

FOCAL POINT!

NO! - POTLATCH!

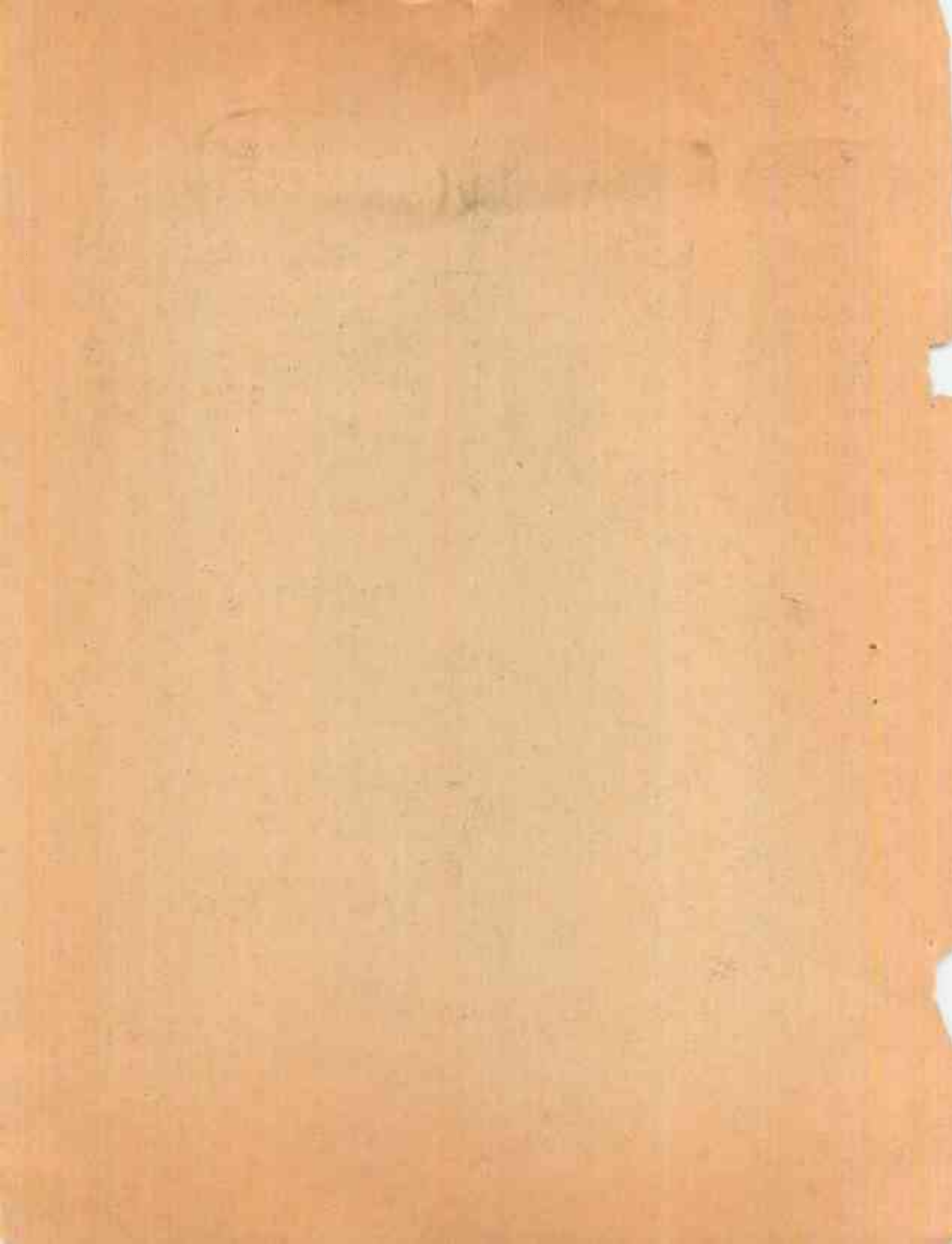
I TRIED TO
WARN ROSS IT WAS
THAT TIME AGAIN.... BUT
HE WOULDN'T LISTEN!

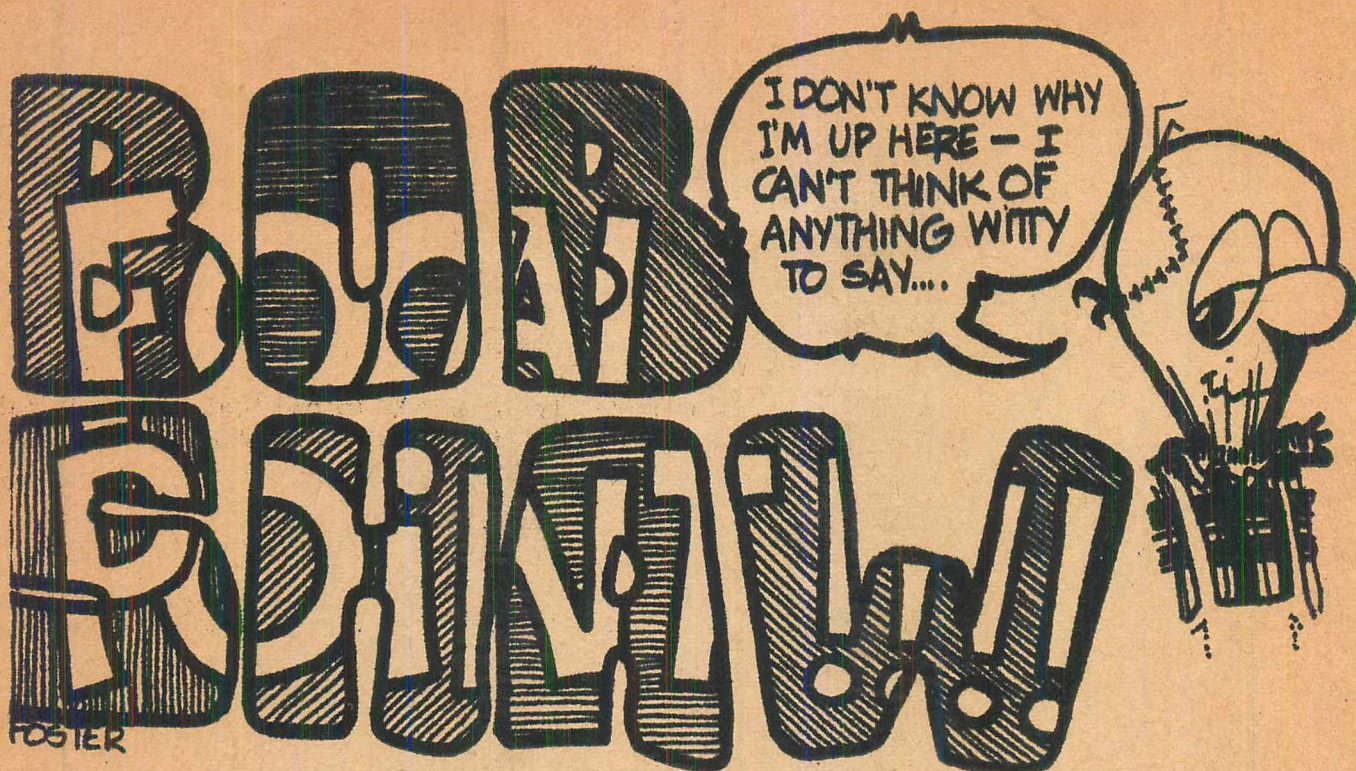
I KNOW WHAT
YOU MEAN!



VOL 3
NO. 2

ORC-





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KATZENJAMMER

It recently occurred to me that I haven't said very much about the wonderful new mimeograph we purchased from Rex Rotary at the end of April.

After getting married, Joyce and I found ourselves with more money in our hot little hands than any time since we began living together in October.

As any newly-established couple can attest, there are always a multitude of things which have to be purchased to make dat-to-day living bearable. Like towels, or chairs or dishes.

Joyce and I found ourselves up against one of Man's eternal dilemmas: should we buy something Practical or something Luxurious.

Though she would probably protest now, I think Joyce had her heart set on some adjunct to gracious living such as a coffee table or a set of lamps. It wasn't even that she wanted the lamps for themselves, but they had great symbolic meaning for her. To Joyce, a lamp wasn't something to take up space on an end table. No, to her, a lamp was the shining symbol of mundane domesticity.

Me? I wanted a brand new silk screen duplicator. Our gestetner 260, while still in full working trim, was getting up in years and showing a bit of temper in its old age. FOCAL POINT, back when it was a newszine, called for some heavy mimeographing, and sometimes during the course of a publishing

the
ARNIE
KATZ
COMEDY
NANOSECOND
WR

session, it would do things that would unnerve me. Not actual mechanical failure, you understand, but rather tiny hints that something utterly calamitous was just around the corner. For example, the gears on the feed tray would fail to catch every now and then, making it impossible to raise the tray and begin printing. Of course it would right itself long before I got really hysterical, but in the meantime I'd have visions of FP folding due to duper troubles.

So I wanted a new machine, and Joyce, taking pity on me and possessed of a trufannish heart herself, agreed that this would be a good investment for our windfall.

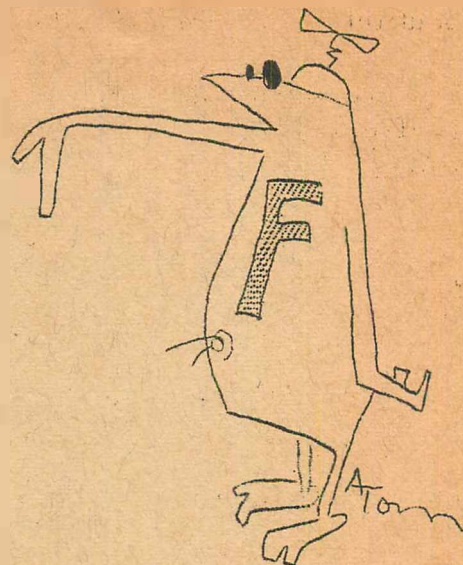
Once we decided it was to be a mimeograph, the question boiled to down to whether we'd buy a gestetner or a Rex. I was used to the 260, and I entertained heady thoughts of buying a 466, the top-of-the-line and only marketed within the last year. I had this dream until I did a little checking at the gestetner dealer. Besides leaving me with the distinct impression that Gestetner considers that they're doing you a favor when they consent to sell you one of their machines, my visit to the dealer showed me that they weren't set up to sell to a private citizen. Their idea of financial arrangements was something like half of the \$1,200. tag down, the balance due in three grinding monthly installments. When I pointed out to them that, though my wife and I both hold good jobs, we are private citizens, not some corporation, they graciously offered to let me make it six monthly payments.

Under those conditions, the only gestetner we could actually afford was a reconditioned 366, the machine which had been replaced by the 466.

After the wedding, when we got down to serious duper-hunting, I suggested a trip to the Rex dealer. Joyce was a little taken aback, chiding me for wavering from my staunchly pro-gestetner stand even to the extend of setting foot in the camp of the enemy.

If you think that shook her up, you should have seen her face when I announced that the brand new Rex Rotary 1000 the salesman had just finished demonstrating was the machine for us. "I didn't know you could be so flexible," she said, by way of a backhanded compliment. Joyce was hardly more surprised than the salesman, though. When we walked in, I think he sized us up as a couple of wandering hippies, out for a lark. His attitude changed somewhat as soon as he realized that his two-minute demonstration had gotten him a juicy commission on a new Rex.

It was really new, too. At first they told us we might have to wait six weeks until machines with a newly developed hydraulic feed mechanism were ready. It turned out that the first shipment had already arrived, though, so we were told to expect delivery by the end of the week. Best of all, this wonderful gizmo even fulfilled Joyce's desires for something Practical. "With those fluorescent lights," Joyce said, I guess it's a-



bout the most expensive lamp I ever bought."

We settled down to wait for the delivery. Waiting for the arrival of a new mimeo is like waiting for the arrival of a new baby, except that no one has morning sickness. I found myself building little fantasies around the Rex 1000.

"You think this Rex is the Enchanted Duplicator, don't you?" Joyce said to me after I had dilated on the subject of our new machine. I looked at her questioningly. "You think it will make you think it'll make you write better, don't you?"

"No I don't. No. Not at all."

"Well, do you think the Rex will make you a better fan," she persisted. I thought about the new duper, gleaming with polished metal, quietly competent.

"W-e-l-l-l, maybe." It was an embarrassing admission, like the typical Mundane admitting that he thinks his new Pontiac will make him more virile.

"But, Arnie, don't you remember what Willis and Shaw said, 'The Enchanted Duplicator is...'. "

"You mean, 'The Magic Mimeograph is the one with the trufan at the handle.' " If there's one thing I know, its my Enchanted Duplicator. "Well, there you have it, Joyce. I'm the Trufan, and the Rex will be the enchanted duplicator, because it will have me at the handle." That proved it, at least to my satisfaction.

So I spent all day thinking about the enchanted duplicator that was to arrive after work.

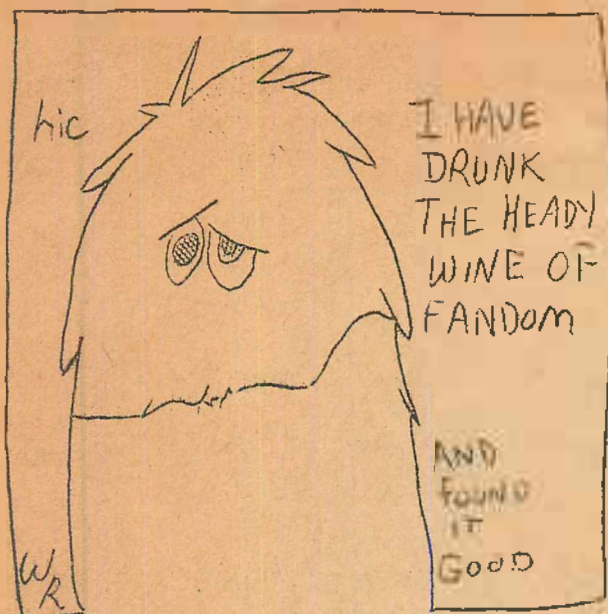
The salesman was waiting in front of the apartment, the machine and its cabinet crammed into the trunk and backseat of his car. With some timely door opening by Joyce, we had things set up in minutes. Rexes aren't as heavy as gestetners, though they do weigh in at a beef 85 lbs., less cabinet.

