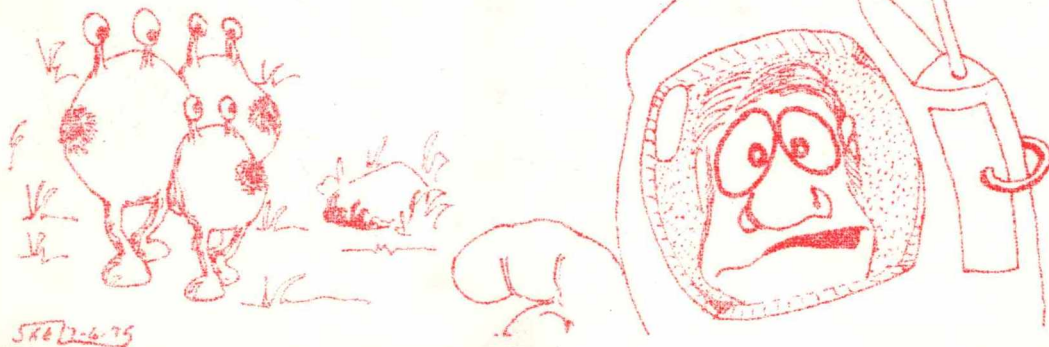


KNOCKERS FROM NEPTUNE

Gee!! Hasn't your Knocker
got big wives!!



"There once was a knocker from Neptune
 Who, when pricked by a truly inept goon,
 Cried at that jester:
 'May your Reality Tester
 Shriveled up like a too-longly kept prune!'"

THERE!! HAS THAT WHETTED YOUR APPETITE, FOLKS? WELL, NOW
 SEE INSIDE FOR YOUR FANTASTIC FREE GIFT!!!

Greetings, Earth Mothers everywhere. Anything you say may be taken down and used in a fanzine article sometime. However, back in Reality 001, this is the second issue of KNOCKERS FROM NEPTUNE, and not a device for removing stones from thoats' nostrils. It is dated October 1975, local time, and emanates via the GPO machine from Mike and Pat Meara, 61 Borrowash Road, Spondon, Derby, DE2 7QH, England, Sol III. It is available for (preferably) substantial letters, not necessarily of comment, for most fanzines in trade, and for devices for getting stones out of thoats' nostrils. Also available for old fanzines, and dollar bills (\$1 per copy). It is polecat publication number 12, and my thoat says would y ou hurry up with those devices, please, because breathing through his mouth makes his tongue sore. Thankyou.

====+====

The interlineations thish come mostly from a remarkable fanzine produced by Art Wesley and Norman G. Brown in the fifties. It was called FILLER, and consisted of 40pp of nothing but interlineations and short humorous quotes. The faned's dream. More from this next time.

====+====

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* indicates a mention rather than a quote.

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John BRUNNER - THE WORLD-SWAPPERS (Ace)	Novel	55	p71
Algis BUDRYS - MAN OF EARTH (Ballantine)	Novel	55	p71
Arthur C. CLARKE - AGAINST THE FALL OF NIGHT (Pyramid)	Novel	57	p87
Arthur C. CLARKE - THE CITY AND THE STARS (Corgi)	Novel	77	p87
David DUNCAN - OCCAM'S RAZOR (Four Square)	Novel	25	p71
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The two-digit code refers to Gil Gaier's rating system.

FILMS & TV:

The Man With X-Ray Eyes p45; The Four Musketeers p56; Metropolis p68; Barry McKenzie Holds His Own p74; The Donald Duck Story p75; The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad p79; Space 1999 (TV) p87; Flesh Gordon p93.

ART: Front cover, p75 and p88 by Skel; p93 by Sam Long; Cover limerick by Pauline Palmer. (Those of you who didn't get KFN 1 probably didn't get the point.)

Apologies for the rather inferior standard of repro this, the result of a misguided purchase of cheap duplicating paper. Fans should avoid Messrs. Vlasak & Co. Ltd. (VH Business Systems Ltd.), Soho Mills, Wooburn Green, Bucks, HP10 0FF like the plague. Next ish'll be better, I promise.

"Dere's a hole in my mailing-list, dear Liza, dear Liza..."

9 July

Christ! Over a week into July and I've only just been able to make a start on KFN 2. It's taken me ten days to get KFN 1's problems sorted out, like: having run off 115 copies (my biggest ever print run - beeg deal) I found myself stuck for enough people to send 'em to. Amazing! About 80 copies spoke for themselves (and were promptly belted in the teeth; no fanzine's gonna talk back to me an' get away with it - no sirree.) But for the other thirty-odd I had to scratch around in reviewzines and lettercols to find enough recipients who'd be likely to respond by way of loc or trade. And yet, to get the best value out of the time spent laboriously hunting and pecking at my typer, I'd prefer to up the print run to a really big-time figure.....150, say. So what's the answer? Find me 150 fen who'll respond in some way or other at least every other issue, and I'll be happy. These lithomaniacs like Jim Goddard and Rob Jackson must do huge print runs to make it worthwhile, so where's this huge reservoir of secret fen whose locs and articles somehow never get published, and whose fanzines somehow never get reviewed. Eh?

THE COLLATER'S REVENGE (Cert 'X')

9 July

Revenge is sweet - so says the proverb. But the most fattening vengoance of all is the collater's. It happened thusly: over the penultimate weekend in June we were chez Skelton (yes, them again - who'd have guessed?) for a quiet fannish weekend after a weary week battling the crotins of Mundania. The Skelperson had made a special effort to get INFERNO 8 ready so's we could help him collate it. Wasn't that nice of him? And we got roped in: as bottlers, assistant, home-brew, 2nd. class. Quiet weekend? Hmph.

Now, the following weekend, being the last one in June if you've been paying attention, les Boax, Gray and Meg, were to be special guest artistes at Bowland House, so although we hadn't originally planned on being there, we decided to make it two weekends of the trot. Early in the intervening week it occurred to me that by dint of much typer-bashing and duper-cranking I could have KFN1 ready in time for them all to help collate. (Those innocents who have never knowingly collated during their adult lives may not realise that no matter how much collating assistance you have, the job won't really get done all that much faster; the mind-numbing tedium of it all tends to be replaced by a warm fannish glow, however.) Anyway, came the Wednesday and a phone-call from Skel explaining that les Boax couldn't make it for various reasons irrelevant here. "But come anyway," says he, "else we'll both go spare sitting here on our ownsomes thinking of fanmeets that might have been." "Okay", I replied. "Oh, and how do you feel about collating 115 x 48 pages?" The ensuing silence told me he was having difficulty putting his undoubted enthusiasm into words. "It'll be ready then, will it?" was the gist of his eventual response.

