

HOWLS NO. 11

FANGDOM'S FINEST FANZINE



PROSSER

'59

Edited and published by: Mike Deckinger
85 Locust Ave.
Millburn, N.J.
U.S.A.

HOCUS - 11

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Sweden.

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HOCUS #11. Edited and published by Mike Deckinger, 85 Locust Ave., Millburn, N.J. USA. Single copies are 10¢ or 3 for 25¢ but trades accepted too. Also, letter writers and contributors get copies. Published very irregularly. The editor would appreciate a letter of comment on this issue if it says so on the back.

N E X T I S S U E

A Visit with Von Braun by Rick Sneary

Sound Off by Art Rapp

and
other
things.....

You owe me a letter how about
some comments on this

-2-

DECKINGERS'S



I offer no apologies for the lateness of this, except to this who sent in money for sample copies and those who contributed to this. HOCUS is on no fixed schedule, I can't say when or if the next issue will be out, but now I'm busy with correspondence, fanav, member of the new NAPA, on SAPS w/1 (though it should be awhile before I get in) and last and not least, school is supposed to take up some of my time.

There will always be errors, such as there being two page lo's in this issue, which was something I could not help; hence I used the filler page. Also, Lambeck's DETENTION report was supposed to run complete in this issue, but unforeseen complication have forced me to run half now and half next time. I also was forced to omit a few other items I'd been planning to use, they'll be around next time, as well as a longer lettercol.

Last week I sent in my registration for the Pitt-con, and I hope everyone else well, as I'm making an effort to be up there in Pittsburgh over the Labor Day weekend. To register, send \$2.00 (\$1.00 for overseas fee) to: Mrs. Arthur Archer, 1452 Barnsdale St., Pitt. 17, Pa. And besides, the earlier you register, the lower you'll number will be.

I've spent all morning running off stencils, and I'm hoping to finally finish this issue by tomorrow. The cover, by the way, is a genuine original Prosser illo, and so will the one for next issue. I could describe it, but I won't. No justified margins now, also, the reason being that it takes too much time to arrange for them, and they just aren't appreciated as much as I figured them would be.

It would be wise if I used this column as a vehicle to offer humble apologies to all those I may have verbally mistreated through the letters Bruce Pelz printed in THE SAVOYARD. The views stated there were old and a bit distorted one, my true thoughts have changed. All this business in re: to snobbery got too out of hand I believe, with everyone taking it upon themselves to point out what a fool I was. I appreciate the effort fellows, but please, I already know. Believe me, reading just what someone has written, without knowing that person personally can give one a very distorted idea of him. To say something is one thing, but to mean what you say is another. And if I never hear anything else about all this snobbery business it will be soon enough.

Today, for the records, is October 19. It is breezy outside and warm inside; just the proper climate.

Mike Deckinger

30 DAYS AT HARD LABOR

ROBERT BLOCH

"HOCUS might go monthly--maybe."

So says the editor of this magazine.

"HOCUS had better not go monthly, because if it does the editor will go crazy, or gafia, or both."

So say I.

I say it, after a careful survey of fanzines after a period of years; years that began with an endless profusion of fine, regularly produced fanzines, and finished in the present time with a mere trickle of issues.

It's gotten so, that every time an editor makes such an announcement, I sigh, sit back, and add his name to a list containing such famous personages as Benjamin Bathurst, Judge Crater, Amelia Earheart, and other people who have disappeared. Because soon enough, that editor--and his publication, are going to vanish.

I've seen it happen too often. There was a time, like back in 1951-52, when you could scarcely open your mailbox without being hit in the head with a new issue of HYPHEN or QUANDRY. Now HYPHEN comes out once or twice a year and QUANDRY has long departed from the fannish scene. Surely there was no lack of readership or ego-boo for those two publications--it's just that the editors couldn't keep up with the high standards and steady pace.

In the mid-50's, GRUE emerged, and for a time fans were delighted with fat, facilely produced, fast-published issues. Now GRUE, is in effect, an annual. And for the same reasons.

A BAS was for a time the subject of much reader interest; fans could scarcely wait to see the next Derogation in it's pages. When Boyd Raeburn visited me recently we discussed the matter; one of the reasons A BAS has become an annual, or at best a semi-annual is that Boyd had so much trouble thinking up new material for Derogation.

The supply of distinctive, well written material, isn't endless, as he found out; and so did Gregg Calkins who used to publish on a pretty regular schedule with OOPSLA and--but I could turn this little commentery into a checklist by merely continuing to cite the names of once prominent fanzines which are now moribund or quite dead. No, the sources of material are limited; heaven knows that prozine editors who receive two or three hundred submissions a week utter the same complaint, so it's no wonder fan editors face the same problem.

In addition, life has a way of interfering. PEON and INSIDE went off schedule due to unscheduled personal developments in

the lives of their editors. It's too early to talk about FANAC, but at the time of this writing I note that Terry Carr's weekly or bi-weekly news sheet hasn't come my way for almost two months now.

Even the most prolific writers burn out. I predict (and somewhat sadly) that the British Balzac, John Berry, will suffer the same fate as all the rest--if he comes over here for the DETENTION he'll write up an account of his trip, do a few more articles, he may get conned into promising con- attendees, and then (from mid 1960 on) go into a literary gafia for a long while. Or an iron lung (I know these Detroiters).

Look at it this way; a TV weekly variety show--let's take the Steve Allen show for an easy example--is aired 39 times a year, and consists for the most part of guest stars doing their acts. Allen himself, in his introductions, and in his sketches with stooges, probably averages around 20 minutes a week on camera. The wording involved in his appearances is small; I'd say 2,000 words to 3,000 words of writing per week amply covers it. And yet at the end of the program, the credits roll of the names of anywhere from 5 to 7 fulltime (and highly paid) writers. In effect, the monthly "wordcount" of such a show is considerably less than that of the average fanzine, but a crew of at least a half dozen men work around the clock to

produce that wordage--and don't concern themselves with any technical productions or manual labor either.

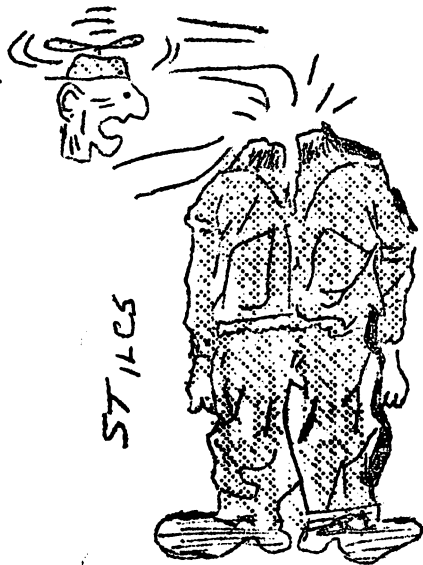
Now granted that the average fanzine doesn't measure up to the Steve Allen show in the quality of it's output--and granted too that we don't intend to stretch a weak analogy too far--the fact remains, writing material of a certain formularized work, week in and week out, calls for a great deal of concentration and effort. More than the average editor and his contributors can hope to bring to an amateur publication on a regular basis.

So magazines go under, fan writers go under.

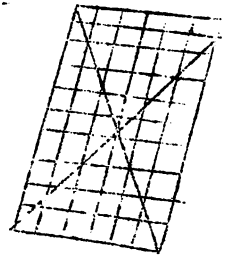
Personally, I'd rather see a zine come out three or four times a year as continue publication, then watch the sudden emergence of some nova which I'm sadly certain is bound to burn out. Because, in fanzine history, when the overproduction phase passes, there is an opposite swing, and fans revert to doing too little.

This observation, by the way, is not necessarily confined to fan publishing; other forms of fanac exhibit the same pendulumlike characteristics. One has only to think of the mad momentum of the average convention committee before the annual event is staged and contrast it with what happens to the majority of such local groups once the con is over--but that's another story.

HOCUS going monthly? I hope not. I'd rather see it keep on appearing.



As I SEE IT



By Barry R. Milroad



As I said last time, this month's column is subtitled "The Origin of Chaos." I'm not backing down now.

In case anyone had trouble reading my page in HOCUS #10, MD's glasses slipped and he accidentally left out a few lines, aiding my incoherence. Enough of this prattle, now to work. No reaction to HOCUS #10 has come in yet, so I don't know how many toes to step on at the moment.

