Mercury.

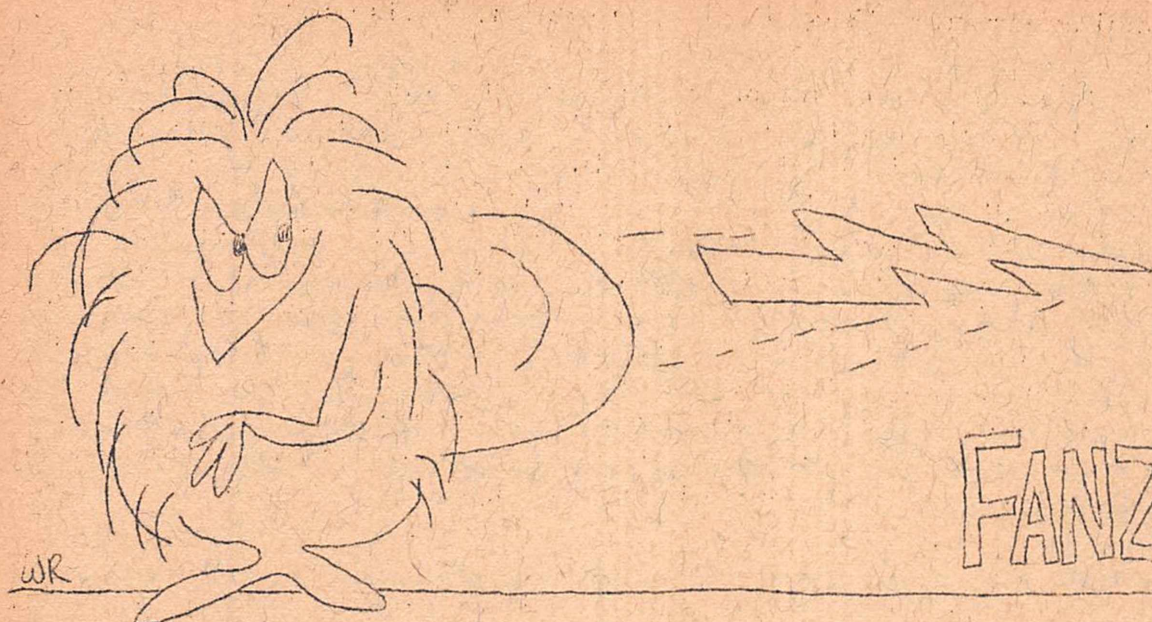
Well, who knows, may be we will all be Republicans on Mars. But I doubt it.

To get off the soapbox and back to the trip report, Ken wound up a good speech with some humorous reminiscing about past conventions -- like the time Brian Burgess was to be a human sacrifice as part of a con program, but let all the chicken livers, pig intestines, etc -- props for the act -- spoil in some fan's room. Subsequently the props were thrown into the river and Brian had to go it alone with, uh, what he had at hand. Everyone misses him.

-- Steve Stiles

BUT DONT YOU MISS the next exciting chapter of "Harrison Country", a regular feature of FOCAL POINT. Next time our hero has a girl materialize on his lap, meets Dave Kyle in the guise of a house detective, and many other Marvels too incredible to reveal at this time. So be sure to be with us for Part Five, when we will hear Ella Parker say, "Take off, yank!"

QUIP SUBBERS please note. Since I have no definite plans for an issue in the near future, I am not holding QUIP money aside. Because I never allowed any form of long-term sub, what money has come in is as a result of reviews in AMAZING. All such requests are being filled with FOCAL POINT. I'm sorry you're not getting exactly what you asked for, people, but I hope you'll find FP worth your investment. -- Arnie



FANZINES

--RICH BROWN--

BEABOHEMA 8, Frank Lunney (212 Juniper St., Quackertown, Pa. 18951), regular (but it doesn't list schedule), mimeo, 60¢.

Coming at BAB with a fresh eye (this is my first issue), it seems to me that Lunney is trying to pattern his fanzine somewhat after SFR -- controversial articles, lots of book reviews, and response-provoking letters -- while still keeping enough on top of his writers and contributors to keep them from falling too much into the SFR mode, lest they appear a parody (which, rest assured, they would). That he sometimes fails to BAB's detriment is not entirely his fault. He has to learn, and he gives every indication -- in the imitation without flattery and the individuality shown within the imitation -- that he will.