It was. For your edification I have derived the following collater's revenge equation:

$(75\text{copies} \times 44\text{pages}) + 3 \text{ staples per copy} + 23\frac{1}{2} \text{ pints homebrew} = (115\text{copies} \times 48\text{pages}) + 5 \text{ staples per copy} + 115 \text{ free gifts to assemble, fold and put in envelopes} + 115 \text{ spines to be taped.}$

There now - wasn't that a fun equation? They just don't write equations like that anymore. Maths isn't the fun it used to be, y'know.

All you completist fanzine collectors out there are really gonna have a hard time, heh heh. KFN 1 had three different coloured spines: I did the brown ones, Pat did the black ones and Skel did the green ones. Cas? She just sat on her arse in the other room and watched Kojak on the telly. No sense of priorities, that woman.

Some issues of LURK 7 had a backcover printed on card, instead of paper. These issues are extremely rare, and cost £5 each. Cheques etc. should be sent to the usual address.

This new fanzine title and its obvious abbreviation is already causing some hilarity. During the aforementioned weekend, Skel, in search of his personal copy of KFN1 was heard to bellow up the stairs: "Cas, have you got KNOCKERS up there?", a question which really defies rational analysis.

Thursday 10th. July

Letter from Ben P. Indick, 428 Sagamore Ave., Teaneck, NJ 07666, USA:

Dear Pat and Mike, Famous Vaudeville Team,

B'gorra, no byes, and it's shure sorry I am I have failed to reply to your fine fanzine for so long. Especially seeing as this is the last issue, as you say. It does seem a fruitless exercise to loc a final issue. Almost necrophiliae. (Unless one does not like it, in which case is it necrophobic?)

Cy chauvin's interview of John J. Pierce seems to flog a weary horse, but I imagine it was written a while back. In any event, what it says still is pertinent, for many of writers are themselves flogging a dead animal, that of "writerly timeliness". However, I guess a man can't be faulted for experimenting in a newer idiom. I tend to take a less conspiratorial view of the whole thing, you see. And, after all, if what a man writes does not sell, he'd better wise up and try a different technique. Perhaps the ultimate im New Wave -- whether simplt vagueness, existentialism, or whatever, is Delany's DHALGREN. Reviews in the USA have been very mixed, from scathing, bored, moderate to rave. Has it appeared in England? Any definite reaction? The critic of the New York Times claimed it made all other sf "pulp", a rather ungracious remark and unnecessarily denigrating, since pulp has come to be held in high esteem lately. Finally, I would add that "new wave" does not have to be pessimistic, unless one interprets the words that way; I feel one can use new techniques of writing and still have an upbeat story. It's all up to the writer. Then again, maybe I haven't read enough of the stuff...

Damn! (Mike speaking here) I forgot to inset your letter, Ben. This Macallan's twelve year old malt is certainly good stuff. Anyway, welcome to the ranks of the LURK letterhacks, even if you are a bit late. Hopefully my KNOCKERS will maintain your interest.

I'm not quite sure what you mean by "writerly timeliness"; is it the obsession that some of today's writers have with present-day problems? If so, I

and the only really worthwhile story in the collection, 'The Ubiquitous You', an early story about cloning. Easy reading, but little more.

Fritz Leiber apparently rates CONJURE WIFE as his best novel. I haven't read enough of his longer fiction to form an opinion, but I hope that eventually I'll disagree. It took me a long time to quit balking over the basic premise, that all women are witches, controlling the actions of their menfolk by means of their spells. Once I did that, I found a pleasant enough story, but not one that I felt was going to surprise me at the end, nor one that had me peering around into shadowy corners. Interesting for the descriptions of the 'gadgetry' of white and black magic, but nothing to get really excited about.

The backcover blurb states that Wyman Guin's THE STANDING JOY "...nearly defies description." It certainly defies mine. I hardly know where to begin to talk about such a puzzling, apparently meaningless book. There's a lot of stuff about the 'equations of human meaning' which I suspect would have baffled even Einstein; there's something about a hormone injection which produces multiple orgasms in males, which doesn't seem to tie in anywhere; and there's an alternate/parallel worlds theme to it as well. Any opinions on this book would be gratefully received, as I expected something very good and was very disappointed that I couldn't understand it.



Some of the nicest fans I know are people! (Evelyn Gold, MidWesCon 3)



Gil Gaier, 1016 Beech Ave., Torrance, CA90501 sent along a couple of flyers giving information on his book evaluation schemes which he uses in The Project, the purpose of which he says "is to help the new high school SF/F teacher and the one who 'got stuck' with the class and knows little about the reading in the field to do the best job he can." Two methods of evaluating books are described, the simpler of which is the Personal Preference Evaluation Chart. I've already used this system to evaluate the books mentioned in KFN 1. Basically it's a two-digit code, translated as follows:

- 95 = one of the best books I've ever read
- 85 = excellent/superior
- 75 = good/enjoyable/recommendable
- 65 = above average
- 55 = average/satisfactory/readable
- 45 = below average
- 35 = poor/weak
- 25 = bad/terrible
- 15 = I couldn't finish reading it

FINE TUNING: Let's use 75 (good/enjoyable/recommendable) as an example. You may substitute for the second number (5), a 6, 7, 8, if you wish to suggest the story was extremely good, particularly enjoyable, or highly recommended. Go downward from 5 (4 or 3 or 2) if

the story was pretty good, rather enjoyable or mildly recommendable. (Avoid using 0, 1, or 9 as a second number.)

Gil goes on to say that this is of course a subjective evaluation, and that the fine tuning element is particularly important. Okay, say I, but what happens if you take 35 as an example? Does 38 mean extremely poor/weak? In

which case one is showing a higher number for a lower evaluation, something which doesn't tie in with the 75 example Gil uses. I think some clarification on this point would be useful, Gil; surely I can't be the only one who's confused.

The other system is the Book Evaluation Fill-In Sheet, a rather more complicated system, and too lengthy to describe here, but one which I feel is more likely to give a 'true' evaluation of the book in question. It gives a similar two-digit code.