Chaos, by definition, is confusion or complete disorder, by the Army it's SNAFU. But where does it start. Better yet, since it's not eternal, how does it start?

Any small misunderstanding, given the proper sequence of following events can turn into a form of chaos with great magnitude. Both World Wars were organized chaos. So was Korea, so is Cuba now. So is the middle East. In the U.S.A., so is the segregation question after being tossed around for a couple of years. All of them date back at least five years. Two of them date back over a hundred years, one of these over three thousand years.

The World Wars and Korea can easily be traced back in history books. The segregation problem had it's beginning when the first slave ship from Africa came to the U.S. in the eighteenth century. The Middle East situation began in the days of Abraham when he banished Ishmael and his mother.

These small, seemingly insignificant events were the cornerstone of chaos. The initial moves in a grotesque chess game. These things all built up so that we, the descendents of these first blunders, are at each others throats over some completely ridiculous premise like race supremacy. (I hope I'm not sounded like an idealist, will probably get letters from KKK etc.etc. All mail will be answered--should make good kindling in the winter).

Someone once told me that lost causes are the only ones worth fighting for. That's right, and the bull-headed, bigotted causes should be buried--like race supremacy. Apologies to all such people, the-only-reason I've used their chaotic cause so-much as an example was because it's the most omnipresent, most bullheaded, most deserving of iniquity. If you have any comments pro or con about my ramblings let me know. Write Barry Milroad, 91 Locust Ave., Millburn, N.J. Citizens committees send pamphlets--KKK send bedsheets.

A CONNECTICUT YANKEE

AT THE

DETENTION

Bob Lanbeck

I arrived at the Pick-Fort Shelby about 8:30 in the morning, about a half hour before opening of registration. I walked into the lobby, found the stairs for the second floor, and walked up. There were a few fans wandering around out there, and some of the Detroit group were attempting to set up things for the registration. I finally managed to get the; typer, cards, programs, banquet notes, raffle tickets, and themselves organized, and the registration started.

I was looking around for Seth Johnson, who told me he might be at the con, and saw one fan ahead of me whom I figured could be him. When we started to register, he took out a wallet bearing his name, and I knew it was Seth. Introductions were taken care of soon afterwards, though before the con was over I was a bit surprised by the persons I had seen.

After registration was done with, I went into the Shelby room where displays were being set up. Fans were working to arrange lots of pbs and books and mags on the tables.

Then I noticed G.H. Scithers, who was talking to Marion Z. Bradley, which made a total of three fan whom I had heard of previously and seen now. As I went out, I ran into John Koning.

As I was talking with John, Wally Weber came up wearing a three-prop beanie. Then Bruce Pelz came along, and I said hello to him for George Johnson, who had asked me to do that. Wally was also saying hello to everyone for Ed Wyman.

I finally found where the N3F room would be, and went to it. I found Alma Hill inside it. She went out for a moment, so I sat down to wait. I started lettering a sign too.

Walking back, I came into contact with Dick Eney, and inquired about what my chances were of getting FANCYCLOPEDIA II. They were good, it seemed. The next fans I saw were Bob and Juanita Coulson, who were heading for breakfast. John Berry wasn't hard to spot, since he had on suspenders and a wide moustache. Wandering back to the N3F room, I found Art Hayes and Stan Woolstan there.

The greeting, scheduled for 1:00 was held at 2:12. Roger De Vore did the talking, tho Howard Sims was rolled on the stage at one point. Following was the introduction of famous names, including: Dave Kyle, Doc Smith, 4e, Roger Sims, Sam Moskowitz, John Campbell, Bob Madle, Asimov, Leiber, Bloch, Falasco, Ford, knight, Emsh, Merril, Dickson, Shaw, Scortia, Miller, Santessan, Silverburg, Harmon, Devet, Ley, Trent, Eshbach, Mills, Bradley,

James E. Gunn, Gerry de la Rey, Sandy Goldsmith, and Martin Greenburg.

So much for the pros. Here're some of the fans that were there: Rick Sneary, Bjo, Al Lewis, Stan Woolstan, Jack Harness, Wally Webber, Art Rapp, Djinn Faine, Ron Ellik, Al Lynch, George Heap, Ben Jason, Noreen Shaw, John Millard, Boyd Raeburn, Burnett R. Toskey, Art Hayes, Bob Pavlet, John & Joan Mangus, Alma Hill, John Koning, Lynn & Carol Hickman, Andy & Gene Young, Bob & Juanita Coulson, Bruce Pelz, Dale Tarr, Fran Light, Earl & Nancy Kemp, Ray & Suzy Beam, Steve & Virginia Schultheis, Stu Hoffman, Dirce Archer and Lee Jenkins.

Then Dave Kyle mentioned the three sf groups in New York, and introduced: Ruth Kyle, Belle & Frank Deitz, George N. Raybin, Chris Moskowitz, Dick and Patty Ellington, Ian MacCauly, Bill Donaho, Larry Shaw, Sandy Tutrell, Ted & Sylvia White, Tom Condit, and Gene Copman.

Following that, Harlan Ellison was introduced by Roger Sims. Harlan dresses very neat. He had on a continental suit, and horn rimmed glasses, and one of those soft, sickly green hats with a shaving brush in the hatband.

Next it was Poul Anderson's turn, who carefully walked to the speakers' stand. He talked for awhile about how a speech should be given (he didn't do it that way) and how he really didn't have anything to say now, although he had reams for the banquet. He was followed by John Berry who said that he was very happy to be at the con, and gratefully thanked Nick Falasca and Norren Shaw for all the work they'd done on the Berry fund, as well as thank all those who had contributed (tho not individually). He expressed Walt Willis' greetings, and Walt's regrets that he wasn't attending in person. Berry had mentioned TAFF during his talk, and called Bob Madle up to explain just what TAFF was. Madle gave a brief rundown on the history of TAFF, and introduced the present candidates. Don Ford was present and stood up, Bjo had just stepped out, and Terry Carr was unable to attend the con. Sims announced that Willy Ley's speech would be delayed till 4:00. It had been originally scheduled for 3:00.

Dean McLaughlin (the other co-chairman) explained the Auction Block, and called up Sam Moskowitz as auctioneer. (For those not familiar with the Auction Block, the pros auctioned off give an hour of their time to the people get them--the time is arranged at mutual convenience). Sam explained to the slaves that they were up their volunterily, since slavery was illegal, but they'd better do as they were told, and do it of their own free will.

The first pro to be auctioned off was Willy Ley. The bidding started at 10¢ and ended at \$12.98. The bidding on Isaac Asimov began at 2¢. He was finally sold for \$17. The first bid on Poul Anderson was 13¢. The last was \$13. Doc E.E. Smith was next. The bidding started at \$5 and ended with \$12. Five dollar bids were started with Judith Merril, but she finally went for \$15. Emsh was the last of the slaves to be auctioned off. The first bid on him was 10¢ and the last was \$14.

All during the auctioning, Sam Moskowitz (and Asimov) had been clowning around while showing the merits of the various slaves. Bidding for Sam began at one mil (\$0.001) and, after Alma Hill and some others pooled their money, was sold for \$9.

After the auction Sims got up and announced that Willy Ley's talk would be at 4:30, and there would be an sf film shown in the Cass Room at 7:45.

Willy Ley's speech began at 4:52. His topic was "Science Fiction and the first ten years of the space age." He said that the first ten years of the space age are practically nonexistent in sf. No author has really explored the fundamental work in space-flight technology. He talked on various topics, some of them being: What will space pilots eat? (Fish and chlorella ice-cream), jet vs. rocket boosters (he favors piloted rocket boosters), recovery of rockets, how to get a piloted booster back to the take-off sight (it would glide into a convenient air-port, then strap on jet engines and fly back), Project Saturn (an array of eight Jupiter rocket engines in two squares), putting a satellite in a 24 hour orbit for communications between the U.S. and Europe, manned space stations (he predicted a manned space station in 6 years) etc.etc. He concluded by saying that these achievements will depend upon the speed of our competitive resources with our closest rival; the Soviet Union.

A question and answer session followed his talk, and Mr. Ley gave more of his views during it, such as stating that in time communications satellites will be privately owned, although the government will be putting them up.

It was announced that the fan-author's panel would be at 11:00 the next day.

Stan Woolstan made an announcement that confused everybody. It was apparently an apology, but very few people know to whom he was apologizing and for what.