What hath BAB wrought? There's more in BAB that's wrong than right, considering the quantity and, in some cases, the quality of material on hand. What would you expect of a brand new fanzine with an editorial column entitled "Babblings"? Offhand, you'd say, two pages encapsulating the editor's trials and tribulations in putting out the issue, a nostalgic remembrance of fandom 'way back in the Good Old Days (of 1967, of course), how many pages the next issue will be and why, and probably explanations and excuses about things readers might not like in the current issue. If it would be funny in the first issue of a fanzine, it's ludicrous in this 8th issue of BEABOHEMA. While BAB has good qualities that some fanzines don't attain in twice that many issues, Frank needs to learn to either write editorials that Say Something or to try something radical and new -- like not writing one at all.

The other place where one might reasonably expect to see the editor's hand -- the letter column -- shows not a finger. Frank doesn't take part in the controversies his writers create, which is not a bad thing in itself considering the lengths some of them have gone to in creating them, but also seems to have exercised no editorial control, which is. The lettercolumn suffers from what seems to be a total lack of editing.

The rest?

Dean R. Koontz has a column, "Way Station," that says nothing and bores you while it does so; what's worse is that it's the first item after

the editorial. Two such weak items in a row shows bad planning. Piers Anthony has a column (one page) and a letter (four and a half pages) that should have been transposed with one another. In the column he responds to people who presumably attacked him or said something to him (it's all the same to him) in the last issue; while he does much the same thing in the letter at greater length, he also manages to have some interesting things to say that are only indirectly related to attacking people.

In an article, "The Incredible Justin St. John," John J. Pierce succeeds in what he set out to do, smearing Justin St. John (who seems to have deserved it), and in revealing himself as rigid and a sad prig who cannot let facts stand for themselves. Paul Hazlett, in column and letter, comes off a complete fugghead, while Leo P. Kelley just passes on his own admitted ignorance.

BAB is profusely, and rather well, illustrated. The layouts range from poor to inspired with most getting by at least satisfactorily.

BAB's material often breaks the SFR mold, and just as often what spills out is not pretty. Yet what is most aggravating about BAB -- that its young blades are so honed to writing controversy that they have little respect for accuracy and often fall to the level of simple name-calling -- is in fact one of its best qualities. Most of its writers demonstrate that they don't know, or much care, what they're writing about, as long as they create or add to the controversy; consequently, BAB is controversial. Almost incidentally, it provides a sounding board for one of sf's most acclaimed "new wave" writers -- whose opinions are worth seeing whether one agrees with them or not. With the rest of the crew ranging from misguided to fuggheaded, it may be hard to like BAB -- but it's just as hard not to respond to it or find it interesting, one way or another. And for that amount of success, Frank Lunney should be complimented.

LUNA MONTHLY 11, Frank & Ann Dietz (655 Orchard St., Oradell, N.J. 07649), monthly, multilith, 30¢. LUNA is dry, sometimes to the point of dullness, but more often highly informative. Its news is more strongly sf-oriented than FOCAL POINT, and sometimes its coverage is more complete. (As an example: while we beat this LUNA by a hairs' breadth on the winners of this year's Nebula Awards, they also list second- and third-place winners, which we did not.) There are plenty of reviews and listings of upcoming fannish events, prozine contents, and books, among other sundry things in this issue.

EGOBOO 10, John Berry (Mayfield House, Stanford, Calif. 94305) and Ted White (339 49th St., Brooklyn, NY 11220), frequent (more or less), mimeo, \$1 or trade. EGOBOO is one of the handful of fanzines extant that is light, witty and well-written whether the material be serious or funny. In addition to the two editors, this has Calvin W. "Biff" Demmon's first general fanzine appearance in Years, a welcome site. John (rightly) jumps Charlie Brown's remark in LOCUS 46, "If only well-known people were involved, there wouldn't be much purpose in a (TAFF) campaign". Ted (rightly) jumps Tony Lewis for the extortionate prices being charged for Noreascon membership. In addition to the two editors and Calvin (who didn't jump anything, but writes right rightly anyway), there's a Jay Kinney cartoon strip and a blossoming, tight, well-edited lettercolumn. Highly recommended.

MAGIC IS ALIVE 2, Ed Reed (668 Westover Rd., Stamford, Conn.), for APA 45, REAP and apparently anyone willing to pay 25¢, irregular, ditto. Record reviews, quotes from Kierkegaard and the words to Richard Farina's "Pack Up Your Sorrows" are among material too pretentiously presented to be read comfortably.

THE AXE Unless you do something -- write us news, subscribe, trade, etc.
-- by the next issue, Chuck Crayne, Richard Delap, Mike Domina,
Doug Lovenstein, Dick & Pat Lupoff, Bruce Robbins, this will be your last is-
sue of FOCAL POINT. You Have Been Warned!

COAs

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