The reason I'm devoting so much space to The Project isn't because I feel it's the best way of selecting good sf, or sf suitable for reading and discussion in schools: I don't. I'm hoping that by responding, and encouraging others to respond, I might encourage Gil to publish some sort of survey of the total response at a later date. Anyway, if you're a fan who discusses books or uses book reviews, I suggest you use the PPEC system, or get your reviewers to do so. If you want further information, I'm sure Gil will be only too pleased to supply it.

Vernon Brown, c/o Pharmacy Dept., University of Aston, Gosta Green, Birmingham B4 7ET. sent along some information on Eurocon III, and requested fanzine publicity in an attempt to encourage more UK fans to attend. Glad to oblige, Vernon:

Eurocon III will be held at the County Town Hall in Poznan, Poland, during August 1976, probably from Thursday 19th. till Sunday 22nd. Attending fee is \$10 USA, Fr50 French, or equivalent. The programme will contain all the usual elements familiar to UK con-goers, and simultaneous translations into English and other languages will be provided. Accommodation will be either at the Hotel Mercury or at the local students' hall of residence - your choice. If you intend to attend you must register before December 31st 1976 ((it says here, but I presume 1975 is meant.)) Periodic information is available from Vernon for 50p or \$1.50 USA, deductible from your fee if you later register. Vernon hopes to organise a trip-cum-holiday if there's enough support.

Speaking personally, I've never been much attracted by the idea of a european con, certainly not in Poland anyway. Why go all that way to see a bunch of people you can see at Novacon or Easterncon, and for less money? If I had the money available I'd rather put it towards a USA Worldcon trip.

Pete Roberts sent the CHECKPOINT fan poll results: not a single mention for me anywhere. I'm not surprised, of course, but I had hoped that somehow, somewhere my name might just creep into the second five in some category. Oh well.....better luck next time. With three publications and one joint publication to my name already this year, I ought to get in somewhere by sheer weight of numbers.

Wednesday 23rd. July

About time I tackled this lovely large pile of locs and fanzines which has built up during the past fortnight, I think. Right at the top is this, from Gray Boak, 2 Cecil Court, Cecil St., Lytham, Lancs. FY8 5NN:

"I must admit approving of the idea of saving postage by getting together with other faneds to post fanzines together. It would be a real ace idea to get a few more, maybe thirty or so, together, and choose a time when all the fanzines have to be ready, then mail them all out at the same time. British Fandom leads the world again!

"I don't think that fans are more intelligent than any other group of people who read books. I think that they are a bit more aware of "man-kind" and its progress than most people, though they do seem to be somewhat naive when it comes to people as individuals, or politically. I don't think that any truly intelligent person could get too heavily involved with fandom, however. It is too time-consuming, too petty, and provides too little in the way of concrete returns. But 'tis fun, sirrah, and I likes it fine. It is more than just a hobby, less than a philosophy for the Universe."

"...maybe thirty or so..."? Ah, the sarcasm of the man, I thought. But then I sat down and made a quick list of the currently active UK faneds I could think of, and soon came up with a surprisingly high total of 25 - and that doesn't include anything in the fantasy, horror or comix fields. I realise that your tongue was somewhat displaced to one side or the other when you made that suggestion, Gray, but with the savage new postal increases due in September (hopefully this issue will be posted just before they take effect) I can see more faneds, especially those who live close to each other or get to see each other often, setting up joint posting arrangements.

There is quite a bit to be gained, or rather saved, by such an arrangement: for example, about 50 issues of INFERNO 8 and KFN 1 were mailed jointly, as Skel's and my mailing lists coincided to that extent. We split the saving down the middle, and saved ourselves about £1.60 each on those 50 copies. In addition, if each participant takes his turn in doing the addressing, packing and mailing, there is a saving in work too. Obviously, the more faneds who participate, the greater the saving to be made, but a little thought will reveal the problems associated with a mailing group larger than, say, three or four. I was going to do some calculations based on a group of ten or so, attempting to take account of all the likely snags, but it ain't worth the effort.

I'm not quite sure about the intelligence/books tie-up, since if there are people like me who read little other than sf, bookwise, then there are very probably people who read little else other than 'nurse' novels, Micky Spillane or the 'Confessions of a Window-Cleaner' type of soft porn. Naive people tend to be honest, at least, and in that sense are preferable to some of the world-weary and 'sophisticated' types one meets. You may be right about the time-consuming nature of fandom leaving the truly intelligent person too little time for other things; unless one is petty by nature, one can mostly avoid the pettiness of fandom, however, and I'm not sure exactly what constitutes a concrete return, except I'm sure it'd hurt my foot if I stood too close to the letterbox of a morning.

I agree 100%, but.....

Eric Bentcliffe, 17 Riverside Crescent, Holmes Chapel, Cheshire CW4 7NR,
says:

"Thanks for KFN....so far I prefer LURK, but I'll be interested to see what you make of the new title. There is some entertaining writing here - in but whereas with a genzine such as LURK (or even, a fanachronistic fnz like TRIODE), you can easily pick first the items you want to read ...consigning the others to the fate of a possible-read-later...with zines such as KFN you have to suffer the dross to find that which is worth reading. This, of course, is a criticism of not only KFN but all personalzines.....it's no doubt a finely fannish device of getting you to eyetrack the zine from cover to cover. Vairy cunning. Some fans, because they have the facility to write interestingly about everything can pull it off; make the journey from Cover to Bacover a rewarding one - KFN doesn't quite manage that yet, but I hope it will.

"Of course, the other thing I have against fanzines of this type - and I admit prejudice - is that they have the effect of turning the segment of fandom they inhabit into a sort of directionless super-apa. Comments on comments on comments. And Ghu knows U.K. fandom is already so inward-looking that more of the same doesn't help!

"I know you consider TRIODE to be an anachronism and in the strict sense of the word I agree with you - it is, as were all fanzines of its period an International rather than a British fanzine. I've always considered the most fascinating facet of fandom (how's that for an alliterative subconscious!) that a Crossbow Tester from Fort William can exchange views and fnz freely with a Pesticide Producer from Poughkeepsie. Fandom now, Mike, is downright parochial here on this uptight little island, and it's the poorer for it. And whilst TRIODE can be considered a true anachronism when compared with other U.K. fanzines, there are plenty of good genzines still being published abroad.

"Naturally, TRIODE is anachronistic in other ways....I belong to a different milieu. I don't like pop music, so T will not feature reviews of the latest lp's. But....is this anachronistic? I'm not bending your ears with reviews of the latest Woody Herman release. Hmmm, quite probably not. I suspect it's the style of TRIODE you find anachronistic; I could change that but I probably won't....for all I'm doing is having fun publishing the material I like in a format I find convenient. Who knows.... I may even create a new/old trend!!!"