Then we had PSIONICS UNDER FIRE. The panel consisted of Ed Wood, Murray Yako (who did an article on dowsing rods for ASTOUNDING) Ted Cogswell, Tom Scortia, and John Campbell (who in my opinion, had the rest of the panel outnumbered single handed).

Some of the following lines are quotes, some are my comments, and some are paraphrasing, so you'll have to sort it out.

Wood: "Campbell should not inflict his "personal eccentricities" upon the readership." "When he inflicts his enthusiasm on me, I resent it." But... "validity of psionics, that's another thing." Wood just thought Campbell was not behaving as a real editor should. After a real dig "...luckily I'm not a professional author." He also asked whether psionics was good for the magazine: "What are your circulation figures?"

Campbell: "Circulation...has increased...over the last four years...(the magazine is) still monthly (and is) increasing the page number...(the) publisher is happy." "The policy of ASTOUNDING Science Fiction today is exactly what it was twenty years ago...exploring new frontiers." Campbell added that space flight had allready been explored in sf and it was not a new frontier: "We can't rest on our laurels."

Cogswell: "I'm certainly not anti-psionics--I invented the first psionics machine"... he got a radio and connected the tubes with a thread and "I kept calling Mars." "Psionics is a legitimate area for investigation, but Campbell has a responsibility to the readers that he's not fulfilling. I thought the article on the Heironymous machine was fine. But I don't like magical thinking. If these things works...if Campbell is going to bring them up...he should follow them up. Campbell has a responsibility

as an editor not to pass these things on without following them up." "There should be controlled experiments...body of evidence... experimental techniques."

Campbell: "...dowsing rods...have you ever tried it?"

Cogswell: "No."

Yako: "Experiments have been run. Consolidated Edison...has twenty men in service...(who) carry coathanger rods...80% of the time they work."

Cogswell: "Set up scientific experiments and then you can say...15,20 people went over the ground...here are the results."

Campbell: "What you want...(is) a controlled scientific experiment. What we have presented is 'direct personal experience.'"

Cogswell: "Why isn't there experimental evidence?"

Campbell: "The experiment is carried out as dialy experience in Flint Michigan."

Scortia: He set up a test. He had a pipe put in one of 12 identical compartments, then had that person who put the pipe in the compartment leave the room. Then he brought in a subject with a pair of rods. It doesn't "work a damn" for some people, while for others it works perfectly.

Campbell: "When they bounced a signal off Venus they fed it through a computer. It said that odds were 1 out of 10,000,000 that the experiment had failed. They use these odds as proof that they've bounced a signal off Venus. But when Rhine gets odds of 1 out of 10,000,000 they won't accept it as proof. Scientists should name specifications of evidence... (and) then stick to them."

Then it got wild. Campbell and Cogswell got going too fast too quote, although it made good listening if you paid attention. Cogswell said that he wanted experiments. Tom Scortia (who got into the brawl) said that he'd done experiments and that what Cogswell wanted was an explanation. Cogswell said he did not want an explanation. Scortia said: "If John W. Campbell did not exist, it would be necessary to invent him." ... "I don't know whether I beleive or disbeleive in psi." He also stated that it's hard to control experiments in psi because like in the 12 compartment experiment, the experiment could be explained by clairvoyancy or telepathy. And he wanted to know how you set up control conditions? He concluded by saying they should put more scieence in- to psi investigations.

Campbell: "TRY IT!...Get in and pitch! ...the dowsing rods don't do a damn thing. It's the guy holding them that does it." (He explained that they had done experiments with rods mounted on platforms and the rods only worked when held in the hands. And that his publisher is the "most expert operator with the rods that I've known." He added that psionics had been in pragmatic, practical use, for years).

Someone answered that witchcraft had been in pragmatic, practical use for years.

Campbell answered: "Precisely!"

The audience groaned. It was about 6:50 and the panel broke up. I went out for dinner. I went to the place that I had gone for lunch, but had two hamburgers there instead of one.

When I got back I found Gregg and Khan Trend, and we wandered all over trying to find some action. Someone told us that the Detroit suite was room #1837. We took the elevator to the 18'th

floor. No room #1837. After riding the elevator for a while, and asking around, we found it was room #1873. We went back up and entered. We had just gotten settled one someone shoos us out, explaining the suite was being closed for the evening.

So we left for the Cass Room where they were going to hold movies. The film was an extremely amateurish production. No sound on the movie, but they had a tape which was more or less synchronized with the film, no words though, just music. The film concerned the adventures of a group of space travelers from Earth. They land on one planet, see what is obviously a beach scene played in fast motion, and leave. On the next planet they are captured by BEEs, which were kind of cute looking, at that.

At 8:20 I went down to the Coral Room where the fancy dress ball was to be held. Practically no one was there. Later, the band started warming up, and some more people began to arrive. Eventually, some people in costume showed up. Randy Garrett was Henry VIII or something similar; Karen Anderson was a vampire (with wings). I'm indebted to the Philly group's 3-shot for the list of awards:

MOST FANNISH: Bill Donaho - dressed as a certain Robin Hood character, carrying a sign reading:

FIRST FANDOM
IS NOT DEAD

--Friar/Tucker

BEST BASIC ANATOMY: Nancy Shapiro - Spacegirl in green.

MOST NAUSEATING: Al Lewis - victim and Puppet Master, (I missed this one).

MOST BEAUTIFUL: Joe Christoff (I missed this one too).

CLEVEREST: Betsy, William, and Margeret Curtis - Mathematical family. Now this one I saw. I got a pretty good look, since they were at the next table. I don't know who was which, but one of the women was A and A. Her front was A and had three breasts, labeled true, false, and true. Her back was A and also had three breasts, which were labeled perhaps, improbable, and maybe.

The man was psi (or null-psi?). The costume liked pretty much the same on both sides, like an astrologer's get up.

The younger woman (or teen-ager) was E and E. In back she was E. Cartesian co-ordinate paper was pinned on the top of her costume. Down around her buttocks she had a graph of asymptotic lines approaching plus infinity. In front she was E. Saddle-shaped space outlined her breasts, while curved space was around her abdomen and suchlike, down to her legs.

The reason I missed most of the things was I left at 10:30 to catch a train, being too cheap to get a hotel room.

And now a couple of quotes from the Philly 3-shot to show what happened after I left:

FROM THE WARDEN'S OFFICE: The management requests that as of now, folk singing in the hallway of the 17th floor will hereby cease, at 4:30 in the morning. Attention: Djinn Faine, John and Joanne Magnus, George Heap and others. They had names, but at 4:30 who can remember them?

The latest official count of registrees is 521.

(This was part one of Bob Lambeck's report; part two will be in the next issue).

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

Advertising is accepted in this section upon receipt of the usual fee of one letter containing the advertisement to be placed.

WANTED: "Astounding" and "Amazing" magazines prior to 1929. Pay top rates. Also, top prices for all "Galaxy" issues before November 1936. M. Deckinger; 85 Locust; Millburn, New Jersey. No phone calls, please.

FOR SALE: One issue Sears, Roebuck catalog for 1957. Has been stored more-or-less out of doors. Write: Range headquarters, Running S Ranch, Nuevo Laredo, Guadalajara, Mexico.

WANTED: Baby sitter. Contact Papa Dionne.

WANTED: Junk furniture. Any condition. Best prices. Abbie's Antique Center; 11 Brokenup Ave.

FOR SALE: America's finest traditional antiques. Abbie's Antique Center; 11 Brokenup Ave.

WANTED: Women. Contact Range Central; Sierra Frio Range, LAZY J RANCHES; Post Office Box 445; Roswell, New Mexico. Call prepaid Main 2-0382 extension 43.

WANTED: Armed guard. Must be on the alert and capable of working against big odds. Contact Range Foreman; Sierra Frio Range, LAZY J RANCHES; Post Office Box 445; Roswell, New Mexico. No telephone calls.

FOR SALE: Slightly used pistols. Priced for quick sale. Murder, Incorporated. Brooklyn, New York.

WANTED: More women.

WANTED: A man. Contact "Woman", telephone FIreside 9-6328, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

WANTED: Telephone equipment installers. High wages, good working conditions. Needed at once to assist in work on unexpected need of equipment in New Mexico. See Mountain States Telephone office.

WANTED: A divorce. s/Husband

WANTED: A man. s/Wife

WANTED: Supper. s/Child

FOR SALE: Slightly used 1959 pick-up truck. Am no longer allowed to make pick-ups. Write "Newly Wed Husband" c/o box 6, this publication.