When we went to start the machine, we found it had a three prong plug, and the salesman forgot to bring us an adapter. Joyce volunteered to go buy one.

"Shall I ink it up while we're waiting," Mr. Luisi, the salesman, suggested.

"No," I said, "if it's all right with you. My wife helped pay for it, and I know she'll want to see it inked for the first time." I didn't even try to explain to him that the inking of a new mimeo is a mystical experience on a par with nirvana or at least a lavish Bar Mitzvah.

"What shall we run," I asked Joyce when she had returned. She rushed to the light-scope. Working rapidly, with sure deft strokes, she put a Rotsler on stencil. She even dug out a shading plate to stencil an area Rotsler had made all black. This kind of amazed me, since she'd only put one illo on stencil before.



We bowed our heads as I turned on the Rex. A few hits on the ink lever and the drum was nicely covered with glistening black. "Want me to put on the stencil?" Mr. Luisi asked. I knew he meant well, but I was no neo.

"No, no, I'd rather do it myself," I said. Deftly, I wrapped the stencil around the drum in one fluid motion. Uninstructed, my hand found the lever which printed a test copy on the backing sheet, just as if I had always had this machine. I pushed the button, turned the crank, and examined the results. Perfect. I opened a fresh package of the finest 85¢-a-ream masterweave, aired it, and placed it tenderly on the feed tray. Mr. Luisi made tentative helpful motions toward lining up the side paper supports, but I

motioned him away. I found the controls and set up the tray properly. I pushed the stainless steel button which raised the tray with a hydraulic whisper.

I depressed the next button. The feed engaged, sending a sheet of paper through the machine. I fancied I saw a slight glow around the edges of the Rex, and I thought I heard the theme from "2001" build in the background.

The first copy came through perfectly. Copy followed copy in automated perfection. When the counter read "0-0-0-0" the machine turned out two extras and shut itself off. There was a bit of applause, a few cheers, and the salesman departed.

I turned my eyes from the Rex to the Gestetner 260, the machine which had served me so well for so many years. "We still love you," I said to it.

"I hope they don't fight," Joyce said.

"Maybe one's a girl mimeo and the other a boy mimeo," I ventured. We looked at the machines carefully, trying to find something that would indicate gender.

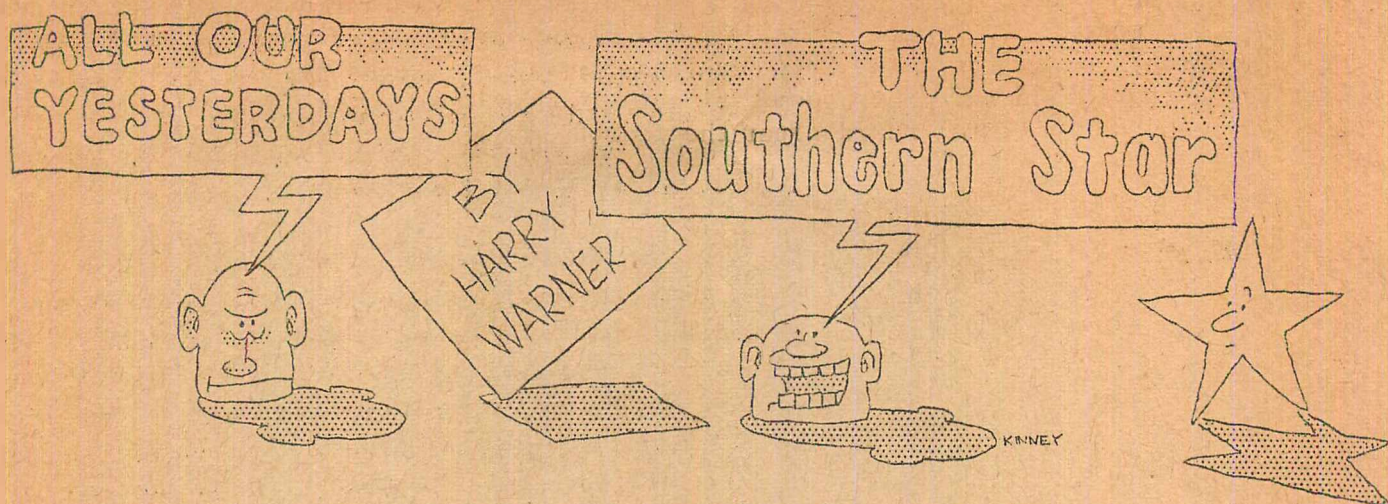
"The Rex is big and square," Joyce observed. "Kind of masculine," she added.

"And the Gestetner is smaller and more curved," I said. "It must be a lady duper." Joyce brightened at the thought of good fellowship among mimeos. "Maybe if we leave them alone," I said, "they'll mate."

"Oh, Arnie, maybe we could have a little collator all our own."

"I wonder how long it takes a gestetner to give birth to a collator?" I mused, as we left the room to give them a chance to do whatever it is that dupers do in the dark.

-- Arnie Katz



Someone ought to take a poll on the best forgotten fanzines of all time. It would include the fanzines that were popular when published but neglected today because even more brilliant ones in the same time and spirit are more publicized today; Aporrheta suffers this way in comparison with Hyphen. There were fanzines that seem more impressive today than they did when they failed to attract much attention as issues appeared, for one reason or another; Sam Youd's *The Fantast* would qualify, because its literacy and serious subject matter were out of joint with the general fannish outlook of its time. Then there are the short-lived fanzines that produced so few issues that their quality is overlooked. The *Southern Star* is one of these.

The Fanzine Index lists five issues for it, but the last appeared four years after the fourth issue, in a hopeless attempt to revive a local fandom that was dead. Those first four issues had appeared in 1941, at a time when Columbia, South Carolina, somehow became a major fan center. Three or four superactive fans suddenly sprang into existence in that comparatively small city, sucked into the whirlwind of their fanac a few other persons, seemed to be responsible for every other fanzine and every third contribution to all fanzines for a while, then subsided as abruptly as they'd blown up. They called themselves the Columbia Camp, and they broke camp through no fault of their own. The draft and war-time situations destroyed Columbia's fandom, and it never reincarnated in any concentrated form after peace returned.

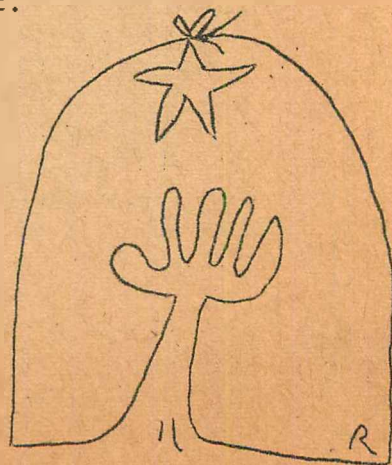
The *Southern Star* wasn't remarkable in appearance, a conservative mimeographed format with artwork that was good for its time but appears crude today. It was somewhat larger than most of 1941's fanzines, ranging from thirty to forty pages. It had one unusual feature, a geographical bias. There was an effort to feature fans from the South as contributors, and it plumped for the Dixie Fantasy Federation, the first major attempt to form a fanation in Dixieland. The *Southern Star* had one major advantage over most other fanzines of the time: excellent grammar and spelling combined with legible reproduction. It seemed to be a law of fandom at that time that the most literate fans were least able to cope with a mimeograph or hectograph.

But the big thing that makes *The Southern Star* a leading candidate for the top ten forgotten fanzines is the remarkable way its material retains interest today. Aside from some indifferent fiction, it ran consistently good stuff that holds either nostalgia value or an appeal which time hasn't affected at all over the years. Joe Gilbert, a youngster, and Art Sehnert, a Memphis fan who was somewhat older, made a good co-editor combination.

Harry Jenkins, another youthful Columbian, was listed as art editor but I suspect that he did quite a bit more than the title implies. Fred Fischer, another resident of Tennessee, and W.B. McQueen, one of the older Columbia fans, provided various types of advice and help on the editorial board. They seemed to get along well together, for they were all still listed on the editorial board after the fourth issue, and that's quite an achievement for such a large editorial staff.

The first issue showed the results of a real effort to get fresh, different types of material. Gilbert offered *The Handwriting on the Wall*, an attempt to analyze fans by graphology which he described as a limited but real science. His analysis of Tucker's handwriting seems quite accurate in retrospect, and you must remember that some of Tucker's lasting characteristics weren't as prominent in 1941 as they have been over the past thirty years: "Bob is highly individualistic. His ideas and thoughts are well defined and his vision is broad. He reflects before acting. He has an excellent and magnetic personality, and is a most likable fellow, despite the fact that he's reserved inwardly. He's well-balanced, conscientious, and possesses a good control over himself. A normal, human, dependable person is this Tucker fellow; really quite a nice guy." Then there was an extensive exchange of opinions on space warfare, extracted from correspondence between McQueen and Fischer. Some of their ideas anticipate more recent theorizing on the topic that I've seen in fanzines. This issue also began a series of quite entertaining looks back at the old Munsey magazines, both generalized remarks and specific synopses of fantasy stories they published. It's bylined Panurge, which was, if my faltering memory serves, a McQueen penname. Whoever it was knew how to sound enthusiastic. Of *All-Story Weekly*, during its six years of life before its merger with *Argosy*, he raves: "Some of those unmentioned or unknown stories, gentlemen, were great stuff. Are you acquainted with Swami Ram? Do you recall the blind hero of the story written by a blind man? Do you know that one of the most powerful descriptive passages ever printed in a pulp is to be found in Francis Stevens' *Claimed*, telling of the destruction of Atlantis? Do you know that as far back as 1909 *Cavalier* carried a short having to do with the preservation of a Viking's body in a block of ice? Across a Thousand Years was the title. In the old *All-Story*, Stevens, Julian Hawthorne, Sheehan, and several others are good material for a self-appointed press agent, so crusading we will go, I betcha. Maybe."

The big thing about the second issue was an untitled article by Milt Rothman. I hope Terry Carr gets around someday to including it in his series of reprints from old fanzines. It dealt with the argument about whether science fiction is escape literature. Maybe its conclusion will be coherent without the thousand preceding words. Milt was writing about two guys who disagreed about that old notion and one of them decided to become a scientist. "Of the two guys one had a push and the other didn't. Both hated the way of the world, but one was pushed to do something about it. The other just hated and was unhealthy. What was that push? Under a mechanistic psychology there are no abstract qualities such as intelligence and ambition. There are merely patterns of behavior, combinations of synapses, which the individual has acquired or inherited. The Gernsback Theory said that science fiction itself was the push. That is not true, for lots of guys who read science fiction don't have that push. In the guy who was going to be a scientist the push was an inferiority complex because he didn't have a girl friend and didn't know how to dance so he said he was going to learn more science than anybody else. The Gernsback Theory apparently applied to him because he already had the push and science fiction made him jealous so that his push had something to work on. Maybe the push was something different in the other guys who had it,



but whatever it was, science fiction was escape literature to the guys without the push, and it was stimulation literature, like Horatio Alger, to the guys with the push. Liebig said: 'To one man science is a sacred goddess to whose service he is happy to devote his life; to another she is a cow who provides him with butter.'"

I also suspect that a full reprint of L.R. Chauvenet's brief essay on ERB in the second issue would be justified, despite the millions of words published about that author over the intervening three decades. Russell attempted to find the qualities that had made Burroughs such a big seller in the face of all those limitations as a writer. Of Tarzan, he writes: "In having Tarzan at once an English lord and a savage ape, ERB demonstrated his genius by managing a simultaneously appeal to the snobbery and secret rebellion against civilized customs which are to be found in the average person. Mowgli could boast no royal blood in his veins, and in the jungle of Kipling, animals for which the average person feels few sympathies appeared wiser than humans. Compare Kaa, the python, with Histah, the snake, for an instance of my meaning. The physical prowess of Tarzan, as contrasted with the cunning of Mowgli, illustrates another great difference between the two jungle heroes, and even the most cursory student of human nature in the mass could have predicted that physical prowess would win more admiration. And why? The average person has muscles; he can imagine them much stronger muscles, and so can place himself in the role of Tarzan. Our average person does not have brains; he cannot, if normally dull-witted, imagine himself as clever, and the role of Mowgli becomes distasteful to him. Hence the immense sale of Tarzan--and the continued popularity of the Jungle Books among comparatively few."

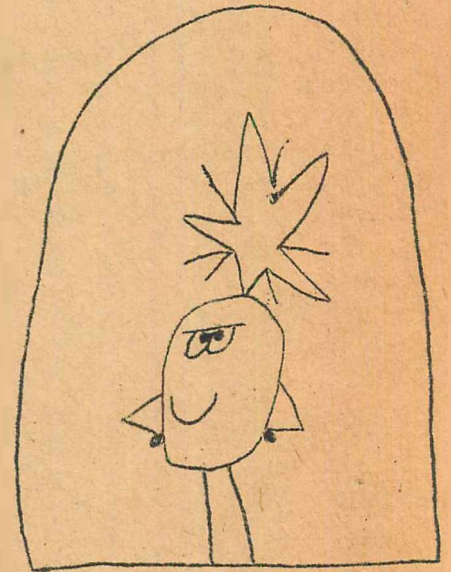
Tucker was an innocent youth in 1941 who couldn't know the surprise that a Savannah fan named Lee would give him a few years later. So in ignorance of that future episode, he wrote in the third Southern Star: "Earl Singleton and myself once held dear the illusion that Nebraska Nellie, otherwise known as D.B.Thompson, was a girl. Earl called my attention to some of the writings of Thompson in then current fanmags, particularly a lengthy letter in Fanfare, which, apparently, he had dissected line by line, phrase by phrase, chasing the mirage. The mirage in question was the exact sex of that critter, Thompson. All I knew of Thompson at that time were his initials, DB. Nevertheless Earl seemed to think I should know all about everything, particularly as to whether Thompson wore skirts or trousers. The flattery was nice, but I couldn't measure up to it. I don't believe I had exchanged more than one or two letters with the Nebraska Nibs. However, I promised Earl I would soon be hot on the trail of the mystery because the matter interested me, too; imagine a femme hiding her fan talents under a cloak of secrecy! What a scoop it would be for me, if I could but expose him/her. I looked into the letters. I must admit I was practically convinced; some of Thompson's neat phrasing possessed an almost girlish twist; his syntax even suggested it. After debating the matter pro and con for several days, as to just what would be the best, yet decent method for finding out, I threw caution to the winds and addressed a letter to him, which, if I remember right, was headed 'Dear Donna Belle'. I asked him pointblank his sex and he didn't even threaten a libel suit."