You're right - it is the style, the general appearance of T which I find anachronistic....not that I don't find it enjoyable, it just doesn't seem to fit with today's scene. I'm not sure what you mean by International and British fanzines; I consider KFN to be an international fanzine, purely because more than half my locs, trades and circulation is non-UK. Is UK fandom really parochial? Do UK fans really not welcome, and actively seek, contact with overseas fen? I find that hard to believe. Certainly there are more local groups than there used to be, and this could lead to ingroupishness, but the group scene is only really getting back towards the norm after a severe decline. In reply to your point about personalzines I would say that by its very nature a personalzine has the same mixture from one cover to the other,

and is not designed to have separate 'items', some to be picked out and read, others to be left till later. It may have its high and low spots, depending on how the writer was feeling at the time, or what was happening, but that's all part of the fun, to me at least; you're never quite sure what to expect next.

Once again you write a provocative letter, Eric, for which I thank you. Hopefully your comments on the parochial nature of UK fandom will provoke some interesting response.

TIRED? DEPRESSED? TRY FANDOM

24 July

I was feeling pretty pissed off after a mediocre day at work; I had to walk home because the car's off the road having its roof resprayed; and I had blisters on my toes, through wearing shoes after eight weeks of wearing nothing but sandals on my feet, which were hurting like hell. Yep, I was feeling a mite low. Then I got home and checked the post, found I'd got three good fanzines, one of which had printed my loc, had a nice tea with a smashing white wine, found a fascinating programme about foxes on the telly, and then, to cap it all, about seven o'clock Frank Denton rang up, asking if he could drop by for a while. I didn't even know he was over here, but anyway we spent a very pleasant evening with him and his wife Mary Jo. Nice people. So now, as I type, I'm feeling all cheered up again, and with a new resolution to somehow save some cash so's we can get to the Worldcon in '77

An arab stood on a one-cent scale In the twilight of fast-fading day.
A counterfeit penny he slipped in the slot, And silently stole a weigh.

- - - Russ Kirkwood.

Just one more letter, then we'll look at a few fanzines. This one's from Pamela Boal, 43 Hawthorne Crescent, Grove, Wantage, OX12 7JD.:

"Now here's an odd thing, my overall impression is that the first issue of KFN is less individual than LURK was. Of course you can't read this letter as I used the Reality Tester to discover that I am not real or alive. I went to the Citizens' Advice Bureau but naturally they could not see or hear me. ((Damn! I shoulda thought of that!)) I returned home in a pitiful state of panic, so desperate in fact that I tried the Tester on Derek. I discovered that he is alive and luridly real. We have been around together for so long that he hadn't noticed my lack of substance and can still communicate with me.

"A small comeback on your reply to my last letter. The body is more able to heal physical wounds than mental ones, words do hurt. What is more, mental pain can and does cause physical malfunction and pain. If you always portray an entire group of people as having the mannerisms and speech patterns used by only a few, you perpetuate prejudices, which is a very nasty 'so what?'. Yes, it's your zine and of course you must be yourself; I wouldn't have it otherwise. I don't happen to think that

the natural Pat or Mike would be offensive to me. Isn't there a little bit more to it than that though? Isn't friendship give as well as take, isn't part of giving presenting that side of yourself that is most comfortable and agreeable to any specific friend?"

Yes, of course friendship involves giving as well as taking, but it also involves honesty, and to modify the face you wear to suit different friends involves a measure of dishonesty, I feel. Often it's not easy to be completely open and natural, especially with new friends, but eventually, in a real friendship, it ought to be possible to speak and behave honestly without fear that the other will be offended. Ideally.

...FOR HATE OF BARBAROUS ELLAMS

25 July

If you can keep your prices steady when all around you are increasing theirs, chances are you're offering a tattier product without telling anybody.

In the past I've bought a fair amount of duplicating supplies from Millway - they used to be cheap, and the quality was good. When I got their latest price-list a few weeks ago, I was amazed at how the prices had rocketed, but their stencils were still the same price as before. Skel and I and a couple of others needed some stencils, so on my recommendation we ordered a dozen or so quires between us. Alas, when they arrived we discovered that they weren't the unbranded but perfectly satisfactory ones I'd had before, but were tatty Ellams' rubbish, without even a carbon, and the waxy gunge on them blocks up the typer keys like buggery. Look at this - half a stencil I've done and they need cleaning already.....there, that's better.

A few fanzines, now. The latest TONG from Mae Strelkov is a really amazing thing: printed single-sided on something that looks like army-surplus bog-paper. It's all quite neat and legible, though - eat your heart out, KW! The cover isn't as good as some similar ones Skel received recently, but the overall effect is quite remarkable.....these things are produced by painting direct onto hekto jelly, is that right? What an incredible idea! You're a wonderful writer, Mae; you seem to get all your soul down on the paper, but yet it reads so easily. I find it very difficult to write like that. Anyway, this is just to let us all know that Mae is getting back into things fannish again, after her trip Stateside and Vadim's illness. I hope things go well for you both.

Roytac, I've a feeling you're testing me. I start into DYNATRON 62, all innocent, get a good laugh out of the Green Slime Awards, then I get to p6, where, as you know, there's a fascinating bit about that real subversive 1949 record 'Old Man Atom'. Trouble is, I get to the bottom of the page, only to find the print has slipped and I'm missing the last half dozen lines. So what happens, huh? Then I'm jolted by p7 which carries the legend 'Science History & Science Fiction'. This sounds heavy. So what's all this heavy stuff doing taking up 5pp of my favourite greenzine? And who's it by? Dainis Biscnieks, that's who. I tend to disbelieve in people called Dainis Biscnieks. Own up now - you wrote it yourself, didn't you? I read it, though. I've paid £1 of good (well, reasonable) English money to try to get you over here so's I can tell you, in person, what I think about all this heavy stuff in my favourite greenzine. And you gave Mike Glicksohn a WAHF? Still, mebbe you're

right. We don't want him to have it too easy.

With the tenth issue of FANZINE FANATIQUE, Keith Walker has hit on the best mixture yet - short editorial, short fanzine comments, articles about fanzines (like this reprint of Bruce Pelz's 'On the Care and Collecting of Fanzines'). Very much neater than before, too. Stick with this, Keith.

Saturday July 26th.