LOST: 1759 model Thunderbird. If found please contact "Chief", Comanche Indians, Warpath Reservation, Oklahoma.

FOUND: 1759 model Thunderbird. Owner may have same by paying for thunder stolen by this bird. Contact Paleface, Lincoln, Nebraska.

MEN WANTED: Need experienced auto repairmen. Joe's Garage. 1297 Northeast Western Avenue. Will train beginners.

AUTO REPAIRS: Only factory-trained experts work on your car at Joe's Garage, 1297 Northeast Western Avenue.

FOR RENT: Recently vacated room. Good view. Low rate. Contact "Warden" at Sing Sing. Also, a few vacancies will be available overlooking river.

TRADE: Second hand suit. Good condition but needs cleaning. Gray and white stripe. X. Cahnvik; Bowrey, New York.

URGENT NEED: Will pay top prices for air pollution control devices. At present need method of removing old tires, stripped gears, broken glass, crushed pedestrians from air of large cities. Also, want method of preventing overaccumulation of Sputniks in upper atmosphere. Contact Patent Office, Washington 25, D. C.

WANTED AT ONCE: Anti-gravity device. Contact "Launching Officer"; Cape Canaveral, Florida.

WANTED: Three minutes of Stage One rocket fuel. Call MOonflight 2-6000.

FOR SALE: Western boots. Hand made. Eastern Boot Shop, Millburn, New Jersey

WANTED: Western boots made for feet. Contact "Sorefoot" Joe; Route 11 Box 31C; Albuquerque, New Mexico.

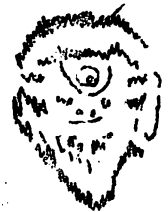
WANTED: Money. s/Editor, HOCUS.

Have you seen the new Cape Canaveral countdown? It goes:

10	7	4	1
9	6	3	Oh,
8	5	2	Damn!

THE TROUBLE WITH AUSTRALIAN FANDOM

BY GRAHAM B. STONE



In Australia, fan activity goes back before the war, when there were a few fans in Sydney, and even fewer elsewhere. There was an abortive SFL Chapter in 1936-7, then the Futurian Society of Sydney, founded in November '39, continued up to late 1943. It was suspended till June '47, when most of the same group reformed it. After several years of small scale activity on the traditional pattern, with a membership up to a score or so, there was a change of pace. Activity was very irregular, with meetings going on regular, but anything else dying out from time to time; about the end of 1950, things were very dead and called for a revival. Instead of merely following on and livening up the existing group, we started a new idea: The Australian S.F. Society, of which I was the Secretary. Its purpose was to find and recruit s.f. fans, and especially to get groups started in other centers. It was very successful for about three years. Local doings were promoted too, but the FSS gradually became a body to which only a minority of local fans attended. We had many non-FSS members regularly coming to meets, and even doing things on their own account, and in the end it was more or less inevitable that we should have a rival organization, and the community split up into a violent schism. But before it got to that stage we had a clubroom, meetings three times weekly with attendances averaging about forty on the main nights, and all kinds of things going on. By 1956, we had ended up with a handful of fans, and nothing much doing. And there has not been a serious move for revival ever since.

The FSS emerged from the failure with a small membership, and it's fairly extensive library, which is now in my charge. Not having adequate premises makes it impossible for me to open it to local fans. But I've been running it for postal borrowers outside Sydney, and the service is gradually extending. At present I'm trying to get a weekly meeting in the city started, but there's not much enthusiasm. So any activity of the FSS will

be managed for the time being by it's executives. Which is NOT saying there can't be any more activity. Besides the library, we have a campaign under way to bring in more associate members from the whole of Australia to use it, and we are planning a mimeographed publication titled "Notes and Comments" which will take a more sober view of sf than most fanzines do. There have been published two indexes to Australian s.f. magazines, with similar coverage planned for many Australian pamphlets of a few years ago, and there is even an Index to British SF magazines which will be published soon.

I intend to soon bring out a small pamphlet explaining the ISFS and giving some of the activities here. There used to be handbooks put out by that unfortunately titled affair; Operation Fantast, and that is the kind of thing I will eventually be aiming at in my publication. The first issue will have a list of addresses of the main s.f. organizations, with a few words about them.

As for other Australian groups. Well, the ASFS as I said, brought many fans to the lights, and mainly as a stunt to focus attention on it, the FSS sponsored a campaign in Sydney in 1952. One Melbourne fan came, and after a high-pressure campaign from this end, a club was started in Melbourne. The FSS put on two more conventions in the next two years, and they were strongly imitative of the American conventions.

Our conventions were frankly publicity stunts. We knew that practically all those attending would be from Sydney and nearby. But we did try to get a few from other areas, and at the business sessions called on them to talk about their fields. By the third Convention it was fairly successful, and actually gave the impression of something like a genuine meeting of representatives from several groups. To read the report we got out of the affair, you'd think the movement was pretty firmly established, but actually, it was mostly a false front.

The Melbourne group was mainly juvenile for a long time--there were adults, but they didn't act that way. But they have come along gradually. Now they have a small clubroom in the city, a fair-sized library, and a weekly attendance of two dozen or so. For a long time they published several fan magazines which were awful to start with, and didn't improve much. Mervynn Bins, the present leader occasionally produces a sheet with news of this group. It's a good idea, but it's appearance is terrible.

In Adelaide, after a great deal of fumbling around, the dozen or so known fans there got together in August 1953 and agreed to start meeting fortnightly and to also set up a library. They're still meeting in the volunteer librarian's home, but the collection has greatly increased, and now numbers more than three thousand separate items. They are a happy group, but they're uninterested in fan publishing or any other of the numerous activities, and hence, they're rarely heard from. But I certainly would call them the most successful fan club in Australia. Their membership now reaches near 100 or more, and the average attendance of the meetings is about thirty.

It's alive Professor-----I tell you the mimeo is alive.

I've seen both these groups, having recently gone on a three weeks trip to Adelaide with my wife, and have stopped at Melbourne on the way back.

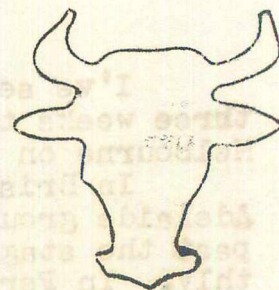
In Brisbane, a few fans got together in the same way as the Adelaide group, and about the same time; but they have never got past the stage of twenty-odd people, though they still meet monthly. In Perth, though, there was a forceful fan well known overseas; Roger Dard, and a couple of others with plenty of ideas, but somehow nothing has ever been done in the way of organizing. In Hobart, Tas. we have the internationally known Don Tuck of the Handbook and a very few others. Don started a Hobart Futurian Society during the war, but it did very little. There have been clubs that began and lapsed in Canberra (which is our national capitol, even though it's in reality, just a small town). There have also been similar groups started in Goulburn, NSW., Newcastle, NSW. and Mt. Gambier, S.A. All with the same results.

We of the FSS are not in favor of most of the doings of fans overseas. We don't support the adolescent antics of U.S. conventions, and we don't approve of most fan publishing; we don't like to see s.f. linked with fantasy, comics, and what have you. We believe that though the early fan movement was well meant and did some good in the thirties, we feel it's done more harm than good in the present. What SF needs now is some more adult and critical support, some practical information services, and some serious discussion and study. And a general effort to raise standards all around. Because the ISFS seems to offer a hope of progress, we're supporting it, though we don't expect much result from it for a while. We frown on the emblem of Saturn and a rocket not only because SF is more than space flight and shouldn't be tied to it, but because these symbols have been used by comics and the worst SF enough to make them unsuitable for us.



BY
ALAN
DODD

FOOD OF THE DODDS



"You know Alan--this is all wrong," said the Professor, "It can't be left to one man. I just can't make up my mind, you see. I think YOU should share in the decision."

We stood for a moment.

Then I said, "Well, it's not very difficult Professor--after all, we've only GOT sardine or cucumber sandwiches left. Which is it going to be?"

He thought for a moment.

"The sardine," he said with great deliberation.

The professor and I had been working for many months on a new creation--The Food of the Dodd's, which caused immense growth in any organism that absorbed it. Unfortunately, it had gotten out of hand, owing to the professor's absent-mindedness and what with giants, huge rats, mice the size of ponies, ponies the size of elephants, elephants the size of mammoth things, quite a bit was out of control. So much so that we had to destroy the food with the exception of a small sample which we stored in the small room where we kept our old clothes. Not to be used again, but just to remind us of the fact that we occasionally do produce an invention that works.