There's another penname in this issue which I'm not sure about. A news letter from New York has Morley as byline. It was probably Lowndes. Anyway, the writer provided a sidelight on the Futurians' antics at the Denvention: "Chet Cohen was attending the convention equipped with a saintly beard (genuine) since he was planning to go to the masquerade as a prophet. There is an understanding between Chet and Johnny (-Michel-) to the effect that Johnny can hypnotize Chester at any time. So, on the evening of July 3, a bunch of the lads were going downstairs in the elevator and Johnny hypnotized Chet to shut him up for the moment, then walked out of the elevator leaving him standing rigid against the side. The poor elevator boys, knowing nothing of Futurian peck-rights, were beside themselves. They tried to revive him; they unloosed his collar and rubbed his wrists; water they

sprinkled upon him and smelling salts they wafted under his nose. All to no avail; Chester was as one of stone. So with great difficulty they carried him up to the second floor and laid him out on a couch. Johnny had forgotten all about Chet. Comes the time when a large knot of us are gathered outside the Shirley arguing and trying to gather funds for a bottle of vermouth, and one of the elevator boys comes out and tells us one of our friends is sick upstairs. We all dash madly up--and it's Chet, lying rigid with his eyes glassily open. Everyone crowds about, all diagnosing and prognosing. Finally Johnny quiets everyone. 'Chester,' he says clearly and snaps his fingers. And Cohen arises, looking about him bewilderedly."

The most obvious value of the fourth issue is a picture page. Halftone reproductions show quite clearly eight scenes from the Denvention. I overlooked them hunting illustrations for my fan history book. There's Ackerman as the Hunchbackerman of Notre Denvention and damon the demon knight as John Star at the costume ball, a very youthful Heinlein at the podium, and numerous other treasures.

Fischer had a continuing column called From the Starport. His remarks on Heinlein might be interesting, as a hint that the anti-Heinlein attitude is not a recent phase of the anti-establishment movement: "He takes a fantastic theme and embroiders it in such a matter of fact way that the entire spice of improbability is stripped from the framework. I read his *The Devil Makes the Law!* and I never once got the impact of unreality inherent in any real fantasy. Instead, I seemed to be reading what was merely a story--and not a very good story, either--about the workings of a protective racket in a modern American city. Except for the incontrovertible fact that the gangsters of the story were magicians, I found the bare plot to be as hackneyed and as threadbare as any I've ever read. In short: Gangsters threaten shop owner with disaster, should he refuse to kick in with the heavy sugar for protection. He is not intimidated, but rounds up his own gang and fights back. Virtue, as always, triumphs! Pretty puny stuff, Heinlein! Take the frills away from almost any of Heinlein's stories and you'll have hidden in the wings strictly modern plots, made into fantastics merely by terms, times and tense.... His studied dryness takes away the glamour of impossibility.... The majority of Heinlein's stories build up to a climax or to a particular scene and just bob up and down on a sea of commonplace events before and after this point."



And Rothman gave a brief word picture of the Heinlein of the time: "Heinlein is a medium sized person, extremely good-looking, wears glasses, has a faint moustache, speaks slowly and with great deliberation, is very serious in manner and thought, and looks like a cross between Errol Flynn and George Brent." Moreover, Milt quoted a Heinlein rap session with fans at the Denvention: "The first question asked whether Mr. Heinlein approved of the use of drugs such as the benzedrine surrogate which was mentioned in one of his stories. Heinlein answered that upon occasion he had partaken of certain drugs and approved of their use when the situation called for them."

So what else is new in fandom?

-- Harry Warner

The EGGMAN

By Bob Toomey



Last night--as I write this, not as you read it--I got mugged again, this time right on my own front steps.

My only previous mugging here in NYC took place several months ago and several blocks away in what I consider to be a bad neighborhood. Now picture it. The hour was three a.m. Villainous villainous winter was upon us with a vengeance. I had just delivered a girl I know safely to her apartment house and was walking home. A bone chill wind blew across me, north to south, and I lurched along with my head way down, my shoulders hunched, my hands buried deep in the pockets of my coat. My spinal column was clinched like a fist and one of my feet was freezing because of a hole in my boot. Every so often I would stop and scrape the accumulated snow from the hole with a shaky finger, but it didn't seem to do me much good. Another two steps and--brrrrr. I hate the cold.

At the corner of Ninth Street and First Avenue I halted to let a couple of cars go by so that I could cross. While I waited I scraped at the snow again. My breath made little frost balloons in the air that the wind whipped away. The cars went past, the street was deserted. I began to cross and then I saw something approaching from the right on the periphery of my vision. I turned to look, saw a face, the top half of a face, bottom half obscured by a scarf. And a hand reached out and grabbed me by the hair and jerked my head back.

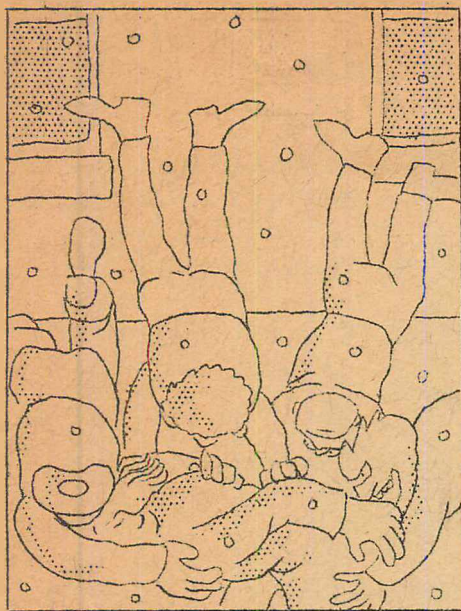
"Hey," I said. "Oww."

"Quiet," he said.

Another hand appeared, and in it was a big knife. The blade picked up glints from the streetlights.

"urrrgh," I said.

"Come on," he said.



"Where?"

"The doorway."

He dragged me back across the sidewalk and into a doorway. It was very good that he did that. I would never have guessed which doorway he meant if he hadn't showed me.

"My hair," I said.

"Your money," he said.

"Oh." I started to reach for my wallet.

"I'll do it," he said. "You move and I stick you."

"I can't move," I said.

He let go my hair and took the wallet out of my pocket. I had maybe twelve dollars in there. I thought about all the things I could do with twelve dollars. Six movies, fifteen paperback books, twenty four packs of cigarettes, thirty five strawberry malteds, a new pair of boots. He emptied the wallet, searched for secret compartments.

"You got any more?" he said.

"Some change in my pockets."

"Fuck it," he said. "I don't want no change."

"That's all I have left."

"If you're lying I stick you."

He frisked me, fast and not too efficiently. I started to wish I'd concealed what I had about my person. Always he kept the knife at the ready.

"Could I have my wallet back, please?" I said politely when he was done. "I've got papers and stuff in there I'd have trouble replacing."

He tossed it to me. "Here."

"Thanks."

"Get going," he said.

"Just go?"

He gestured with the knife. "Go, go, go. And don't look back."

I went.

All in all, he'd been very business-like about it, except for the frisking. And short of stripping me down to my underwear, a horrible thought on such a winter's eve, he could hardly have found any cash on me anyway, even if I'd had any. I decided he must have been a professional.

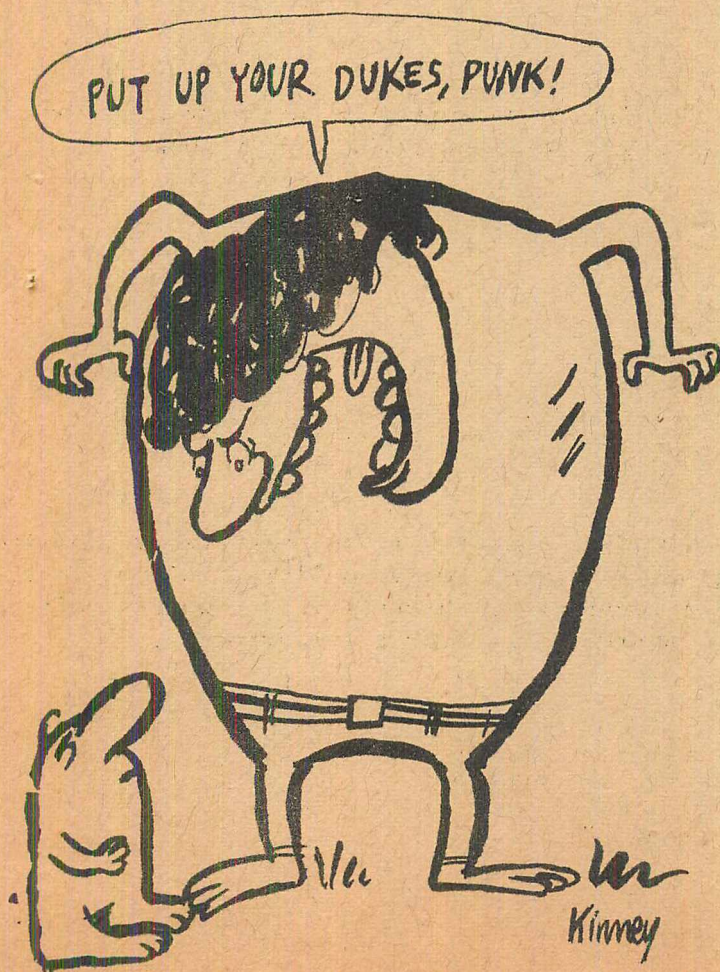
Not so with my encounter last night.

I'd been walking around, something I like to do when the weather is warm. It couldn't have been much past one a.m. East Seventh Street, where I live, was still fairly common with people. I felt secure. Then just outside the wrought iron gate that leads to my basement apartment, a guy stopped me and asked for a cigarette. I gave him one.

"Would you like a light?" I said.

"Yeah," he said. "Yeah, that'd be nice."

But there was something funny in the way he was moving. He wasn't coming towards me so much as he seemed to be circling me. I had a sudden burst of paranoia, and then dismissed it.



After all, there were people on the street. True, there was no one nearby, but further down the old folks were sitting out on their steps gossiping. Sheepishly I took out my lighter. An arm came around my neck from behind. The point of a knife pricked my throat.

"Stand still," said a voice in my ear.

I dropped the lighter. It hit the sidewalk and clattered away. The guy in front of me produced another knife. He danced up to me, shifting from foot to foot.

"Where's your wallet?" he said.

"It's---"

"Don't move," he said.

"I'm not---"

"Don't scream."

"I wasn't going to---"

"Get his goddam wallet for Christ's sake," said the guy behind me. "Hurry up."

"Take it easy," I said. "I'm not going to hassle you. Just take it easy." I was afraid they'd stab me out of sheer blind nervousness. "My wallet's in my back pocket."

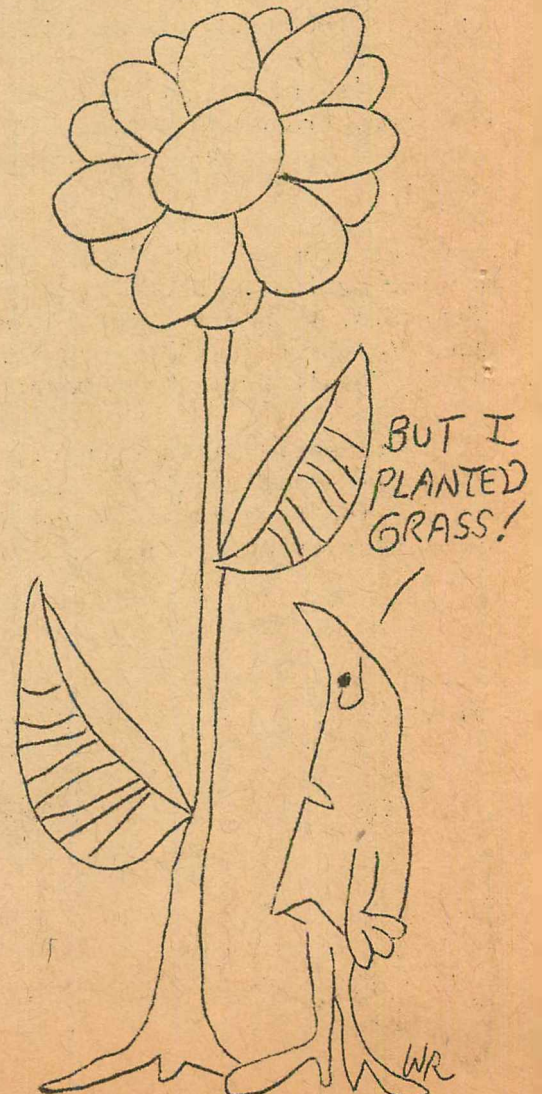
The guy in front took it. I had about twenty dollars on me this time. He emptied the wallet quickly, not even looking to see if I had any secret compartments. That's when I began to suspect. Then the guy behind me reached around and snatched my wristwatch that I've had since I graduated highschool eight years ago, and a battered ID band that I wear that cost me a dollar fifty new five years ago.

"You got anything else?" he said.

"No," I said.

"Okay," he said.

He didn't even frisk me. That's when I knew. They were amateurs, a couple of lousy amateurs, scared shit of what they were doing. I shook my head in disgust. Still, there was one good thing about them. One was black and the other was white.