Back to the letters. Now here's a thing: a loc from Andrew and from Ruth, they being the Dunlops, of 34 John Grundy House, Howard Place, Hyde, Cheshire SK14 2TB. Andrew first, male chauvinist pig that I am:

"I find that when I want to do some work on the zine, nothing happens, and when I haven't the faintest idea of writing, ideas start pouring into my head. Now the next statement you may find extremely funny or you may not but I seem to be at my most productive best in bed....not sex-wise, I mean. After the marital nuptials etc. are finished for another night (THANK GHOD!), and I just want to sleep to try and set me up for another great boring day, then, POW! all these ideas start forming in my mind. Of course, being a lazy sod I don't immediately jump out of bed and get pen to paper, or indeed have a pen by my pillow and grafete all over the wall (can't see in the dark). So I just lie there turning the ideas over and over in my mind, and thus on the morrow there's one bleary-eyed Dunloptype, trying for all he's worth to remember what fantastic ideas worth a fortune were the reason for another sleepless night.

"Anyway I thought your Reality Tester was great, but why did you have to import it from Japan? Last Saturday I bought six genuine English Reality Testers for only £2.50 the lot (none of your £5 each), and the makers also threw in, completely free: one paper bag; one cellophane bag (rubbish for the use of); two very-useful-for-something plastic cliptype things; one sheet of tissue paper (comb for the use of when blown through); and one quite cruddy ordinary shirt, which I disposed of as I only wanted the six Reality Testers. So I can let you have the six for, say, £15, giving me a profit of some £12.50; on the other hand, when you have sold them you will make £15 profit. Here's to good old British enterprise."

Gad sir, with people like you around, there's a chance for Britain yet. A slim one, admittedly, but..... I'd like to take you up on your offer of six for £15, but the WHICH report on Reality Testers (out next month) has shown conclusively that the English model is inferior in all respects to the Jap one. The point soon goes blunt, you see. Sorry.

I have considered your ideas problem carefully, and offer the following suggestions:

- a) get some luminous wallpaper, so's you can write on that.
- b) keep a tape-recorder by the bed, so you can murmur your inspirations into it after Ruth's gone to sleep.
- c) give up sex. You won't get any more inspiration, but at least you'll

sleep better, and you won't be worried. Frustrated, yes.....

Ruth says some nice things about the first issue in general, then:

"I hope when we next meet we can go back to the religion bit, especially the Guru. I had a few friends who were members of the Mission, and they have become very disillusioned - they have seen 'the light' in my opinion."

Yes, the same thing happened to a couple of my friends, too. It must be considered as a criticism of the present state of our society that so many people are rejecting it in various ways - religion, drugs, communes etc. It's doubly sad that not all that many of them find a solution that is durable.

Ian Butterworth, 29 Larkhill Rd., Cheadle Hulme, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 5QW:

"Getting back to anarchy for just a moment.....as it happens, I am employed by one of the Simon Engineering companies just for the purpose of sorting out the kind of cockups you were talking about. "Ah," you're saying, "he's in a state of orgasmic ecstasy." Wrong. For the first few weeks, every time something went wrong it was great, but then the thrills died and I found that to really get interesting several things had to go wrong at once. Since then the problems have to be bigger and more complex to achieve the same result, that is, to get the old adrenalin flowing. It's like junk in that respect - the more you have, the more you need. I guess, I'm hooked on chaos!"

Curiouser and curiouser. I reckon Harold Wilson could use a bloke like you. Then, if you did succeed in sorting the country out, you'd be a national hero, and Prime Minister in no time. Mind you, you'd have to change your name; Butterworth hasn't got that ring to it. How about Chambermillan?

(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)

"I don't think I'm really into penises at the moment."

(Pat, on my suggestion that she should read Philip Jose Farmer's IMAGE OF THE BEAST.)

(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)*(*)

Kevin Hall, 12 Lound St., Kendal, Cumbria LA9 7EA, wrote a long but not particularly quotable letter, in which he says how depressing it is to write a long letter, only for the faned to say "Kevin Hall wrote a long but not particularly quotable letter." Actually, the reason why it's not particularly quotable is that, to judge by the writing, it was written under the influence of LSD, whilst riding a drunken camel through a sandstorm at midnight, hence it's somewhat difficult to decipher. However, Kevin, I did get the bit about your preference for a more structured format, such as Paul Skelton uses in INFERNO. I can only say that I prefer the diary-type format, which is more or less structureless. I type up the locs and zines as they come in (except at times like this, when a backlog has built up because of holidays), sticking in anecdotes and ideas as they happen and as they occur to me. This is the way I prefer to do things at

the moment. I may change my mind later on - who knows? Not I.

* "I still firmly believe that modern music isn't just unfamiliar: it's *
* really fundamentally rotten. It's rotten because it meets no felt *
* need in even a small public. It's rotten because it has no folk roots, *
* it draws on no tradition of a society where 'everybody plays some in- *
* strument'. It has no social function. You can't sing it, you can't *
* dance to it, and it doesn't work well as theatre. There is no elite *
* of aristocrats to listen to it at supper. There is no church of gen- *
* uine believers to be uplifted by it. One branch of modern music con- *
* tinues a ghostly if profitable existence - Schlock Rock. But even *
* that has reached a point where the guy who plays it feels he must *
* appear in a dress to put it over." *
*
* Ray Nelson, from a letter in Leigh Edmonds' RATAPLAN. *

I shall put in quotable quotes like that one from time to time, as I come across them. There's a good chance you won't have seen some of them before, and you may feel like adding your 2p worth, hmmm? The above does express some of my feelings about all modern music, despite the fact that there is a significant proportion of it that I enjoy (10%, say, at a guess). But there is not much of that which appeals to my intellect, or to my emotions other than the fundamental foot-tapping feeling which most music with a beat can inspire. OK then, let's pose a question: what types of modern music appeal to you, and why? And if not, why not? If you care to analyse your likes and dislikes, it's the reasons I'm really interested in.

.....

Living is a way of life.

.....