Unfortunately, we hadn't reckoned with the moths.

Being full of old clothes, the room accumulated it's natural share of moths, which made their home in our clothes. Constant eating away of these had left not much in the way of clothes at all, and when the pocket of one coat which contained a jar of the food finally gave way with a rending tear, it spilled the container onto the floor, and the food was loose again, and so were the moths...

"Do you hear a banging?" inquired the Professor one morning, peering up from his microscope trying to identify his breakfast.

There seemed to be a hammering coming from the old room in which we kept all the old clothes and rubbish from time to time. We both investigated the clattering--and opened the door.

"Well," said the Professor ten minutes later, "We can't sit around here without any clothes on--haven't you got anything at all we can wear?"

"The food is in control again," he moaned, "giant moths--eating everything, all the clothes, all the--hmmmmmm. Shall we put on these suits of armor and venture out?"

Our assistant Brewce, panting, entered the laboratory.

"The moths are heading for the coast," he said.

"The coast," I repeated, "how do you know?"

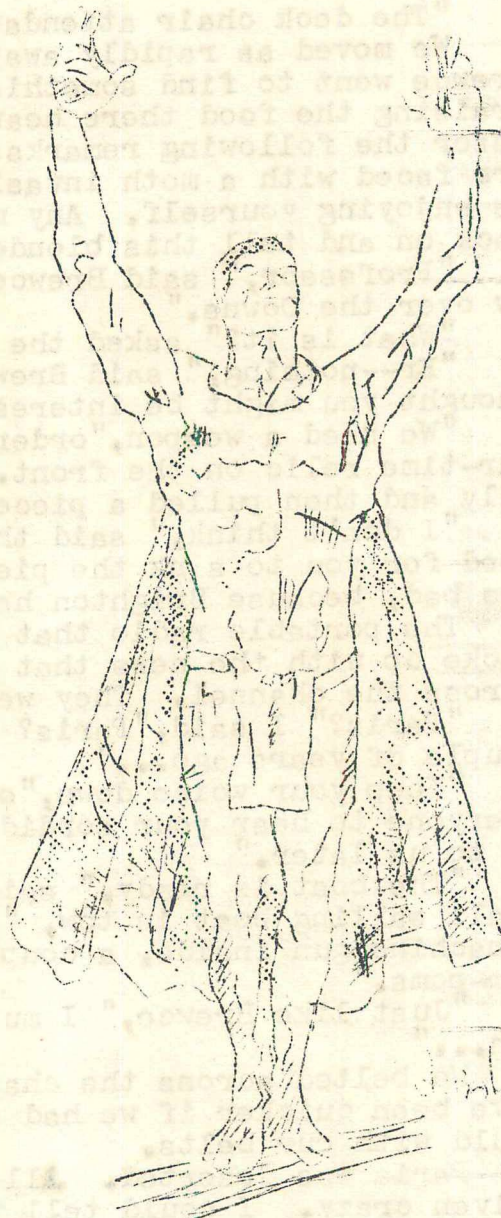
"There's a horde of them flying over Victoria Station, that's how."

Victoria Station? For all points South--For the continents--for Brighton...

"They're heading for the beach," roared the Professor frantically, "all those woollen bathing costumes, that's what they're after. We've got to stop them. We've got to warn the people. We've got to warn all those girls, we've got to--hmm--y'know Alan, if we got a fast train down there we could be there in time to watch it happen."

"Professor," I said disgustedly, "how could you suggest such a thing? That two men of science such as you and me--you suggest we should go down to Brighton in our suits of armor, just to watch a lot of moths stripping.....ummm---when did you say the next train leaves for their??"

Although the suits of armor were pretty cumbersome we both finally winched and levered ourselves onto the train and were down there in an hour. There was no sign of the moths at all--everything was the same as it always was. People all on the front, along the piers, on the benches, signing their names "Mr. and Mrs. Smith" in the hotel registers. We took our seats on the bench, selected a couple of deck chairs, and sat down.



Here we remained for almost two hours. There was no sign of the giant moths that had eaten our clothes. Perhaps, like the weed killer that causes giant growths in plants to kill them, the food had destroyed the moths in the same way.

"Quick Professor--quick, MOVE," I suddenly shouted to him.

"Why, what's happening? What horrible turn of events could it be?"

"The deck chair attendant, he's coming to collect the money."

We moved as rapidly away from the beach as possible, while Brewce went to find something further to eat. He came back praising the food there heartily, which received from the Professor the following remarks: "How many times must I tell you we are faced with a moth invasion and all you seem to think about is enjoying yourself. Any more of this and I'll put my armor back on and tell this blonde to stop rubbing oil on my back..."

"Professor," said Brewce ominously, "There's a huge dark shadow over the Downs."

"What is it?" asked the professor anxiously.

"Er--nothing," said Brewce, "just a huge, dark shadow. I thought you might be interested..."

"We need a weapon," ordered the Professor, pointing to the war-time relic on the front. A twenty-five pounder. I sat there idly and then pulled a piece of string at the bottom of the gun.

"I don't think," said the Professor severely, "there was any need for you to sink the pier like that. But it's really not too bad, because Brighton has two piers, I'm sure."

The portable radio that Brewce had been carrying suddenly spoke up with the news that the moth fleet had been seen heading across the channel. They were on a direct route for Paris.

"Paris?" I said, "Paris? I remember when I was in Paris a couple of years ago..."

"Keep your voice down," ordered the Professor, "we don't want everyone to hear your sordid reminiscences-----Whisper it to us later."

"The boat is ready," said Brewce, suddenly appearing with a small sailing boat in tow, "I've taken the precaution of putting a machine gun inside, a couple of lugers, a Mauser and a pair of pom-poms."

"Just like Brewce," I muttered, "always thinking of his stomach..."

We belted across the channel in double-quick time. It would have been quicker if we had some oars, but we did the best we could with our belts.

Paris was deserted. All the population must have been driven crazy. I could tell this because they were all hiding in the river, and everyone knows that in Paris it's the same as driving one in Seine.

"Look," shouted Brewce, "at that tall building. The moths have attacked and stripped it--only the scaffolding is left."

"That's the Eifel Tower, it always looks like that," I shouted.

But of the moths there was no sign. We sailed back to England. But we made an error. There must have been female moths in the cupboard, and on the way back the boat was attacked by them.

After all, as everyone knows-----female moths cannot resist a sail.....

A reply to Mr. Hamlin and Mr. Durham
/by Bill Durkom/

In the last HOCUS, two "gentleman" were on hand to try to persuade me to mend my ways and be a good boy. One wrote on baseball, a subject so dear to my heart, it gives me heartburn every time I think of it. The other misguided one preached to me in a manner befitting a back-to-God evangelist, and made more of an idiot out of himself than any evangelist could. Since these two are just begging for repkies, I shall take it upon myself to put them back where they belong. On second thought, I think they allready know where they belong, and so would any-one else who's read their two items.

First Mr. Hamlin, since you come first in the zine, and you at least are braver than my other adversary; you give your name while "Bull Durham" is too much of a hit-and-run coward to admit his. You remind me of the average, obnoxious baseball fan who is out to show the world what a great and universal game it is. And you even admit to being a sports reporter, which is one mark against you allready.

Why have their been critics of baseball? Does this question really puzzle you so much that it frequently robs you of nights of sleep? The reason there have been criticos of baseball is that it deserves to be criticized, just like most any other sport does.

I am not a frustrated athelite as you so snidely hint. And if I was a frustrated athelite, I would not be frustrated because of baseball. I can only think of the morons whose one ambition in life is to become a famous ball player, and to this they practice extremely stenuosly. Idiots--all of them. I wouldn't care to have the so called "talents" that many of these morons posses, what kind of talent is it to be able to hit a ball farther than the other guy with just a wooden stick. Sure some can do it better than others. But does this take talent? No, it just takes practice. And I certainly wouldn't waste my time practicing anything as foolish as that. As far as the money is concerned, of course I wouldn't object to having what some of those idiots do.