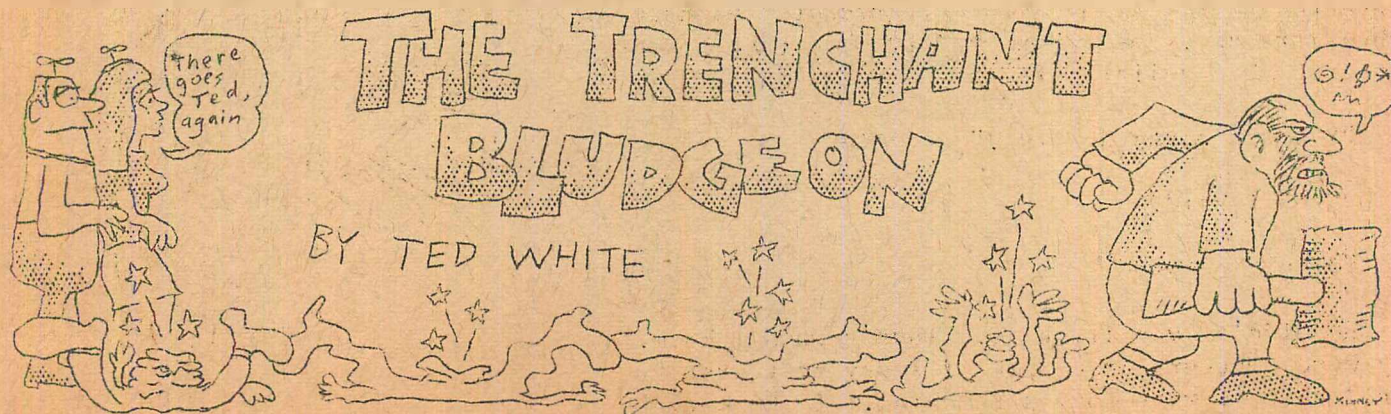
NEW ADDRESS: Since 1968, this column, which made its debut in the early sixties in CRY and didn't last long there, resided in the pages of Dick Geis' PSYCHOTIC/SFR. It has always concerned itself with whatever I felt like talking about at that point--usually, but not always, fandom and science fiction. It will continue to do so, here in FOCAL POINT, where I envision an erratic schedule of appearances--more erratic, I mean, than FOCAL POINT's own. Arnie asked me for this column when PSY folded, and I told him then that its last several appearances in that fanzine were semi-frauds. That is, they weren't conceived or written as columns, but were cobbled together out of letters I'd written to Geis. I've waited until now, simply because I haven't felt I had much worth saying until now. Perhaps I still don't. We shall see.

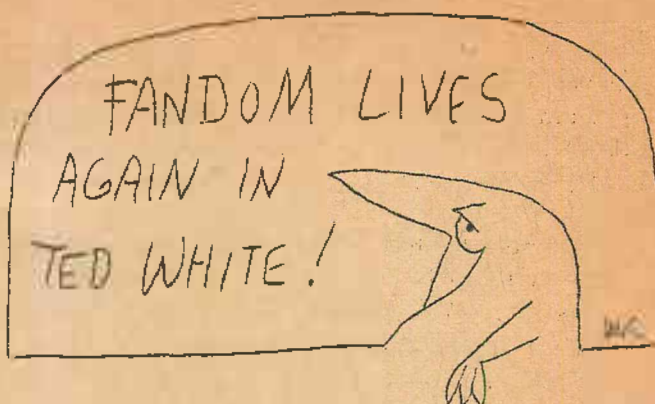
QUOTE: "Dramatic Presentation - NO AWARD. None of the three movies were particularly outstanding. It's good to see records nominated, but "Blows Against the Empire" is inferior Airplane with poor lyrics. Just because it's SF is no reason to give it an award. "Don't Crush That Dwarf, Hand Me The Pliers" is rather obvious satire with drug references thrown in. Its connection with SF is rather tenuous and it's not even the best of the Firesign Theater records." -- Charlie Brown in LOCUS 86, giving his "second thoughts" in Hugo recommendations.

Let's skip right over the fact that with a circulation reputed to be over a thousand, Brown is pushing his choices in Hugo nominees rather heavily. What insensed me about this particular paragraph is the way ignorance parades itself as wisdom.

Put simply, I don't believe Charlie Brown has heard either record he is recommending against. Since I am not myself a fan of either the Jefferson Airplane or Starship, I am not going to say that Charlie knows even less about rock than Spiro Agnew (a noted critic in the field recently). But his capsule critique of the Firesign's "Don't Crush That Dwarf" tops some sort of list for inspired inanity.

Not a word of what Charlie says is true. The album is not at all "obvious" in its satire--and requires repeated listenings before it really opens up for a listener. The texture--in sound and in concept--is thick. The first time around you spend your attention just gleaning the major story lines--themselves complexly inter-





woven. Then the next few times you strain your ears to catch all the background voices, sound-effects, etc., fitting them into the overall context. Like a densely composed piece of music, the album rewards you on repeated listenings and you follow new lines, new trains of thought. "Obvious?" It is to laugh.

"Drug references?" While there are undoubtedly a few--they are part of the general milieu under attack--none stand out in my memory. In many respects the construction of the Firesign's humor is drug-oriented--and more obviously so on the earlier two records. The schizophrenic quality of the non-linear exposition is "druggy" I suppose--full of free-association bits and wild jumps, sort of trippy--but you don't have to be stoned to appreciate it. The Firesign Theater is less interested in "drug references" than in the sort of thinking a drug-orientation might produce. In any case, Charlie's mention of "drug references" is a cheap slam and without substance or accuracy.

How about the sf element? That Charlie regards "its connection with sf" as "rather tenuous" tells me he simply hasn't comprehended the basic story line of the album--if indeed he's listened to it at all, which I can't help doubting.

Basically the album takes place in the near future--but one in which significant changes have occurred in this country. For one thing, the Indochinese War is now being fought in Los Angeles. The country is under martial law, and divided into "Sectors". The protagonist's sector is under curfew--and the Pizza place won't deliver to him there.

A neo-fascist regime appears to be running the country, and a religion based around having enough food to eat is gaining popularity. Nostalgia is also big--for that wonderful war era of the past, World War 2, and the "Mudhead and Porgy" movies. Etc. If this isn't sf, then I don't know anything at all about sf.

Basically, "Don't Crush That Dwarf" is an Orwellian vision, but its surreality takes in our immediate past as well as our impending future. There's a lot there--a lot more than the Charlie Browns of this world can comprehend.

And finally--"it's not even the best of the Firesign Theater records." Well, that's a matter of taste, but Charlie is the only person I know of who has expressed that opinion. My own--and that of every reviewer I've read, from The Rolling Stone to The Washington Evening Star--is that this album is not only the Firesign's best, it's a masterpiece.

Frankly, I was astonished that it made the Hugo ballot. Sf fandom does seem to be getting hipper these days.

AND ONE MORE: In a previous issue of LOCUS, Charlie Brown, intrepid reporter, said of Terry Carr's Disclave Guest of Honor speech, it was "about nothing much".

You may have read Terry's recent column in these pages and noted that his speech was about fans and fandom and their relationship to the pros. Terry feels very much as I do, I think, that this labelling of fans and pros, and the notion that one status is inferior to the other, is so much garbage--and about as stupid as saying of someone (as has been said about both of us) that now that he's a pro, he can't be a fan any more.

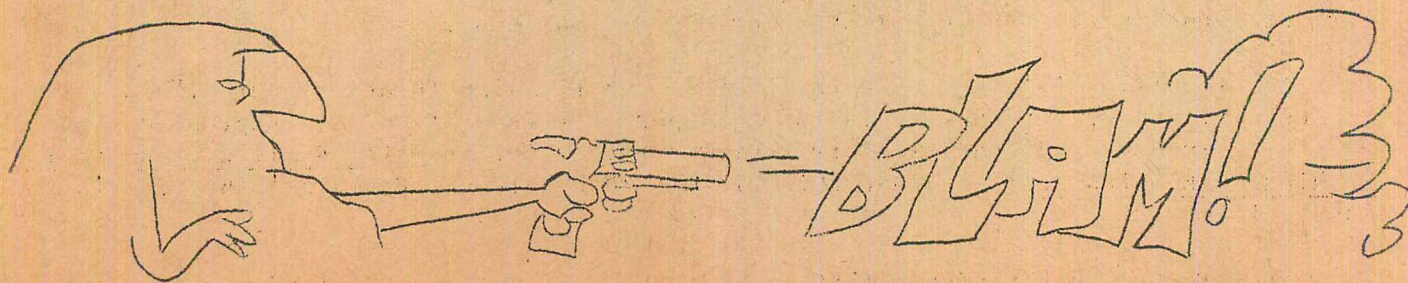
One of the major points of Terry's speech, which was informally delivered, and the more enjoyable for that, was that certain fans seem bent on putting out fanzines not for the sheer pleasure of the act, but for "professional" reasons: to make money at it. He cited Charlie Brown and LOCUS as an example, and told how Charlie had told him the night before that he printed "lots of stuff" in LOCUS not because he wanted to, but because that was what his readers wanted--and that he published LOCUS for money, although he didn't make a large profit on it. I find it odd that Charlie didn't report this, but no odder than the way Charlie went up to the front of the room, demanded the microphone, and began his own Guest of Honor speech, without invitation, to denounce Terry as a liar (which he was not), and to explain that what he "didn't like to print" was "obituaries and things like that".

I have no desire to rekindle the old FOCAL POINT/LOCUS feud--which I always thought was pretty silly anyway--but at this point LOCUS commands a not-inconsiderable readership, serves an important and useful function to that readership, and strikes me as playing less than fair with that readership. On these two above points I felt like calling "foul!" But I remain convinced that LOCUS is a worthwhile fanzine and the foregoing is in no sense a wholesale condemnation of either Charlie or LOCUS.

FINALLY, I hope to avoid all mention in future columns of either AMAZING or FANTASTIC, because I have quite enough of them in my normal working day, thanks. But, in answer to the many questions I've been asked, yes, sales have suffered in the last two years, and no, no changes in the magazines are contemplated and they are not about to fold.

And, oh yes: Before embarking on his European jaunt, Johnny Berry shipped me the stencils for the long-delayed issue of EGOBOO we'd been working on last September. Unfortunately, he hasn't sent me the address list, so it will be A While Yet before it's mailed out.

-- Ted White



BOSH TOSH

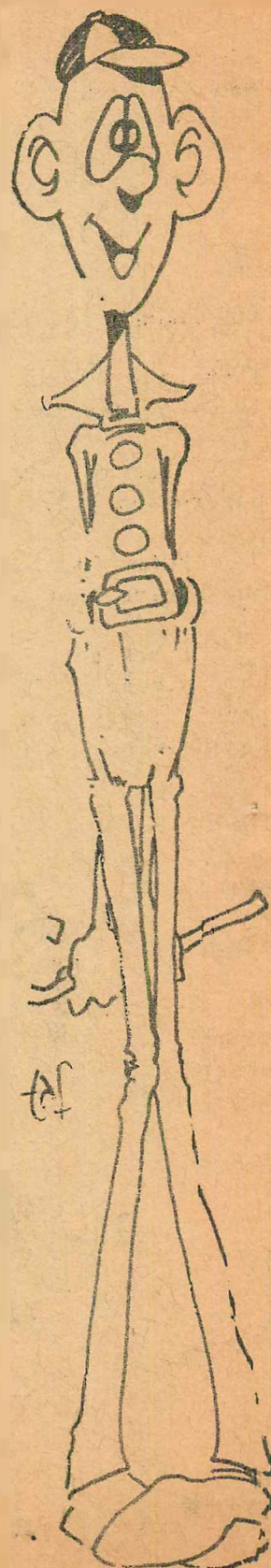
When I sent Arnie the first installment of this column I warned him it would be a rather irregular affair, but I had no idea at that stage just how hard my fanac would be hit this summer.

To be honest, summer is always an unproductive season for me. Out here at the westernmost limit of the European time zone --- which is, of course, far too wide --- it doesn't get dark till 11:00 pm, and the long clear evenings press down on suburbia like a tide of amber, trapping and paralysing. Other people aren't affected by the stasis --- I can hear their lawnmowers at work, and visible from the window is a row of back-sides dwindling into the distance as neat gardens are made even neater. My own garden could do with some attention, but the thought of going out and becoming another backside in the row appalls me.

"Must save myself for better things," is what I always think, defensively. The better things usually turn out to be dozing, watching bad television, drinking chilled alcoholic beverages, and trying vainly to recall the knack of teleporting --- which I'm sure I had in another life --- to enable me to wander Montmartre, the Acropolis and Honolulu for an hour before going to bed. Then I go off up the stairs, feeling guilty as hell, vowing to be energetic and productive the next evening, and knowing in my heart it will be the same old story all over again...

On top of all that, my boss got fired a couple of months ago and his job was filled by the deputy PR manager who is a good administrator but a non-journalist. This has left me doing a writing job which used to be handled by three men, and I've been so busy that on a recent two-week business trip to Paris I was staying only 400 yards from the Louvre and didn't even get time to put my head in through the door.

Unfortunately, as an "executive" in the company, I get no payment for overtime, so all the evenings and week-ends I work represent a clear financial loss because I'm writing no science fiction either. But the most annoying thing has been my inability to show proper appreciation to the fans who started the Shaw Fund and to all the others whose support has made it so successful. I would dearly have loved to have written a piece for each fanzine which had a special Shaw Fund issue, plus a flock of personal letters of thanks --- but in my current



situation it is simply beyond me.

I would like to take this opportunity --- and I think Arnie Katz's fanzine is the place to do it --- to put it on record that I do appreciate the work of all the friends, many of whom I haven't yet met in person, who contributed towards and in other ways supported the fund.

To all of you --- my most sincere thanks.

-- Bob Shaw

THE EGGMAN, continued from page 13

I thought it was swell to see such cooperation between the races. You see a lot of that in my neighborhood. The rest of the world could learn a lesson.

"Let me have my wallet back," I said in a firm authoritative tone of voice. "I got papers and stuff in there that I need."

"Give him his wallet," said the one behind me. The one in front gave it back. The one behind took his arm from around my neck and gave me a shove. "Get going," he said.

I hesitated for a second, confused. I mean, I was right there where I lived. I was home already. Then I realized that they had no way of knowing that, and that I didn't particularly want them to know. So I walked around the block. And the whole time I was walking I kept hoping someone else would mug me. Then I could smile and say,

"Sorry, I was mugged at the office."