Sunday 27th. July

I reckon Eric would like us to consider GEGENSCHWEINS 21 and 22 as one fanzine; he mails them separately so as to take advantage of the stupidity of Australia's postal regulations. The trouble with this system is that GEG 22, for example, has comments in the lettercol relating back to GEG 17, and even GEG 14, which makes it very difficult to remember what was said, or even find the relevant zines in the files. Bigger issues less frequently are much better from the reader's point of view. Anyway.....in all the time I've been getting GEG, I've never really considered it to be more than an average fanzine; there was too much crud. But now, with these two issues, it really seems to have taken off, with plenty of meaty stuff providing plenty of comment hooks. And the first one is this Canada/America thing: I haven't bothered to try to follow all the tortuous arguments expounded by the various parties, because it seems stupid to me that supposedly sensible people should bother to put pen to paper over such pointless issues. If you're a 'Canadian' or an 'American' it simply means that you were born on that part of the surface of this planet which happens to be called, for some reason, 'Canada' or 'America'. What really matters, goddammit, is that

we're all members of a great big club which for the sake of argument I'll call 'homo sapiens'. (I reckon the bloke who thought that title up was a bit of an optimist, to say the least.) Now if we all devoted just 5% of the time we spend slagging each other down towards a bit of thoughtful self-analysis, and stopped writing silly shit-stirring Angus Taylor-type articles and equally silly you-stung-me-so-I'll-sting-back Paul Walker-type replies, then who knows, our club might even hang on into the 21st century. Now wouldn't that be nice. I'm not really surprised that Angus' article took over three years to see print, but I am surprised that you, Eric, didn't have the editorial judgement to send it right back where it belongs. It's a shame to waste good duplicating paper on such trivial nonsense.

I'd like to know how and why you'd dispute Harry Warner's statement, in his loc, that we are all "creatures with a thin veneer of civilisation covering a jungle inheritance." What a beautiful turn of phrase.....and it seems so patently true to me. Someday, someone will push your button, Eric, then watch out for the bits as that veneer self-destructs. It'll grow back pretty quickly, of course. They usually do.

Lots of other comment-hooks here, but they'd seem a bit anti-climactic after all that heavy stuff. Never mind - a couple of good issues.

Despite the fact that GOBLIN'S GROTTO is not, repeat NOT, a personalzine, Ian manages to display the same brand of slightly self-conscious egocentricity that was evident in SIDDHARTHA. There're three pages of editorial at one end, four pages at the other, and a few bits and pieces in the middle. Also in the middle are Bob Shaw's Tynecon speech, and an account of a new kind of religious experience from John Hall, both of which make the whole thing very worthwhile.

What is really interesting, though, is Ian's remarkable volte-face on the subject of personalzines, which he now says "...are largely devoted to personal maudlin manic-depressive ramblings of the writer. They may be of interest to the writer's friends and acquaintances, but that is about it." Wrong. Ian Williams' personalzines are largely devoted to personal maudlin etc. etc., but I found SIDDHARTHA interesting in spite of or because of it, I'm not sure which. Basically though, any sort of fanzine has to be interesting to get response. In the case of a personalzine, that means that the writer must be an interesting person; not only that, but he must be able to project that personality effectively onto stencil. So, lack of response to a personalzine means that the readership are saying, in effect, "You're a bore" or "You're a lousy writer".....or possibly both. Later, Ian says that personalzines are attractive because they are easy to do. I disagree. A personalzine is far more personally demanding on a faned, and requires just as much typing and duplicating effort as a more traditional type of zine. (* in that it requires the creation of more self-written material)

Well, Ian has strong views on the British fanzine scene; hopefully these will provoke the lettercol arguments he bemoans the lack of. I shan't join in on this one, though; it's been argued out before to no real purpose, and I suspect it will be again. It's a good issue, though, and I suppose it does fill a gap.....if you happen to feel the gap really needs filling.

PARANOID 5 is a flimsy two-sheeter from Ian Maule, with information about his new job and his change of address. You must be on to a good thing money-wise, Ian, if you can afford to send four pages (one of which is virtually blank) at the first-class rate, when for the same price you could have sent twenty six or thereabouts.

=====
A little woman is a dangerous thing.

(Ron Fleshman: NAUSEA 3)

=====
"Unaccustomed as I am to typing in just my underpants....."

29 July

.....it's a question of necessity, since the temperature's high and the humidity higher, though it's 9.30pm (or maybe later...I took my watch off too). The stencils are standing up to it better than I am, though - not a sign of wilting anywhere. All in all, though, it's not a pretty sight. Just be glad that you're there and I'm here.

Finally got to see THE FOUR MUSKETEERS a few days ago. This is supposedly a follow-up to THE THREE MUSKETEERS, though I seem to remember hearing somewhere that the material for both films was shot all in one go. Be that as it may, the sequel isn't a patch on the first one - but then sequels very rarely are. The humour is more thinly spread, the performances generally lack sparkle, Raquel Welch doesn't feature so heavily (if you'll pardon the expression) and gets it in the neck in the end anyway. There are one or two good scenes, like the fight on the ice, but all in all it's heavy going. A disappointment.

More letters, now: Archie Mercer, 21 Trenethick Parc, Helston, Cornwall:

"Pamela Boal's a nice lass, isn't she. And she's quite correct when she supposes that I have in my time used the sort of language that is specifically in question - though from exasperation, I think, rather than for effect, and certainly not as everyday common-or-garden unthinking speech. (Furthermore, when it began tentatively to creep into fanzines, a good many years back now, I remember applauding. That was before various people started wildly overdoing it, until it began to seem no more than childish. That, I think, is what irks me about its current usage in fanzines.)

"General sf fandom is no longer my scene as such - the older I get, the less interesting sf-per-se seems. I'm still a living part of the fandom that flourishes around the more upbeat aspects of fantasy - as distinct from straight sf on the one hand and weird/horror on the other - and I derive most enjoyment from the fanzines that deal with such matters. General-sf fanzines appeal to me, if at all, for the personalities of their perpetrators and contributors rather than for their basic subject-matter.

"What it seems to come to is this. It's probably time I faded out a little more from general-sf fandom. So any more fanzines I may receive from your particular sub-group within the movement will almost certainly be enjoyed

rather than not, but will be unlikely to provoke me into LoCing. You Have Been Warned.

"I continue to like the lot of you as people, and in particular as household-gestalts. So we can at least part friends, I hope. Pamela will approve."

Yes, I guess she will. That's a fair enough statement of your feelings and intentions, Archie: I'd still like to argue the subject a little more with you, but I feel here isn't the place to do it, and I'm unlikely to ever get around to writing a letter, so.....maybe if/when we meet again?

Mary Legg, c/o 56 Kings Road, Fleet, Hants.:

"The above addy is pretty permanent for the moment, so could you please pass it on? I'm staying with my sister and her husband - at the moment I'm in the middle of petitioning for a divorce. Would you ask anyone you know who does a fnz to send a copy? I'm afraid (understandably) I've not written many locs lately, but I will Try To Do Better, and will guarantee a loc within 2 weeks at most. I make no claims about the quality of the loc!