You cansider that "the sheer drama of eighteen superbly endowed young men is something that has no equal in suspense". I say baloney to this. I'd rather look at eighteen superbly endowed young WOMEN, than eighteen superbly endowed young men. And what suspense is present???? The last (and only) time I viewed a game, I didn't find any suspense present. All I found there was boredom. I could have fallen asleep, but I saved myself from this fate by turning to something else on the t.v. No, I must say I've never seen Babe Rauth strike out, but I strongly doubt whether I'd be moved to tears by viewing such a great moment. And if someone named Bobby Thompson hit a homerun, good for him. I really don't care whether he did or didn't. Imagine, going to pieces just because some charactor named Willey from your state was able to play a little better than the usual riff-raff. Tsk, tsk, your sentamentality is loathsome, Mr. Hamlin. And if experience any "mind soaring excitement" when you see the ball drop into the stand, I strongly recomend that you see a good psychiatrist. Perhaps he can do something to help you, though in your case, curing seems like an impossibility.

And I hope that will succeed in putting you in your place, Mr. Hamlin, and if it does, I'd advise you to stay there.

Now we come to Mr. "Bull Durham" who is obviously afraid to voice his views under his own name, so he has to pick a pseudonym that is insulting to me. I don't even know whether I should take the time to read Durham's babblings, since it's probable that you have really nothing to say, and your thoughts lack complete conviction if you are so unsure of yourself that you won't even use your own name.

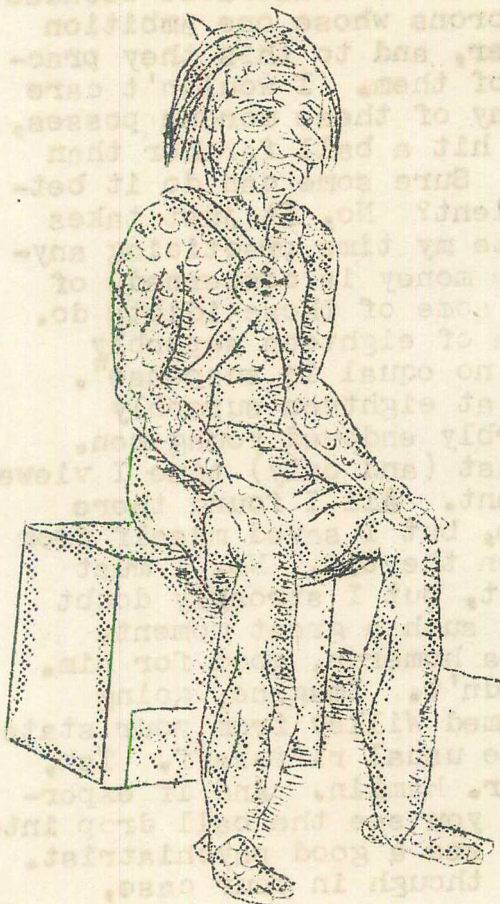
My, my Mr. Durham, you intimate that my outlook on life seems "to hide a great hatred for society's mores." Congratulations on your expert deductions, I wonder how many weeks it took you to figure out that fact. No doubt you needed assistance to, in determining my true nature, but you finally arrived at a conclusion, and for your efforts deserve your own key to the washroom, or at least visiting privileges.

I say the only immensity contained in the Bible is that thousands of people are willing to accept it as a holy book without making the slightest verification toward it's true meaning. It's ok as fiction, but once you start believing in the Bible it's time to call the men with the white coats. I am not the only one who knows the true nature and value of the Bible, there are others, these "sheep" as you put it, who have a faint

inkling of it themselves. But most of them are so bound by custom and tradition that they are afraid to rebel against these forces, and thus are content to be led around by the real hucksters.

How good a judge of sanity am I, you ask. Well I know one thing; I know that it would be best if you were put away for a short "rest." I find your attitude even more deplorable than Mr. Hamlin's.

There is no proof of value to religion. It does not mean anything, and can offer no proper justification. Yes, I'd call him a heel to his face, and I'd like to do the same to you. If enough people wise up Durham, and realize that persons like you are in the minority and are to be ignored, something might come of this world. When my day of judgment comes, if it does, I'll spit in his eye. And so Mr. Durham, it's revealed that you have an astounding mind, keep it up and I predict someday you'll be safely locked up in a padded cell.



VIC'S PICKS

by Vic Ryan

THE PLOT AGAINST EARTH by Calvin Knox and RECRUIT FOR ANDROMEDA by Milton Lesser. Ace double books D-358. 35¢. 250 pages.

THE PLOT AGAINST EARTH by Calvin M. Knox (Bob Silverburg) is a poorly written, hurried development of a not especially new theme. This theme concerns the mysterious "hypnojewels", that can corrupt a man's mind and make him an incurable addict; the similar story that immediately comes to mind is Webber Martin's "Spacerogue" in the last issue of INFINITY. There, however, the jewels were called Starstones, but were equally illegal. In fact, Martin's short novel is infinitely superior to Silverburg's novel.

Lloyd Catton has been assigned as a figurehead member of the Interworld Crime Commission. Earth is a relatively new member of the "Big Four", or the four major races of the Galaxy...so Catton isn't expected to have any power; his appointment is merely a kindly gesture.

From here on in, Bob spoils the plot and ending with little hints dropped here and there, some very bad characterization, and a poorly conceived villain whom everyone knew was The Bad Guy. Not a good book at any means, but interesting reading...if only to find the obvious inconsistencies present. Budding authors: read this to see what not to do.

RECRUIT FOR ANDROMEDA by Milton Lesser has such great possibilities that it's regression seems all the worse. You know, the bigger they are, the harder they fall...

Every year thousands of young men are chosen for the mysterious "Nowhere Journey", the title of this dangerous mission isn't exaggerated, as you'll see when (and if) you read this. Anyhow, Kit Temple has been chosen and fondly says good bye to his lover, etc.etc...as no one has ever returned from the mission in thirty years. This story is so sensitively woven that it showed real possibilities. Just where "nowhere" is, why scores of good men are stationed there, etc.etc. makes an intriguing book---however, near the end, Milt seems to have grown tired with it, and been unable to come through with anything resembling a decent ending.

The general impression that these books leave is bad...both seem rather hurried (as do most ACE books). Both fall short on the endings and lack really good characters. Recommended only for completists and rich people. That's all. **AVOID!**

EDITOR'S NOTE: The magazine version of the Lesser novel originally appear in IMAGINATION in '53 under the title VOYAGE TO NOWHERE.

ALIENS 4. A collection of stories by Theodore Sturgeon. Avon T-304, 220 pages, 35¢.

I've always liked Sturgeon. I liked THE DREAMING JEWELS, A TOUCH OF STRANGE, THE COSMIC RAPE, and others. Now, along comes ALIENS 4, a collection of 4 longer Sturgeon pieces. Suddenly I don't like Sturgeon anymore.

All four are reprints; one from F&SF, another from aSF, another from VENTURE, and the last CACTUS DANCE, one which you might not have seen previously, from LUKE SHORT'S WESTERN MAG.

The first story; KILLDOZER, from a '44 aSF, concerns a mysterious life form which inhabits machines. Naturally, in the interests of a good story, this form hates humans...and it happens to have 8 of them cornered on a small island while working on an engineering project. The 70 pages of this story concerns itself with the plight of the engineers, or allegorically, the triumph of Good over Evil. A very poor story in my estimation, lacking in enough characterization to supply one hero, without the introduction of a second. Actually, the machine is by far the most human character. Wasted effort.

CACTUS DANCE is a poor bit of style copying...so poor I'm not even sure who it's supposed to be--perhaps Lovecraft. It's the story of a strange little girl who can't seem to take roots (read the story to understand the pun), and a rather cracked professor. Anyway, it's in narrative form, with the narrator narrating the professor's narration. And the idea isn't so hot--besides that, the slam-bang ending is milding and not at all terrifying...or even interesting.

THE COMEDIAN'S CHILDREN, a novelet from VENTURE, is probably the best of the lot. It has a plot, even though the real meaning is easily deduced. Only average, but the best of these four.

THE (WIDGET), THE (WADGET), AND BOFF is a confusing and meaningless, if not plotless, bit of space filler from F&SF. Undoubtedly one of the worst short novels I've read.

Sturgeon throughout these stories seems to have one thing in mind: word rate. Every story is fully three times the needed or desired length, with the possible exception of THE COMEDIAN'S CHILDREN. Ted tries to be a little Poe-ish, I think, with his detailed prologue technique, but where Poe's jabbers serve to stimulate interest, Sturgeon confuses, bores, and almost drives away the reader. Pity the poor layman who picks this up and either judges this as the best Sturgeon or the Best S.F. or both, cause he's in for a big letdown. A poor book, definitely not recommended.