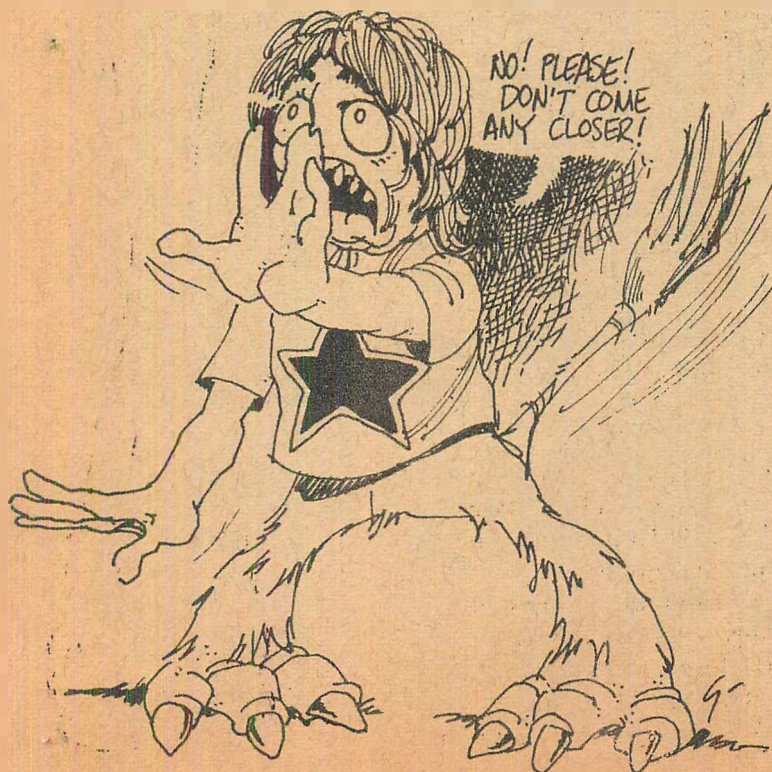
I've had that line ready ever since my first mugging, but I guess I don't really want to use it.

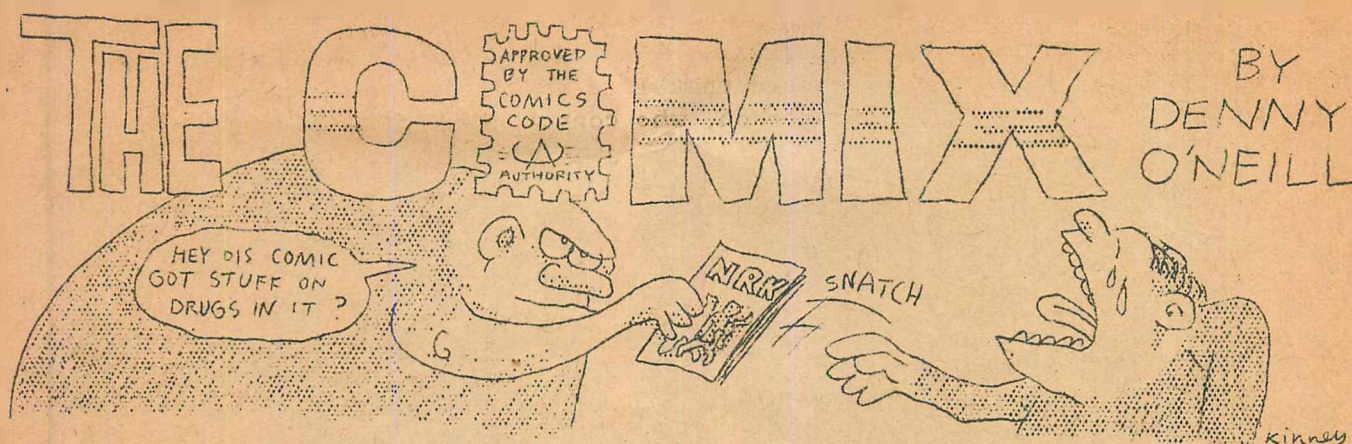
Instead I'm just going to leave NYC to the animals. My next stop is Florida, where I hear it's warm most of the year, and never very cold. At least, not too cold, too long. So long.

-- Bob Toomey

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The Echanted Duplicator by Bob Shaw and Walt Willis, with beautiful illos by Ross Chamberlain is available from me for \$1., including third class postage and a mailing envelope. It's a great story, and Ross' drawings certainly do it juatice. Order now!





Up front, I should admit I don't like censorship.

Reasons? Read John Stuart Mill, or any other libertarian social philosopher. To me, the con arguments have always seemed infinitely stronger than the pro arguments. (What kind of man wants to be a nay-sayer, anyway? Would you trust a known fecophile to practice proctology?)

So I was not overjoyed when, late last year, I heard the Comics Code was to be revised. Had I heard it was to be retired--then I would have been happy. But there are arguments for its existence, the best one of which is that if an industry-appointed censor doesn't judge comics, a Fed will. Admittedly, any alternative is preferable to the clammy ministrations of Dicky's button-down homunculi. The only way to test the argument is to scrap the Code and risk an invasion from Washington. I'm not sure I'm brave enough to chance it; the publishers certainly aren't.

I had a suggestion. "Why not invite some artists, editors and scripters to help with the revisions?" I asked. "Get some of the creative people in on it."

The directors of the Comics Magazine Association of America didn't bother to reply in words. Tend your own business, snotty writer, said their attitude.

Okay. There was, after all, hope. The document was being changed.

But not much, friends. Not much at all.

It's not really as bad as you may have heard--never has been. However, it contains several silly provisions and one, in particular, that I find immoral. To wit:

"Policemen, judges, government officials and respected institutions shall never be presented in such a way as to create disrespect for established authority. If any of these is depicted committing an illegal act, it must be declared as an exceptional case and that its culprit pay the legal price."

Echoes of the Bund in those phrases, friends: hear the thud of the massed goose-steps and the cries of "Heil" in the square. Surely the CMAA realizes that authority is often "established" with murder and torture. The Reichswehr and the Inquisition and the court of Caligula were all "established authority" and "respected institutions"; should we pay them homage? Pick your own horrible examples; the sad history of civilization is rife with them.

(As I write this I can see, from my office window, a cop peddling shit to one of the neighborhood junkies. Shall I pledge him my support? Maybe put a bumper sticker on my car?)

From the immoral, we move to the dubious. I quote: "Scenes dealing with, or instruments associated with walking dead or torture shall not be used. Vampires, ghouls and werewolves shall be permitted when handled in the classic tradition such as Frankenstein, Dracula and other high calibre literary works written by Edgar Allen Poe, Saki (H.H.Munro), Conan Doyle and other respected authors whose works are read in schools throughout the world."

Splendid, this. We can't show "walking dead" but we're free to show the ghouls who make meals of them (presumably after they've stopped walking.) And notice the authoritarianism, again: we've got to imitate "respected" authors. Respected by whom? I respect the hell out of Lovecraft and happen to agree with many Lit. Crit. types that Saki was a minor talent. Does the Code dictum mean I can model heroes on Sherlock Holmes and not on such relevant characters as Philip Marlowe, The Continental Op and Lew Archer? And the part referring to "works...read in schools throughout the world": do the Code framers really think Mary Shelly is studied at the University of Calcutta? And is the CMAA aware that literary fashions change almost as regularly as clothing fashions? (Dickens is currently respected in schoolish circles, while Kipling is infra dig, a no-no; when I was an English major, the opposite was true.)

Gentlemen of the Association, the requirements are unreasonable by your standards, and destructive by mine. You are not willing to admit that comics, of and by themselves, are an art form. We don't need anybody's "classic tradition", even if such a thing existed: in enforcing this fiction, you are refusing us the freedom to create our own traditions; you refuse us the opportunity to develop our unique, potentially beautiful, medium.

Permit me to choose a final gripe from many possibilities. The "General Standards--Part C" section reads: "All elements or techniques not specifically mentioned herein, but which are contrary to the spirit and intent of the code, and are considered violations of good taste and decency, shall be prohibited."

Whose good taste? Whose decency? Define exactly the spirit of the Code. Good taste, decency, spirit--these words are about as semantically meaningful as the sound of a baby's rattle. "The essence of totalitarian prose is that it does not define, it does not deliver" wrote Norman Mailer. "It obstructs from above." Yes, exactly. Maybe it's the nature of sentences used in sets of rules to be "totalitarian". But, damn it, if I must obey these rules, I want to understand precisely what they are. Most complaints from comics professionals concerning the Code have to do with its capriciousness; it's impossible to tell, from week to week, what will be acceptable. (In a forthcoming Green Lantern issue dealing with heroin addiction, the Code insisted we white-out hypodermic needles in the body of the story, yet permitted a spike in the cover illo.) Artists and writers simply never know, and so play safe--and dull. And the comic book remains plodding, logy, like a caterpillar denied growth hormones.

Still, I remember the threat of Federal regulation, and tend to forgive much. Can you imagine the kinds of restrictions Martha Mitchell would put on us?

The mind curdles...

-- Dennis O'Neil

PgHLANGE 1971:

I'd never been to a Pghlange before, nor indeed to Pittsburgh. All I knew about the city was that when at the Disclave I asked Ginjer Buchanan why anyone with intelligence would move to New York City, as she and several other fans from Pittsburgh are now doing, she replied mildly, "You've never been to Pittsburgh, have you?"

I've now been to Pittsburgh, and I can state with authority that it looks a great deal like the inside of a Howard Johnson's Motor Lodge. Most of the people there seem to be spaced-out youngfans or equally oblivious waitresses.

But it was a good con...somewhat over a hundred attendees, most every one of them intelligent and congenial. Since most of the people I usually hang around with at cons weren't there I had to talk to strangers even if they weren't timidly asking for my autograph, and the necessity proved to be a pleasure. I met and talked far into the morning with Dan Steffan, Brad Balfour, Sandra Meisel, Dave Hulvey and numerous others whom I should also mention in print, but this way all you others can feel superior because at least I didn't misspell your name in front of the elite minions of fannish fandom. ("How many fanatic disciples does it take to make up a minion?" I asked Bob Silverberg, but he didn't know. See, he isn't perfect. Yet.)

As far as "program" went, the con was decidedly a mixed bag. Saturday afternoon there were two panels, each odder than the other. The first was on "The Resurgence of Faanish Fandom," with Charlie Brown, Mike Glicksohn, Jerry Kaufman and me (Ginjer Buchanan moderated). This might have been a fired-up panel if, say, Arnie Katz and Ted Pauls had been on it, but Arnie wasn't there and Ted declined to appear, I was told, because he doesn't speak well in public. As it was, the points of greatest conflict on the panel were between Charlie and me: Charlie opened the panel responding to Ginjer's question about how fannish fandom had developed historically and Charlie seemed to be saying it had started in 1950 with Lee Hoffman and was primarily a reaction against the science fiction oriented fanzines of the time, which were uniformly awful. I said that in the time-stream on which I'd been living there'd been people like Bob Tucker, T. Bruce Yerke, Charles Burbee, Art Rapp, Ray Nelson and like that, and

AH, YES ~ 'TIS THE

INFAMOUS
BEAUME ~

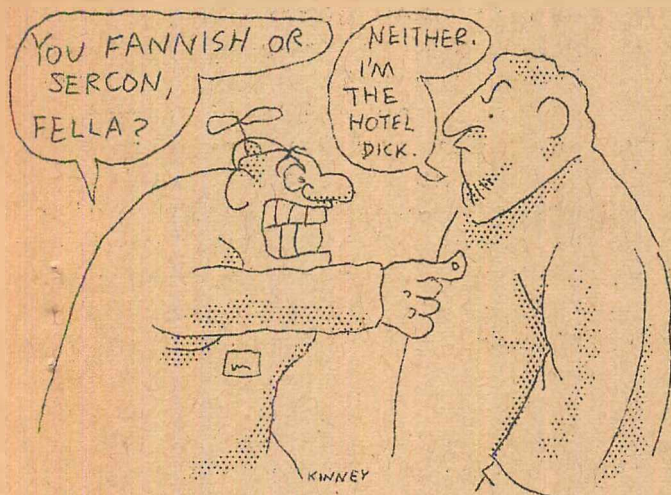
By Terry Carr...

...Consarn... Who put the
silly little propeller on my
chapeau...



further, that there were any number of excellent straight sf fanzines before LeeH started QUANDRY. Charlie explained that he'd only been talking about the stuff he'd read since he'd come into fandom, which I suppose means he never read any fanhistory. (Lack of any interest at all in fanhistory strikes me as weird because I can only interpret it to mean "Nothing interesting happened in fandom till I got here.")

Anyway, we got that straightened out and then began to struggle with questions like "How is fannish fandom defined?" and "What is the future of fannish fandom?" These are guaranteed downers to both panelists and audience, I assure you, because they're interesting only to aficionados who are in the mood, and at least half the audience probably didn't know what fannish fandom was to start with. About halfway through the panel I remarked "Wow, isn't this a ridiculous discussion?" and I meant it. I mean, there was Jerry Kaufman trying to convince Mike Glicksohn that ENERGUMEN is a fannish fanzine ("Over my dead body!" cried Susan Glicksohn from the audience), and me trying to convince Charlie Brown that not all science fiction fanzines are crudzines, and Charlie getting himself into a position where he was forced to concede that he was a fannish fan, and Sandra Meisel in the audience complaining about the misuse of the word "sercon," and all sorts of things like that.



And of course Lester del Rey had to heckle a bit from the audience. Lester, in his facet as heckler, is an utter monster, no matter how much we may love him anyway. He asked Jerry Kaufman, "Why are you so serious about being fannish?" Jerry stared at him open-mouthed for seconds, tried an explanation that was largely incoherent, and Lester said, "See, you're being sercon!" Jerry tried to struggle on with an explanation of his attitudes, then shrugged and said, "Oh, what's the use?" "Now that's fannish!" Lester said, which cracked up all of us including Jerry.

(Jerry later told me he'd been struck dumb by Lester's very first question, because he saw where it was leading and how true it was, and in the throes of having his mind blown by Lester he'd played right into his hands.)