"Your mention of the Roadrunner reminds me of John Barfoot (a N.E. fan now long gafiated) who used to swear I looked like the Roadrunner. Well, we met briefly at the Tynecon, so you know what the truth is. (Actually, Pat reminds me a bit of myself, in looks I mean.)

"Paul's letter touched me deeply. May you always feel this way, Paul. Even now, after all the pain I've had over the last weeks, I do believe the world will be good again. Maybe being able to state that truthfully means it is so becoming, I don't know. Don't let anyone trample on it, I beg you. Whatever else you lose, keep this safe always.

"Your invitation to send £5 for a new Reality Tester: I've heard of earning pin money, but.....

"Yes, I enjoyed DAVY - tho' would you say it was sf? I do like to see people discovering books I've read - and in some cases I envy them the joy of discovering certain books and authors for the first time. How I wish I was beginning Vance or Bradbury again, or just opening LORD OF THE RINGS for the first time!"

Hmmm, interesting, that last point: it ties up with what Paul Skelton said in his book review in LURK 7: "Rather the people to be pitied are those who did not come across, say, ERB when they were eight or nine years old and who are now forever barred by their increased sophistication and critical awareness from the intense pleasures such novels can bring to an uncritical imagination." In other words, since you are presumably now more critical and sophisticated than you were when you first read Vance and Bradbury, would you get as much enjoyment, or the same sort of enjoyment, from them if you were only now discovering them? I was twelve or thirteen when I discovered Bradbury, and I think that was too early - for me. I enjoyed a lot of his stuff then, sure, but I'm finding much more in it as I'm re-reading it now. Whereas

Asimov, whom I discovered at about the same time, was an ideal choice for a scientifically-minded lad like me. I read a lot of his stuff then, and enjoyed it all hugely; I suspect (with a few exceptions) that it won't be as much fun to re-read. I read a little ERB in the same period, and found it rather inferior. I suspect that Paul is right, and that I was even then three or four years too late. I certainly wouldn't bother with his stuff now, likewise 'Doc' Smith, whom I sampled for the first time a couple of years ago and found completely unreadable.

Yes, we met, but we didn't really chat at Tynecon, and to be honest, my visual impression of you isn't all that clear. Tall and thin? Yes, I think so. Freckles? I thought I remembered freckles. Hmmm. Hardly up to Identikit standards, is it? But anybody who goes around comparing females of his acquaintance with cartoon characters has got to be bad news.

Speaking of bad news, I was round at Pete Presford's place a couple of weeks ago, and he mentioned he'd received a letter from you. I was shocked and sad to learn the reason for your fufiation. Hopefully things will improve for you from now on. I greatly enjoyed the two ROSEMARYs you sent, and would like to keep them. And I'm still looking for copies of CRABAPPLE!

=====
"With what sang-freud you ply your kraft, Ebbing!" (Dean Grennell - GRUE 8)
=====

Another long-time-no-hear-from is Dave Piper, 7 Cranley Drive, Ruislip, Middlesex HA4 6BZ:

"I can understand the economic sense in sending KFN and INFERNO out together but, for the recipient, reading them one after another rather blurs them together and to be frank ('ullo Frank!) I'm now in the, slightly, off-putting position of not being able to differentiate between any of you. It is, I've discovered, a mistake to read two 'personal' type zines of this format one after another. I won't do it again. (Even assuming that I ever get the opportunity.)

"I like your format, Paul.....

And I like your format, Mike.....

I'm sure I'd like your format, Cas.....

And yours, Pat.....

I even like mine...now...started @ 12st. 7½lb. and am now a snake-hipped 10st. 9lb. Only trouble is, I'm still waiting for An Offer. I mean, dunnI, I'm ready for An Offer. Middle-aged, suburban, Ruislip Residence Ass'n member, salad for dinner EVERY DAY, category 'B' (lower managerial) on the questionnaire covering a cigarette survey I'm on at the moment (free fags, anyway!) - real boring bloody middle-class archetypal-type CS. I did get An Offer the other day:

"I'd just left Bram's shop and was legging it through a back street to Tottenham Court Road when I came upon 3 ladies of easy virtue. "This is it, Davy boy," I thought. "An Offer." I got one, oh yeah! I got one - 2 of them were quite reasonable for broilers and one of them would have made the back of a bus look erotic. Who did I get An Offer from, I hear you asking breathlessly (?) Yeah - the one that resembled me mother-in-law to an incredible degree. Yuk!!

"I dunno who's written this letter to you; it, for sure, ain't me. I tried the free gift on Cath who promptly hit me over the head with the Guinness Book of Records and I'm now drinking barrels of water with Michael Smith. Or Val, as he's known to all and sundry."

That last reference to containers of watery substances is completely lost on me. In fact, if it was lost on me I'd have a chance of finding it, so I suspect it's more likely lost far away, like in the Sahara, or East Finchley. You are hereby invited to explain the reference in your next loc. And please, no more joint locs, huh? It causes my co-mailer and I to come to blows over who's gonna print what - and that's pretty difficult over 56 miles of telephone cable.

.....
"On the other hand, I have five fingers." (Dick Bergeron - D'JOURNAL D'ART 1)
.....

NEW LITERARY HORIZONS DEPT.

30 July

Yessirree, I read something that wasn't sf, I truly did. To whit:

- THE PERISHERS No. 17 - Mirror Group Books (1975) - 25p
- FRED BASSET No. 21 - Associated Newspapers Group (1975) - 25p
- THE FURTHER BULLETINS OF PRESIDENT IDI AMIN as taken down verbatim by Alan Coren - Robson Books (1975) - 60p

Yeah, I know, it's not exactly your Shakespeare or your Hemingway, but the first two are collections of the two best UK newspaper strips, and anyone who hasn't yet discovered the good Pres's weekly despatches in PUNCH..... well, you're too late, 'cos they've finished, but apart from that, you just don't know where it's at, literature-wise. I quote:

"Once again de hole speckertrum o' worl' history gittin' put under de pconetratin' review wid de amazin' insight, de dazmlin' wit, de staggerin' wisserdom, de piercin' judgement, an' de captivatin' punctwation.....Dis noo masterpiece coverin' de entire sweep o' mankind f'om A to G. Nothin' gittin' left out."

One can't say fairer dan dat.