THE FOURTH R by George O. Smith. Ballantine books no. 316 K, 156 pages, 35¢.

As demon knight would say, "This is science fiction?". And maybe he'd be right.

This story is about a young man by the name of James Holden. Although James isn't a natural genius, he has the use of an amazing invention conceived by his parents...an invention that makes learning a snap. Soon, at the age of 5, to be exact, James has the knowledge of a high school graduate.

James and his parents are returning home from "Uncle Paul's" house when suddenly there's a blow-out and the car swerves madly down an embankment. James is unharmed, but finds both his parents dead, and believes that somehow "Uncle Paul" had something to do with it. The latter becomes his guardian, and possessor of the teaching device.

James leaves home filled with hatred, with the mind of an adult. He is found though, and returned home. Several months later he attempts to run away again, and is again re-captured. However, a third time he manages to make good his escape and stays away for many years, absorbing knowledge and perfecting his machine.

A court battle follows soon after Paul finds him--Paul claims that James has been deprived of his youthful happiness, James doesn't deny this, but begs the court to grant him full rights. The legal points here are outstanding, as each side presents infallible bits of logic.

Of course the sf gimmick in the book is the educator. But is that really fiction in our modern world of sleep-teaching, hypno education, etc.etc? If your interests are confined to strictly sf with the ordinary ingredients of hero, heroine, adventure, sex, intrigue, then don't bother with this book. You won't find any of that in here. However, if you enjoy a fresh, challenging concept, and a real human drama, with the most plausible of facts, then this is the book for you. The characterization, in most parts, is superb; the plot exhibits no basic structure flaws; motivation is always clear, even if Right and Wrong aren't.

I can't recommend this book too highly. Buy it.

Vote for clean government, vote for Brother Frank Jares.



L E T T E R S

Ron Ellik, Berkeley, California

About the Squirrel Cage; I admit there is a thin dividing line between serious writing and tongue-in-cheek, but if you have been reading SHAGGY since it's resurgence, you'll note that there has never been an installment of my column (until SHAGGY 43) that was serious. I don't write serious stuff very much, and I almost never write serious Squirrel Cages.

The N3F has a very large complex of some sort--they can't take criticism. Well now, I think it just depends on what kind of criticism it is and how it's offered. If you get someone who says I don't like the N3F because no BNFs are in it, and then says it's bad BECAUSE of that reason, well I don't think that's a very valid one; the N3F is NOT a club for BNFs--Md!. I consider my remarks in SHAGGY as constructive criticism, yet they have aroused enraged roars from other Neffers.

This over-defensive mechanism exists in the N3F, and it doesn't exist in most other groups to this extent. Most fan-clubs can take a little fun poking or serious criticism with at least a shrug--but the N3F usually assume it to be a direct attack.

You know, if I was serious about destroying the N3F before it destroyed me, I'd have to wear ear-muffs to do it. The screams of anguish would deafen me, otherwise.

Answer me this: If the N3F is neither the worst group nor the best group in fandom, what is the best, and what is the worst? It's hard to give a direct answer to these, N3F serves a purpose, just about the way all the others do. And besides, you couldn't lump every fan-group together, because they are of different kinds; there are the apas, like FAPA and SAPS, there are the "correspondence" groups like N3F and ISFCC, there are the "home" groups which meet at one particular location periodically like LASFS, ESFA, etc.etc. and I don't think they can fairly be compared with one another--Md!. I just want to know if you have any set standard for measuring these things, because I don't. In my mind, an organization makes the grade or falls short by virtue of fulfilling it's main purposes. I don't think N3F has fulfilled its purpose until now...at least, not in the last ten years. Whether it did before 1947 or so is unknown to me, but since Widner, Speer and Ackerman ceased to be officially associated with the club, it has gone to the dogs.

You're wrong: if the club started conscripting BNFs without making them pay it would not be good for it. I am assuming that by BNFs you mean people who have been around fandom a loooong time. Deckinger, if the club did that they would have just that much deadwood on the roster, because these persons are busy. They might have time for a letter now and then--but they couldn't chain themselves to RRobins, or join the Welcommittee, or publish for NAPA. N3F would just not benefit from doing something like that. When I was "conscripted" without having to pay for my membership, I was fortunate that I had time to answer most of the Welcommittee letters I got etc.etc--because Bjo didn't pick somebody like Tucker or Willis to draft. If she picked anyone like Tucker or Willis or Burbee or any BNF she'd have found her joke falling flat. These people haven't the time for N3F.

I think the club could benefit more by just buckling down (as it is doing) and working on itself from the inside. This new follow up bureau looks like a good thing.

The "inner circle" of FAPA could mean any of a number of things. Usually it means the Brain Trusters (see FANCYCLOPEDIA II). When I mentioned it, I was referring to the circle of Kteic-correspondents--William Rotseler's mailing list. The Kteic readers are almost all FAPA members, and they (we, I guess, because I'm one of them) are one of the most closed circles in fandom. No-body gets in unless he is a personal friend of Rotseler's. That's about as closed as you can get, I imagine. When Kteic was being published by mimeo a few years back I was on the outside because I'd never met Rotseler. Now that it's been revived I'm on the inside and I like it.

Anders Froberg, Sundsvall, Sweden

SF Times published in Sweden can be of much interest to the fen. In the U.S. the fen already know the by getting the zine S.F. Times (yes, after the news is only a few months old too--Mä!) but here it is different. Many fen cannot read English and they are interested in getting news from the fan world overseas. And we (Sture Sedolin, Hallstrom, and I) will carry more news, and things like that, than the American edition. We will also translate the con reports.

Yes, ALIAS JESSE JAMES was a howler. But still funnier was SOME LIKE IT HOT with Marilyn Monroe. It is the funniest film I have seen in a year or so. The only complaint I can give is that it was not in color.

But ALIAS JESSE JAMES, like all foreign films, was shown in Swedish, with corny translation strips at the bottom of the picture. Crazy, because you can't look at the picture and read these notes at the same time. And SOME LIKE IT HOT, I have read, like many other American films, was made in two versions, one for the American audiences, and the other for overseas audiences. The overseas version features Marilyn in a much, MUCH shorter dress and other things like that.

Vic Ryan, Springfield, Illinois

I don't like the idea of placing anything on a fanzine's cover but the title, ish, and number, and illo.

I remember George Wells saying Durkom is a snob because he doesn't like anything. A snob supposedly is one who automatically disagrees with everything, and doesn't like other people's ideas. Are the british wrong because they drive on the left side of the road and we drive on the right? Does that make them snobs? Aaaahh, we've got another snobbish bit going, this must die before it erupts into trouble again--Mä!

Ken Smith, Austin, Texas

My knowledge of Francais is very limited, but honi soit qui mal y pense--which of course translated means, "Honey, hand me my suit and pants." Or something like that. I hate to get technical.

Of course you're right, some people can not be taught without first destroying some little tidbit of knowledge they accept as truth. I grant you this.

But the line is drawn thinly between the desire to correct a person for his own benefit, and the desire to consider a person's feelings. It depends on the situation, the importance of the gain in knowledge in relation to the loss in ideals. And, of course, before one can correct, one must be sure.

Floyd Zwicky, Rockford, Illinois

I received HOCUS #10 a while back, but this is to inform you that the jewels were not enclosed, please send them by return mail. I don't care if you smuggle them or ship them by telekin-esis. It looks like Uncle Sammy's boys enjoy to keep things for themselves, because others have complained about the lack of jewelery too. Maybe I'll try to smuggle pornographic pictures, which should prove easier--Mö.

I like David Prosser's art very much. May his shadow never grow less if he still has one, that is--Mö.

In the Feb. '59 issue of "Scientific American" was an article which Paul Shingleton should have read. It's about pidgin languages, and says there are ones based on French, Portuguese, and other languages, besides English, but those based on English are spoken by the greatest number of people, and are of several kinds. There is a chinese pidgin, for instance, but the most popular is Melanasian pidgin, spoken in the South Pacific islands.

Pidgin languages are definitely not haphazardly arranged words; they are real languages, with rules of pronunciation and of order. Through the work of missionaries, Pidgin English has a written form. Vowels are simple, pronounced as in Italian, a few example are:

MELANASIAN PIDGIN	SOURCE WORDS	MEANING
BAGARIMAP	PUGGER 'IM UP	WRECK
DISFELA	THIS FELLOW	THIS
HAISIMAP	H'IST 'IM UP	LIFT
MI	ME	I, ME
PLANTIM	PLANT 'IM	BURY
TINKTINK	THINK-THINK	OPINION

This gives an idea of how the words are formed. But they are used partly according to English word, and partly according to native language order. Structure is simplified too.