Then there was the pro panel, which I was also on. (The con committee claimed there were only four professional writers at the con, though they evidently weren't counting Carol Carr, author of two stories in Orbit, and Lloyd Kropp, author of a Doubleday sf novel called The Drift, a sort of Sargasso Sea novel.) This pro panel was the only panel I've ever seen at a con on which half the panelists were thoroughly stoned. Fred Lerner, who moderated it, said he thought there was something funny going on on that panel, and of course he was right. The panel was also sidetracked from its ostensible purpose of discussing the cosmic significance of the recent Galaxy Poll, especially the questions about whether or not you want to see four-letter Anglo Saxon words in sf stories if the words are essential to the development of the over-theme of the story they appear in...well, I got sidetracked first when I got hung up wondering what to do about five-letter Anglo-Saxon words. The panel got sidetracked because it had been given the

humorous title "The Sensuous Science Fiction Writer," and though three of us responded to Fred Lerner's opening question about why we thought science fiction writers were more sensual than normal men with the levity it deserved, Lester del Rey decided to see if he could make a case for the idea. So there we were, stuck in the middle of a discussion about why sf writers are more sensuous than your normal fella, and two of us were having our attention distracted by the patterns in the wallpaper. It was a little weird.

And we never did get around to talking about that Galaxy Poll. An interesting question came from the floor, though, when Mike Glicksohn asked if we'd ever written under the influence of drugs. One panelist said, "Once I tried writing on speed. I wrote 20,000 words in one sitting. Then I slept for three days." "Did the material have to be cut quite a bit when you read it later?" he was asked. "No...as a matter of fact I had to expand it. I'm a pretty spare writer anyway...." And another panelist answered the question with the preface, "Now I want all of you to understand that I've never taken anything illegal. Particularly this afternoon I haven't taken anything illegal. Also, I've been in Brooklyn all weekend."

(Neither of these panelists was me, incidentally. I was straight as an arrow when I went on that panel -- though by the end of it I discovered I'd picked up such a contact high that Michoacan couldn't have done me better.)

The banquet that evening was a much slicker affair. It started sensibly by being buffet style-- I'd rather eat cold cuts than rubber chicken any day. (There was lots more than cold cuts.) Then Ginjer Buchanan took the rostrum and introduced Bob Silverberg with much wit and grace. I think Ginjer should turn pro immediately, sell a story or something so she can appear on lots of con panels and make them interesting again. Bob Silverberg was appearing in his capacity as Permanent Guest of Honor at Pghlange, and his duty was to introduce the "transient Guest of Honor," as he said, Lester del Rey. Bob is always a delight to hear, and he was even better this evening: after the obligatory number of humorous insults, Bob dropped all that and gave the straightest introduction of a con speaker I've ever heard.

Lester got a standing ovation. He confessed that there were only five different speeches that he gives, and four of them were inappropriate for the occasion, so we'd have to get the one made out of clichés. So he delivered an hour of clichés about science fiction and the state of man, and it was beautiful stuff: as Lester said, clichés are just truths that get said so often everybody starts taking them for granted till the next generation, when they're rediscovered. So he gave a speech that would've satisfied John J. Pierce and Hank Stine alike -- full of optimistic stuff that's really very square, but nice in the off-season. Referring to the median age of attendees at the con, Lester said he always wrote for young people rather than old people and he was especially honored to be invited as GoH at this convention.

(Earlier, while we were eating, Bob Silverberg had mentioned that someone had surveyed the con membership and imparted the information that Bob was the sixth oldest person there. He managed to think of two more people who were older than him, but by and large people at the "pro table" felt a little decrepit after this statistic. I was impressed with Lester's response.)

That night there were parties, mainly at the con suite but also there was a small one all night in our room. We were right down the hall from the con suite, right across the hall from the Silverbergs, and just a couple doors away from the room where Bob Toomey, Brad Balfour and various others were staying. Usually there were half a dozen people in our room taking a breather from the con-suite party. Sometime that night the committee got a phonecall warning them that Pittsburgh police were on their way up to end the party, so people quickly scattered to various rooms till the heat blew over -- which it did quickly: Linda Bushyager called the desk and asked what was happening with these police reported on their way to the room, and the desk said there were no police and if there had been they the desk would've been the first to warn the committee that they were coming. Meanwhile another party had got started across the hall in what I think was Sandra Meisel's room, but maybe not.

We were still in the con suite when Dena Brown told me that she'd really like to publish a fannish fanzine, but she thought everyone would hate her. The fannish fans, I think she meant. I convinced her that Arnie Katz didn't hate her (no mean feat) and perhaps Dena will publish a fannish fanzine soon that will be complete with a rousing attack on LOCUS.

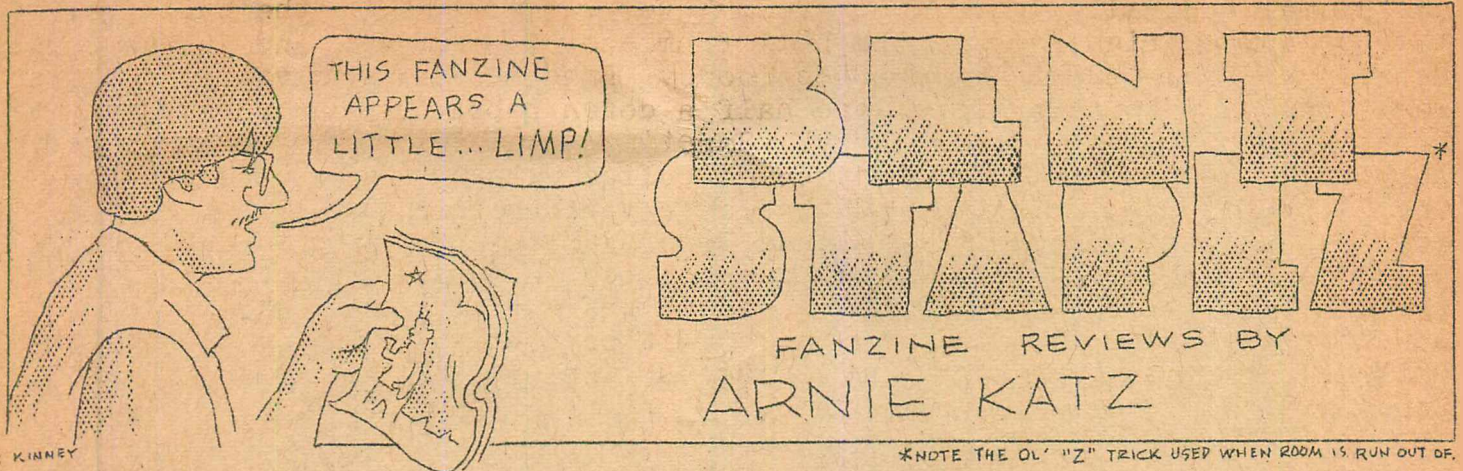
Ted Pauls was at the con, and he made a point of telling me he agreed with my last column here -- FUCK FEUDS and all that. Since he'd said somewhat the same thing in the last ENERGUMEN, I wasn't surprised. Neither of us hit the other over the head all weekend.

Fans kept coming up to me and asking how they could get Entropy Reprints. At first I told them to subscribe to POTLATCH and BEABOHEMA and so on, but they explained they meant they wanted the column for their fanzines, which they were just starting. So the Entropy Reprints will branch out to even more fanzines, rescuing still more worthy material from the quagmires of fandoms past. (Yesterday Arnie Katz said to me, "I hear you're going to reprint 1958.") ((Arnie also tells me that some new fans evidently think that all fannish reprints are Entropy Reprints, and he's thinking of starting a column called "Arnie Katz's Terry Carr's Entropy Reprints." Fout to him; he lacks the proper respect.)

Sunday there was no programming, so instead of standing around saying goodbye to everybody Bob Toomey and I went to the motel's sauna. I'd never tried one before; Bob had tried it the day before for the first time and was caught up in neosaunaish zeal. So, shortly, was I: when we came out of the sauna and I got over my disappointment at having to substitute a cold shower for diving into a snowdrift, Bob said, "You wanna go back in and start again?" and I discovered that I did. So back and forth we went between sauna and icy showers, three times worth. Far-rosebud-out. Hey, is there a sauna at the Noreascon?

THE FUTURE UNVEILED: Carol and I are moving to California after the world-con, and we'll be traveling west leisurely all September in order to make a vacation trip out of a necessity...so if I should miss next month's issue, or even a couple months, pay no attention. When I get to California I'll give you the straight scoop on How To Be a Greg Benford Fan and Whatever Happened to Bill Donaho?

-- Terry Carr



OUTWORLDS #8, edited by Bill Bowers, Box 87, Barberton, Ohio 44203. Quarterly. Mimeo. Available for 60¢ or the usual. 60pp.

Whatever its good and bad points, OUTWORLDS ranks as the strangest of the currently popular fanzines. This despite the fact that the written material isn't very unusual nor, some OW readers and editor Bowers to the contrary, are the graphics.

What distinguishes this fanmag from the rest is that the editor has a penchant for getting off on some of the weirdest trips I've ever encountered. How a fellow who has always been as good-humored and personable as Bowers can continually be going off on some outre tangent is a source of wonder to me.

Early issues were filled with much blather about "unpredictability". Issue after issue Bowers hammered away at how unpredictable his fanzine was. Time after time he rambled on about all the unpredictable things that were about to happen in his fanzine. As would be expected, a certain percentage of his readers parroted this nonsense back at him, and at the height of the unpredictability fad, it seemed like the mag was about to be taken over totally by discussions of its unpredictability.

Harping on this theme only seemed to emphasize the fact that OUTWORLDS is sometimes over-planned. I don't object to careful production -- I like to think FP shows that -- but Bill often makes the readers overly conscious of his method.

To draw an analogy, think of a fanzine as a brand new skyscraper. What people want to do is gaze at the finished building and marvel at the grace of its lines and the beauty of its architecture. What Bowers gives them is a detailed, running commentary on the laying of bricks. Readers would enjoy OUTWORLDS more if they weren't constantly being reminded of the nuts and bolts. OW clanks where it should glide.

Bill's latest shtick is to proclaim his love for/awe of OUTWORLDS at the drop of a beanie. A faned should love his fanzine, but I think he should love it as the product of his mental and physical toil, not as some external object placed on Earth by Ghu himself. Bowers appears so awestruck by OUTWORLDS that he does things that no other fanzine editor would bother doing. For example, he has published a 2-4 page flyer with each issue, containing information that would best be printed in an ordinary colophon, plus some chatty ramblings which could go into the body of the zine were not Bill of the opinion that his own writing would desecrate his fanzine. This issue he goes even further, segregating the letters by

placing them in a separate section for no apparent reason. Perhaps I'm wrong, but I think Bill takes things much too solemnly, and he would do well to loosen up a bit.

OUTWORLDS #8 departs from previous issues by emphasizing the written material instead of the graphics. Led by Greg Benford's "Thoughts While Typing", which seems to have found a permanent home, this issue has the best writing ever featured in OW.

"Thoughts While Typing" is a collection of anecdotes, most of which this time deal in some way with the interface between the new and old cultural orders. My favorite bit leads off the column, Greg's description of finding a copy of "Love Story" and meeting an ardent fan of that soppy masterpiece on the bus.

Poul Anderson continues his "Beer Mutterings" column from SFR in good style. I found this installment a little uneven in quality, but it does contain a discussion of dialogue in fiction which I greatly enjoyed. Since dialogue writing is the major weakness of most science fiction, it's always surprised me that there wasn't more discussion of this aspect of writing craft in fanzines.

In this all-column issue of OUTWORLDS, there are also servings of material by Steve Fabian, Robert Lowndes, Andy Offutt, and Bowers himself. Lowndes' piece, by far the best, was originally intended as the editorial for one of his defunct magazines. I've always enjoyed RAWL's discussions of sf and related topics, and the news that he is to become an OW regular is heartening. At the other end of the scale, there's Andy Offutt. In fact, at the other end of the scale, there's always Andy Offutt. Some day he'll surprise me by writing an article which does not have at least one page about what a great big man he is.

Bowers seems to take an almost indecent pride in having assembled an issue composed entirely of columns. I don't think it was done very effectively. Column follows column, each one with an identical flush left lettering guide heading in the same style. There are no illos to lend emphasis to a particular piece, and nothing to show that these columns compose a fanzine. In short, there's nothing to make the reader keep turning the pages. Since each column is a separate unit, one may stop anywhere without the feeling that he's missing something exciting over on the next page. One gets the feeling that he's reading some kind of randomly selected anthology of uneven quality.

If Bowers had set out to prove the importance of graphics to a fanzine, he couldn't have done so more strikingly than this. Had the material been superb, it still might have come off, but it was only fair to good, so the issue came up short.

Content: 6.5 Benford is unfortunately counterbalanced by Offutt.

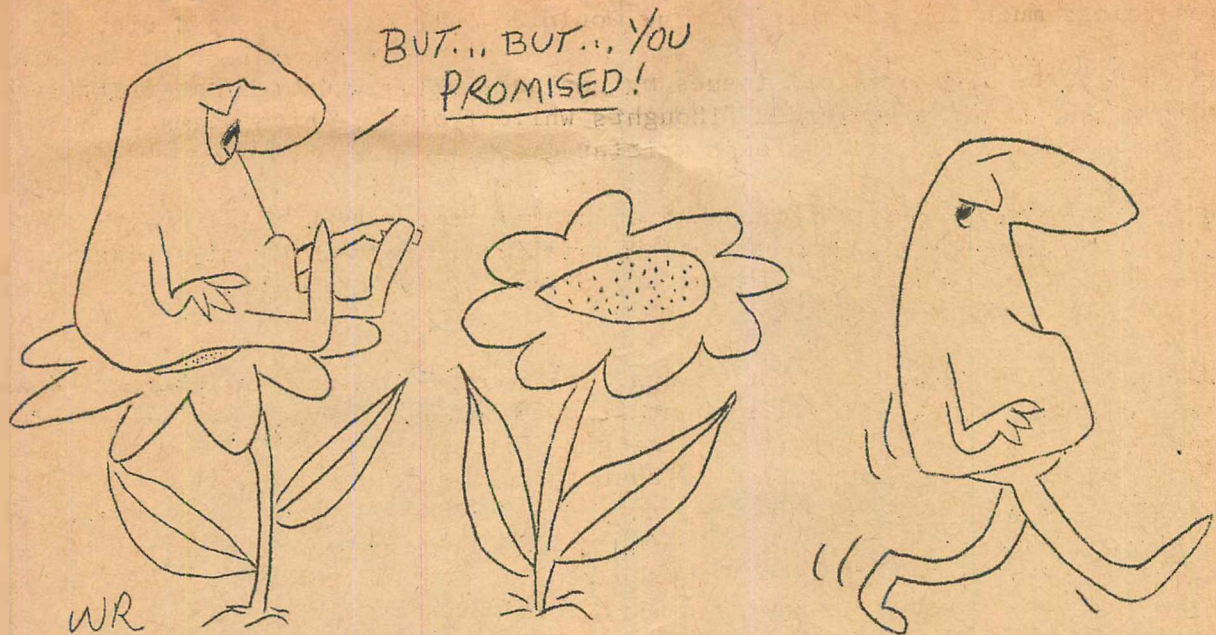
Appearance: 7 Well duplicated and neat, it is nonetheless a bit plain and repetitive in layout.