Paul mentions some Australian slang that was new to me, but then Australia does have some odd expressions. All countries have such expressions, we even have pretty fancy stuff of our own in the deep South--"Ef'n I knowed it was you, I'd a retch out and wove."

Tom Milton's letter interested me. What in the world is a pure Anglo-Saxon, and how would you go about proving it? And if the Germans are inferiour in any sense of modern accomplishment, I would be interested to know where it is. However, let's not give them more credit than is due. Of Tom's list, von Braun, Wagner, Bach, and Marx were germans, but Steinmetz and Einstein were Jews, Frued was an Austrian, and Rembrandt and van Gogh were both Dutch.

And as for Barry Milroad, there's an easy way to get all advertisers to make honest and logical claims for their products. All you have to do is raise the national I.Q. to the point where

too few people will swallow the garbage they hand us. And until they do that, I'm afraid we'll have to put up with these damn lies, half truths, phony medical claims, cosmetic ads full of sickening vanity, pictures that show how your innards work etc.etc.

Ken Smith writes a good letter. But (and you see I'm on both sides of the argument), he is trying to prove the truth of the Bible by quoting from the Bible, which is hardly good logic, isn't it? And he has fallen into that same trap which so many have occupied before him. He has assumed that without religion there can be no moral conduct or thinking. Not so at all, my boy. Read Julian Huxley. There certainly are people who's self-respect will keep them on the ethical track. It is no difficult task to demonstrate that unethical conduct is impractical and senseless, apart from any religious teachings. And it sounds insulting to humanity to imply that the only thing that keeps it good is a fear of hell.

Ken is simply arguing in favor of good as opposed to evil, and where will he find an opponent? I would suggest that if the safety of your life, limb, and material property in the U.S. depended on those of sincere religious convictions, you'd better buy a bunch of good strong padlocks and a shotgun.

Vincent P. Nowell talks of sf and such. So a western story or an sf story is not a type of story but just a background? Me boy, you are here talking about space opera. If you can take a western story, and shift it to another locale and still have a story, then you didn't have a western in the first place. Same thing with sf, if the alien element is not necessary to the plot of the story, then you don't have an sf story. Take the usual: boy meets girl, girl gets into a mixup, boy rescues girl, boy gets girl. With this plot, nothing on Earth can make the story a western or sf or anything else. But mainly, sf is speculative, it asks: "What if...?"

Arthur Sellings, London, England

I haven't had anything in F&SF yet, it must be Arthur Porges you're thinking of. (Probably, I also have the habit of confusing stories by Ed Ludwig and Edward Wellen, telling Ludwig I liked something he wrote which was really done by Wellen--Mdl). I've found that selling to the big 3 hinders one from selling to the others; perhaps one's style gets directed more to one mag than another. Notice that it happens with many other writers, like Marion Z. Bradley in F&SF, Eric Frank Russell in Astounding, Sheckly and Pohl in Galaxy. Galaxy gets first look at my stuff. There are only those 3 that pay decent rates these days, so unless I write something which I think has a good chance with Horace Gold, I prefer to sell here. And Ted Carnell is much more eclectic with his policy, with the result that his mags NEW WORLDS and SCIENCE FANTASY are much more interesting than many U.S. ones. But, you know, British popular publishing is pretty mediocre and unadventurous. AUTHENTIC was making money when it was folded by the publishers, because it was the only mag left they published, after switching to pbs. This notwithstanding that their distribution channels are just the same for mags as pbs. I know Ted (E.C.) Tubb, and he was most disappointed at having a paying mag taken out from under him. Ted Carnell is an old friend of mine too.

Clay Hamlin, Bangor, Maine

Oh, sure Gem Carr and I won't get into any arguments, not really. I do know her lots better than that. Heaven knows I have no intention of starting any fights, and I won't give her the chance. (Famous last words--Md).

Convention? Well I'm considering it seriously. Only met one fan in person so far, and if she is anything like the rest it will be worth attending at least one con. Why not this? Hope to see you and many others there if I go.

This will certainly puzzle you, and it may not make any sense, but there is nothing whatsoever legally wrong with any of Bo Stenfors' illos. I have some many, in fact I have a very fine one in the Gazette, and they are all within the law. The illustrations are not nearly so important as the intent, and the suggestion. Pose, expression, and things like that. (Well I find nothing objectionable with Stenfors either, but I can't see where Prosser's cover on #10 can be classed as pornographic--Md).

Uncle Alan Dodd, Hoddesdon, Herts., England

I received a cheque for a guinea last week--about three dollars in American currency--for my "literary efforts" to a magazine: PICTURE SHOW, which I sent a letter of comment too and they printed it. (Too bad they don't have the same policy with the U.S. prozines--the old FUTURE (as a pulp) used to pay \$2.00 for every letter they used, but this practice was soon abandoned.

Wherever you live in England you can only get two tv stations on your set--The BBC, which is the main station, and the I.T.V. which is the commercial tv station. The BBC covers the whole of England with its one program, but the I.T.V. is divided up into separate areas, because the transmitters are so powerful. That means that near London we get a different commercial station than the others do up north. We have "77 Sunset Strip" while the northern stations don't receive it. (I wonder if you're treated to any of the American crooked tv quizzes too--Md). Television here is limited for each station to have a maximum of 50 hours a week. Naturally both vie for the other in competition, by putting the best shows on in the evenings and weekends.

Think of the agony you have of having seven different stations to choose from. Why I'd keep turning that dial around like a combination of a safe trying to choose something. I'd never be satisfied with what was on, with so much else to choose from. (It really isn't as exciting as it may seem, since the dial I'm twisted most frequently is the one that says ON-OFF, and usually to the latter position.

It's probably more difficult to get into the U.S. for the English than vice-versa. There are so many regulations, declaration; etc.etc. you have to sign saying you won't try and overthrow the U.S. government (Well in the shape that it's in now, I don't see how much more damage can be done to it--Md). And then you have to have a personal interview with a member of the American Embassy to get permission and vaccinations and...but the list is endless, I fear. And of course the prices are higher in the U.S. than here. (I don't care, in FANAC it said you visited the Bay area, and I trust in FANAC--Md).

Last week I saw BLONDE IN BONDAGE, a Swedish film made in Stockholm, but with American voices--probably dubbed. They had a strip-teaser in the film too, but she didn't take off much--just the outer dress and gloves, and the audience has to be easily satisfied with it.

Robert N. Lambeck, Birmingham, Michigan

During the summer, which I was at Summer School in Connecticut, we went to visit Yale one Friday. I saw the two linear accelerators they have (like cyclotrons, except that they're circular).

The small one was behind 3 inch metal doors. One comment someone said was: "What worries me is what's so powerful they have to keep it behind every door?" We had lots of fun running all around the thing while the guide kept yelling something about a 22,000 volt charge on all exposed metal surfaces. Gad, those tubes they had were hot; glowing like a salamander with a hotfoot. They also squealed very nicely.

They're working on some neat project their. Slapping an oxygen isotope ion into U-235 and making a bomb out of what is effectively a transuranic element, which should make one hell of a bang if it goes the way it should.

Jane Carruther, Columbus, Ohio

I don't see why it is that sf fans spend so much time working on these amateur magazines (fanzines, she means--Md) when they could help the field so much more by trying to write science fiction. It seems to me that every time I pick up a mag the same old names are on the contents page, especially this Bob Silverburg. (As I understand it, Silverburg rents space for his name in mags, he can write a good story too; sometimes, it's just that was a tremendous output like his, the majority of it has to be hack work--Md).

Do you trade copies of HOCUS with any of the magazines? If you did it would be an easy way to earn free copies. (No, I don't indulge in such a practice, and I don't believe that any fanzine do, after all, fanzines are put out for fun and ego-boo, prozines are putting out for a more realistic reason: making money, and I'd like to see one zine that isn't--Md).

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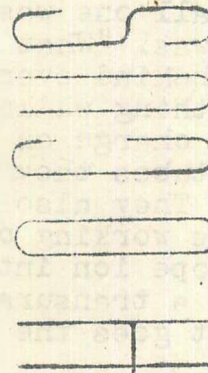
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