Comment: OUTWORLDS needs a little joy and a better synthesis of its elements to become a really first-rate fanzine, Hugo nomination notwithstanding.

AFAN #1 edited by Dave Hulvey, Rt. 1, Box 198, Harrisonburg, Va. 22801. Mimeo. Available for trade, LoC or contribution, but no subs. 32pp.

After serving an apprenticeship in the fanzine letter columns, Dave Hulvey has taken the Big Step. He bought himself a mimeo and some supplies and has produced his first fanzine, AFAN.

AFAN seems to have greatly benefitted from Dave's decision to observe the fanzine field for



awhile before plunging in himself. It would be inhuman to expect a first issue to be free of defects, and AFAN has several, but it's several jumps ahead of the usual maiden effort.

Dave's advantage over the ordinary tyro is that he has a much clearer idea of what fandom is about than one generally finds in beginning fanzine editors. AFAN is not a pale reflection of a prozine, it is a fanzine. In consequence, it has no high-flown editorial, no amateur science fiction, and no little league commercialism. Some fans never learn the lessons Dave has assimilated before even publishing his first fanzine. I suspect that Dave will look back on AFAN #1 with much less shame than most of us do at our first fanzines.

Those familiar with Dave's writing know that he has had a tendency to slip into non-communication. At its best, his pyrotechnic style is unique and entertaining. Other times, Dave gets tangled in a welter of words, phrases, and allusions, and his writing becomes unintelligible. Despite a few lapses, AFAN shows that Dave is making progress in his attempt to forge a clear writing style. While still crackling with such wonderful turns-of-phrase as "Howdy Doody faced nobodies", his writing has reached a new level of lucidity. His bizarre phrasemaking has begun to work for him, instead of obscuring his meaning.

I found the zine overaggressive in some places. It's heartening to find younger fans such as Dave taking up the faanish outlook, but the urge to use one's insurgent powers indiscriminately just to see if they work is a seductive one. Sharpening the satire would be a big help. Dave's targets are so generalized that it takes him too many words to cut them to pieces. For example, he has a parody of a typical 8th fandom fanzine which has a number of nice moments, but it's overly long. At half the length, it might have been a stunning bit of humor, but as it is, the anger overshadows the mirth too often. The hyper-sercon pompous asses of fandom are a worthy target, but a well conceived barb or two has more telling effect than page after page of omnidirectional diatribe.

Dave's Lunacon report was nice, but I'd have liked to have seen an even longer one from him. I'm not necessarily trying to create con reporters in my own image, but I often find that con reports don't contain enough detail to engage the reader's full interest. The writer knows about all the little things that make some particular happening worth writing up, but the reader doesn't unless the author tells him.

Dave has made his fanpublishing debut in the traditional manner by writing it all himself to show what he can do. I think he's made his point sufficiently well that he ought to be given maximum help and encouragement from now on.

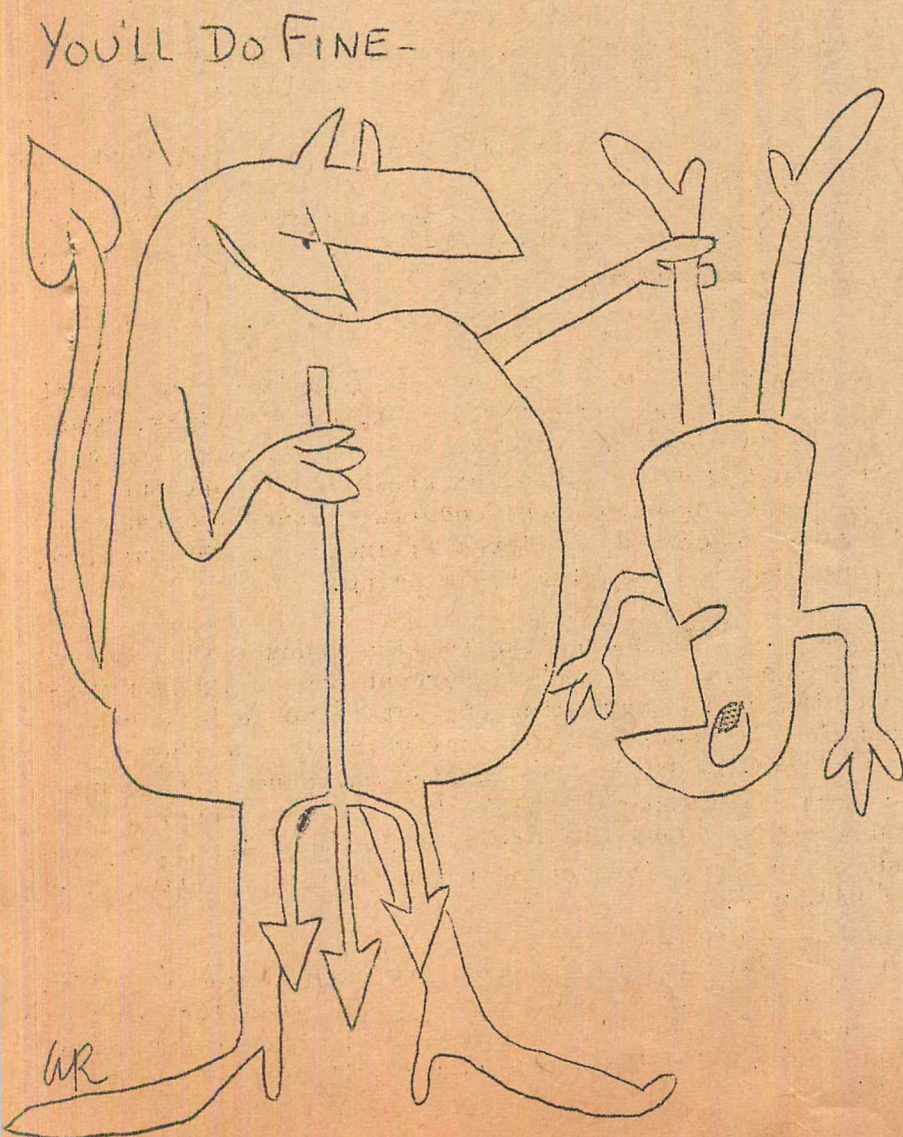
Content: 4 The writing is a little uneven, but the best is quite good.

Appearance: 4 Well mimeographed, but he needs more and better art.

Comment: If I were giving a special rating comparing it to only other first fanzines, I'd say it would be worth about a seven or eight. Good beginning.

RATS! #9 edited by Bill Kunkel (72-41 61st St., Glendale, NY 11227) and Charlene Komar (85-30 121st St., Kew Gardens, NY 11415). Monthly. Mimeo. Available for the usual or 25¢. 19pp.

The second revival issue of RATS! shows an impressive improvement over the previous one, which had exhibited more promise than performance. Not that #8 was so bad, but the writing was a bit hurried and disjointed.



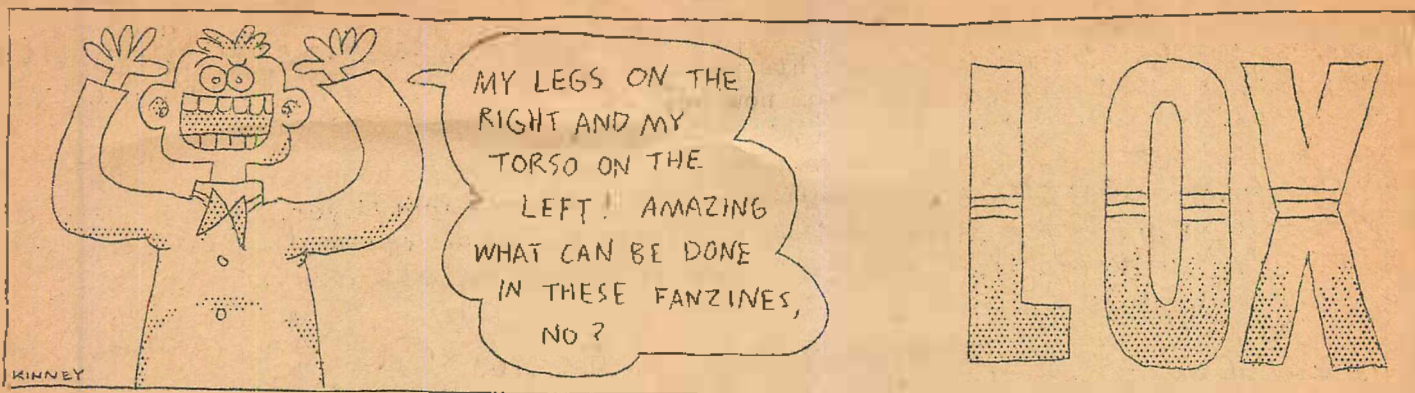
The current issue's scrupulous neatness bespeaks careful planning as does the individual and effective layout, marred only by low-grade art. Since the repro is (ahem) excellent, this fault will probably be remedied within the next couple of issues.

RATS!#9 flows so smoothly that there is some danger of underestimating it. A glance at the contents reveals, however, that there's some fine material here.

My favorite was "Locsmith" by Harry Warner, which reveals the inside story of how he writes his letters of comment. I don't know if others have noticed, but Harry seems to have lately entered his own personal golden age. Recent articles and letters by him have surpassed his already established high standards.

Ray Nelson contributes a transcript of his sf radio show, discussing two novels by Philip K. Dick. This is far enough outside the usual book review mold that it even interested an old anti-book reviewer like me.

Bill and Charlene each have an
(continued on back cover)



JERRY KAUFMAN
417 W118th St.,
Apt 63
New York, N. Y.
10027

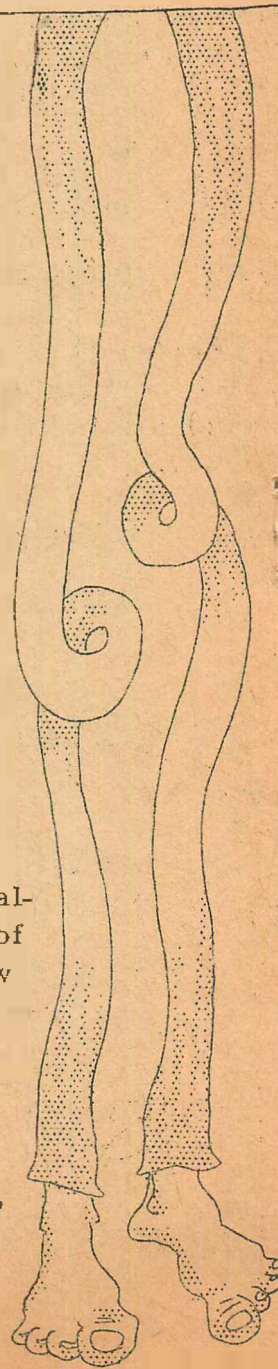
I liked the cover and am looking forward to some of those greatly humorous covers like Ross used to do for QUIP. It might be appropriate for Ross to find a character other than the QUIP Kid, as this is a new Era in Fandom. Ned Sonntag is also a find. those two drawings with Bob Toomey's article were rather nice, if limited, but I expect to see more from him in your pages.

////// By putting Q. Wertyuioip in the coffin on the cover of FP 31, I was trying to suggest that QUIP, against everyone's wishes was trying to live again. If you only knew how close Ross came to convincing me to revive the Vulgar and Ostentatious fanzine.... He was very strong for the idea until he realized he'd have to do those multi-page covers. Apart from the fact that the covers will be scripted by me and drawn by Ross, just like the old days, I don't think you'll find much similarity between the two.

Ned is Jay's roommate at Pratt. And you'll see him in FP just as soon as he sends something.

I'm especially pleased to see your longish fanzine reviews. I have always found them models of criticism and yourself the Pauline Kael of fanzine reviewers. (Dave Lewton was the Rex Reed...) The review of THE NEW ECLIPTIC pinpoints just why such fanzines are bad... not that they publish serious articles or articles by pros, but that they publish bad serious articles or self-serving or dull pros, or articles for the notoriety of writer or subject.

Terry's material in LOWDOWN was exerpted from several columns, but so was Tom Digby's. I believe the LOWDOWN people saw these two writers as mainly anecdotal and then attempted to use the best of their short bits. And many of Terry's columns in FOCAL POINT have been collections of short bits.



Actually, Mike and Susan Glicksohn are hoaxes perpetrated by Rosemary Ulliyot. I know you've seen them at conventions. Yes, they are fleshly realities. But you don't think they can all handle dialogue so equally well? You don't think they can all put just that right twist on an incident to show it in its true absurdity? No, on paper the Glicksohns are hoaxes. Or else Canadians all just write alike.

///// In regard to THE NEW ECLIPTIC, did you notice that Glycer, after his ravings about professionalism, has taken out ads in various fanzines such as YANDRO and MOBIUS TRIP? Fans, like everyone else, have an infinite capacity for self-delusion, I guess.

JIM MEADOWS III
62 Hemlock St.,
Park Forest, Ill.
60466

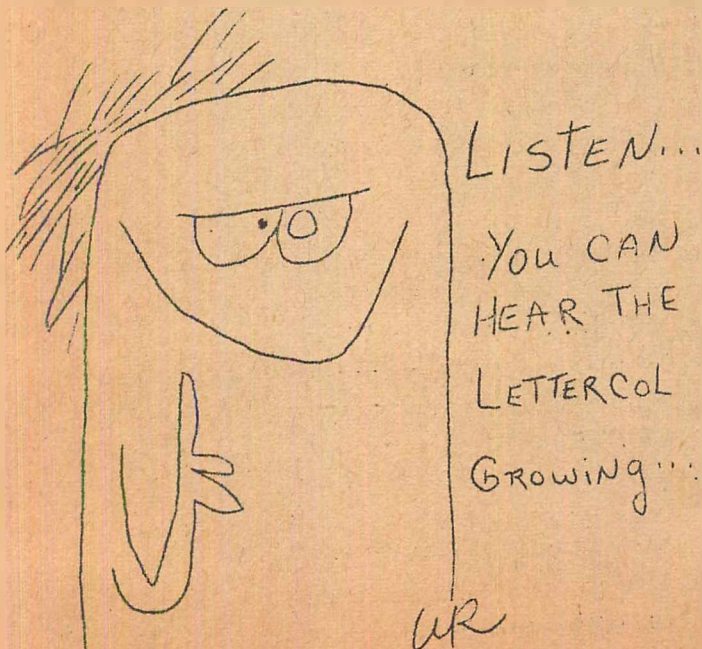
I have the latest FOCAL POINT, the first genzine issue. All weel and good, I suppose, but I liked FP as a newszine, and I'm going to miss it, as LOCUS costs more.

Thanks for adding LOX. I like lettercols. In fact, lettercols are my favorite people. Just be sure they're kept fat and well fed and loved and any normal lettercol will give you eons of reading pleasure.

///// I'm willing to keep the lettercol fat and well fed, if the readers are.

Toomey's "The Eggman" was very good, and he is getting my White Jellybean Award. A White Jellybean Award is quite an honor, only exceeded by a Black Jellybean. Therefore please be very careful with the enclosed White Jellybean and pass it on to Mr. Toomey.

//// Unfortunately, you forgot to write "please hand cancel" on the envelope, and the White Jellybean was crushed flat and died. Besides, I know Toomey won't settle for anything less than a Black Jellybean, anyway.



BRUCE D. ARTHURS About Bob Toomey's
815 N 52nd St. #21 article:
Phoenix, Ariz 85008

I am not here going to go into the merits or demerits of marijuana, because I tend to go into an incoherent rage at the mere mention of such stupidity. Now I don't know who this doctor is who treated Toomey, but I hope I never have to go to him. It seems rather obvious to me that the hot gas and smoke particles from any burning matter, be it marijuana or jellybeans would have a rather detrimental effect upon already inflamed respiratory tissue. This doctor was either a complete idiot or wiped out of his mind at the time himself. In the first instance, he should never have been allowed out of medical school. In

the second instance, he should be kicked out of the AMA, because I at least do not want someone who's freaked out to go around shoving wooden sticks into my mouth. Hopefully, Toomey was smart enough not to follow this doctor's advice.

////// Don't look now, Bruce, but I think you're verging upon Incoherent Rage. You'd do well to take a more liesurely attitude toward things, if only for your own Inner Calm. Rest assured, the staff of FOCAL POINT is going to track down that doctor and committ atrocities upon his bodily person. Only maybe not.

Katz, what the hell is this practice of a blank line between paragraphs? Do you realize there was space for ONE HUNDRED NINETY-NINE lines in all those blank strips? That's enough for another article!

////// I hadn't realized there was all that perfectly good space going to waste between paragraphs. Instead of using it for one article, I think I'll save up all the blank spaces until I have enough to do a 100-page annish.

DAVE HULVEY

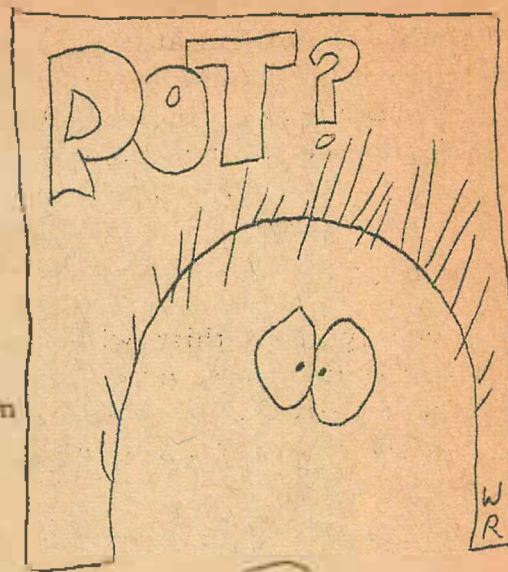
" Rt 1 Box 198
Harrisonburg, Va.
22801

Terry Carr's ruminations on jury duty provide a pleasant and convenient excuse to rap on a very confusing and frightening chain of events that happened to me recently. One of my best Mundane friend's cousins was busted on drug charges (toke the toad and we'll make you trudge that long and winding road,

Spearo laughed). He lives in Newport News where the farce... I'm sorry, the trial took place. The jury couldn't have been a day over 60, and the people on it were just the kind of anonymous strangers that would shake hands with Lt. Calley and whisper a dirty joke about "gooks" in his ear. Of course, they don't exterminate... er discriminate "agin niggers". Why some of their favorite janit ors and shoeshine boys are the direct result of the lustful pleasures of some plantation bound ancestor a few hundred years ago. Hells bells, I know they know the price of prejudice. After all, they sell wooden indians and voodoo dolls to tourists. I imagine when Andy and Miriam returned to Iowa and showed their pornographic treasures to uncle Fred, he just shook his head and said, "What? She had tits that big? I swear, Andy, those people sure can dance and sing, can't they? But workers they ain't. Why, I had to fire one just the other day. Kept wantin' me to raise his pay to equal the others. Dammit, he thought he was a white man! Takes the cake, don't it?"

The verdict was predictable, I suppose. They allow visitors...on election day.

////// Granted that middle America sometimes does pretty awful stuff, aren't you looking at them in the same stereotyped way as they look at you? In other words, aren't you being guilty of the same kind of thinking as the people you're condemning for their narrow-mindedness?



EARL EVERS
1406 Leavenworth St.
San Francisco, Ca.
94109

I'm slightly croggled that you'd actually take my suggestion about running fanzine reviews. (Actually, it's such an obvious idea, I'm sure you would have done it anyway as soon as you switched FP to a monthly genzine. But egoboo is nice anyway.

I really sympathize with Terry Carr, landing on a grand jury is even more frustrating than regular jury duty, because one good person can't hang a grand jury. (Verdicts are usually rubber stamp things by voice vote, or else simple majority votes.) I just registered to vote for the first time in my life, which means I'm elligible for jury duty myself, and as I said, I hope I get on a regular trial jury if I'm called.

BoB Toomey felt paranoid at being offered a joint on a Low Reside street corner? So did I, the first time it happened to me, about seven years ago. There's something about New York streets that breeds paranoia, I guess. (On the other hand, you can see people standing on just about every sidewalk in the San Francisco business district toking on joints -- their employers don't want smoking on the premises, but no one seems to care if people smoke in the street. I've seen people smoking a joint walk right past a couple of cops and neither group batted an eye. Hard to believe, but true.)

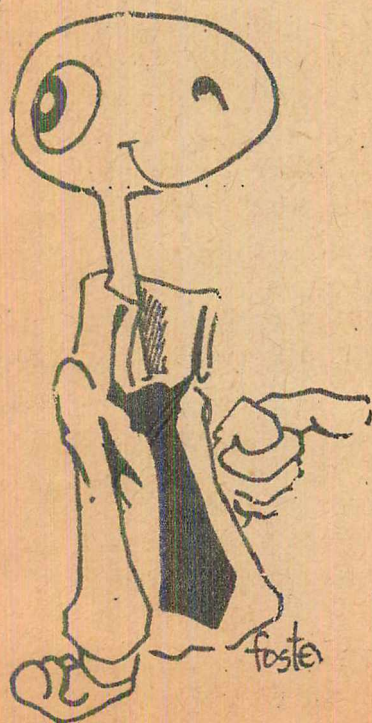
///// Oh, I'd thought about doing a fmz review column, but your comments in ZEEN were the catylist that finally got me doing them again.

TERRY HUGHES
407 College Ave.,
Columbia, Mo.
65201

Terry Carr did a nice job exposing the silent majority. I have long hair, yet I have talked with and know a lot of these unbelievable people. Examples? I talked to some old

ladies who bragged to me that their fathers or older brothers had belonged to the Ku Klux Klan! A person I knew in the dormitory when I was going to college told me that in Baltimore carloads of highschool students, himself included would beat up Jewish people as they were leaving their jobs.

///// People have a surprising capacity for hate. My parents, Jewish immigrants, have as much prejudice as the average redneck. If I thought that talking about prejudice in a fanzine would do any good, I would probably deliver a long preachy sermon. As it is, though, I would hate to see the lettercolumn filled with tesimonials to what we all already know; Middle America is a pretty damn sick state of mind in a lot of ways. I don't say we shouldn't talk about Serious Stuff or pretend problems don't exist, but I don't think there are



many fans who need to be convinced of what we've all been saying about the American malaise. With that in mind, how about we get onto other topics? For example, I have been wondering a lot lately about the identity of the miscreant who sawed Courtney's boat.



30 pages! Wow, I sure feel sorry for whoever had to fold 300 copies; creasing copies by hand is painful on thin zines, a thick one must be excruciating.

I really enjoy the fannish school of zines. Pun packed pages pouring forth humor is such a great relief from seriousness. Fannish writings are great to read, but they are not so easy to produce. Unsuccessful attempts are very painful reading. You and Terry Carr and crazy Irishmen consistantly pull it offturning out delightful masterpieces -- keep them coming.

///// I'll admit that brilliant humor such as Terry Carr offtimes produces takes more work than, say, book reviews, but that's not a debit to fannishness. The best fannish writers are usually the most likely to turn professional, because they've worked hardest to learn the writing craft.

Unfunny humor is always painful, but one doesn't have to be a scintillating wit to be a fannish writer. If one can express himself personally and interestingly, he'll always get a good reception.

Things like what Bob Toomey wrote about must happen in all large cities and all university towns -- you just have to be in certain areas. Yes, the Communal Joint is one of the good things in life, an excellent exercise in paranoia and getting-stoned-in-a-hurry. Far out! as we young people say while garbed in our native apparel.

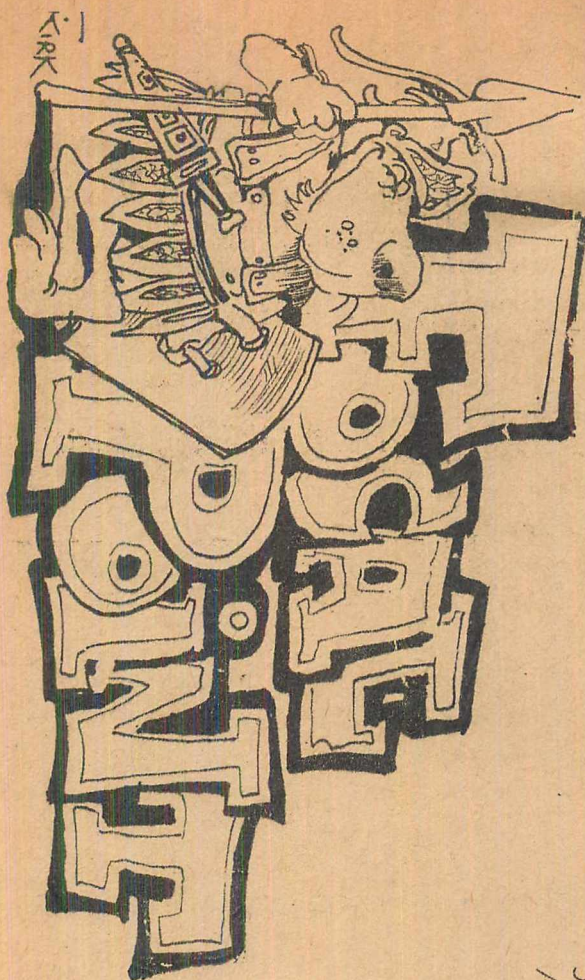
///// Bruce Arthurs may go into an incoherent rage over your letter, Terry, but you're welcome around FOCAL POINT any time. And even more interesting habit of we young people is the endless pipe, yes?

I wish I had more pages, so I could have printed all the fine letters I received on the first genzine issue. As it was, I had to edit those I printed more than I would have liked. I also had to leave out fine letters from such worthies as Harry Warner, Alpajpuri, Mike Carlson, Eli Cohen, and David Williams.

I'm glad to see FP finally starting to pull letters, and I intend to budget more space for the letter column in the next issue. I hope to print Paj and Harry's letters next time, too, since they were both excellent. They arrived a little too close to the deadline to sneak in, this issue.

Hope to see many of you at the Noreascon, and if you don't make it there, then in the next issue of FOCAL POINT.

-- Arnie Katz



(BENT STAPLES, continued...)

editorial, Bill has a column commenting on current films, and the two editors collaborated on an article which acquaints fans with their mundane situation somewhat. Bill is fast developing into a good fanwriter, and Charlene's debut was auspicious, too. His account of his visit to Joyce and me, and her section concerning duplicators, were two of the best things in RATS!

If Bill and Charlene keep it up, I suspect that RATS! will have carved a niche as one of the finest current fanzines before too many more issues.

Content: 6.5

Appearance: 5 Good repro and layout, but sub-par art.

Comment: I'm biased, admittedly, but I think RATS! is one of the best new fanzines.

-- Arnie Katz

.....

Many of you will no doubt remember the grand old days of FP, when there was a column headed "The Ax" and those who were about to be lopped off the mailing list were warned by name. These days, though I try my best, the mailing list is just too big for such personalized service. Besides fans were allowing their subs to lapse, just so they could see their names in print. In lieu of the beloved Axman, let me introduce the New Exclusive FOCAL POINT



Box. If there is an "x" in the box which appears to the left, your time on the FP

mailing list has Run Out. See the colophon for several suggestions as to how you may return to the True Path. If you don't see an "x", why don't you write a letter of comment anyway?

It couldn't hurt, you know.

Arnie

THIRD CLASS

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APT 4B BKLYN NY
11201