Anyway, that's all I'm writing today. Just thought you'd be interested to learn that I'm boldly reading where no Mike Meara has read before. Unfortunately, having typed that, I now realise that I'm two lines from the bottom of the stencil which means I've got to type something else which ruins the p

Monday 4th. August

Back again after a lapse of some days, due to the weather being bloody 'ot and 'umid. It still is, of course, and as I sit here, stripped to my knees, drinking the local excuse for beer (Kimberley's 'Gold Ale' - a name which relates to the price as much as the colour), wishing some of my home-brew was ready to drink, I wonder.....I wonder...why am I sitting here wondering why I'm sitting here?

Enough. There's too much complexity in fandom as it is.

The girls do look nice this weather, though, don't they? Mmmmm.

Is this a fanzine I see before me, its staples toward my hand? Yes, William, it's Graham Poole's SPI 3, from which we learn, on p2, that the BSFA is not, after all, dead. Shame! "The whole organisation could be drastically simplified and streamlined", says Graham. Right on. Simplified to zero and streamlined to the point of invisibility. The sooner you can cure yourself of this obsession with organisations, plans and projects, Graham, the sooner SPI will develop into a good fanzine. It's a step in the right direction to bring in contributors, though - especially someone controversial like Ian Williams, who says that the best *raison d'etre* for a fanzine's existence is fun, and uses this as an argument against seriousness in fanzines. But Ian, just because you don't find such zines fun to read doesn't mean their editors didn't have fun producing them. I mean, any hobby costing £60 - £100 per year has got to be fun, hasn't it?

When I'd read the first issue of PHOSPHENE, which was also my first fanzine from Gil Gaier, I mentally placed him at about age twenty. Then I saw a picture of him as part of a photopage in an American fanzine whose name I forget, and was amazed to see that he looked much older, maybe twice my estimate. Now, in PHOSPHENE 2, he says he's in his late forties. Which shows that the mental pictures of overseas fen that I conjure up on reading their fanzines can be pretty inaccurate. I wonder if any of you have found the same thing? This certainly gives a prod to my long-dormant plan to do a reasonably representative photopage of UK fen.....someday. The zine itself is fine - some good, honest, unpretentious writing here. Liked the author/plot stereotypes (how the hero gets through the book.) How about:

Keith Laumer: gets into trouble, then gets into more trouble, then gets into even more trouble, then....

Phil Dick: thinks he's in trouble, but is never quite sure.

Eric Frank Russell: never gets into trouble, but stands around feeling superior while the aliens do.

J. G. Ballard: gets into trouble, tries to get out, never succeeds, deteriorates steadily the while.

And a zinger: "Thanks for the free paper sample, but why'd you have to print on it?"

if you were supporting fifty-two lines of print, you'd be pretty squashed too.

Aaahh...that's better! I'm free, totally free, no boundaries for me, I'mwhoops

KARASS is a pretty good newszine, and I'd like to get every ish. Trouble is, it comes out monthly, as against KFN's quarterly schedule, and Linda doesn't seem keen to trade all-for-all. Pity. I won't subscribe though.....not to a fan publication. SFR and LOCUS, yes, but I don't consider them to be fan publications; they're semi-professional magazines. After a long self-debate, I decided not to go for Dick Geis' revived sub-only personalzine, because it is sub-only, and because \$2 for five 10pp issues is too damn much.

Anyway.....I was talking about KARASS, number 14 of which is a bit like the old-style CHECKPOINT, but posher. Number 15 is more interesting, as it contains the correspondence Linda received on the 'whither the Worldcon' piece in an earlier KARASS. Good reading, this. My own views? Yes, the size of the Worldcon must be limited; in my opinion the best way of attempting this is by stages. First, kick out the fringe-fen - the comix, weird, horror, Star Trek, yes, even the film-only fen. Let them have their own cons if they want to. If this doesn't bring about a sufficient reduction in numbers, then limit publicity; certainly there should be no publicity in non-fan publications, and concons should cease absolutely to cater for or cooperate with the press in any way. If that's not enough, then the time-limit registration plan could be tried, or stepwise increases in the registration/attendance fee as the con approaches. I'm not really too keen on this last idea.....in fact I'm not keen on the principle as a whole. But something will have to be done, and soon. The same situation will soon begin to apply to our own Eastercons, don't forget, if the present growth rate continues.

An alcoholic may be defined as one who beats everyone else to the punch....

Tuesday 5th. August

Jim Linwood, 125 Twickenham Road, Isleworth, Middlesex:

"Having carefully examined your 42pp Knockers I shall refrain from making such obvious remarks as "a good firm beginning but sags towards the end" or "can Pauline Dungeate match this?" and leave them to lesser fannish wits such as Dave Rowe, whose hairy puns are possibly the worst ever to see print.

"The toplineers were infuriating (and until I re-read the contents page I was hailing you as the 2nd. Willis) as they broke up the flow of narrative...interlineations have their place; between $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ the way down a page contained in horizontal lines."

Here Jim gave an example, which was $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ the way down his page, but would fall outside those limits on mine. So I shan't quote it. Nyaaah!

Didn't understand it anyway.

Paul Skelton, 25 Bowland Close, Offerton, Stockport, Cheshire, SK2 5NW:

"I remember Babylon? I remember Anita? (Obscure reference to an equally obscure story in an even more obscure copy of NEW WORLDS or maybe SCIENCE FANTASY of the Compact era). I remember Bullwinkle? I REMEMBER BULLWINKLE????? Shit yes, of course I do! Stands to reason I have to remember something, doesn't it? Mind's not a complete blank, dontchaknow..... just a bit faded, is all.

"Bullwinkle.....the best cartoon series ever to appear on British TV. Bullwinkle the moose and his friend Rocky the flying squirrel. They teamed up in at least two interminable serials, although I can only remember the one in which they were trying to bring to justice Boris and Natasha, the box-top bandits who were undermining the economy of the U.S. by counterfeiting box-tops. I tell a lie.....didn't one of the other serials contain a pair of aliens who hopped about in some kind of flying saucer, called Floyd and Gidney? (Not the saucer, you cretin.....)

"Apart from that cartoon show I reckon the best are the Bugs Bunny/Warner Bros. crew which of course includes Road-Runner and Sylvester and Tweety-Pic and a couple of others. I have this love/hate relationship with Tom and Jerry because whilst some of the things that happen to the pudgy tad are graphically superb, it goes right against my sense of fair play that the mouse who is invariably in the wrong pisses all over the cat who is always in the right and the fact that the mouse is all smaller and cuddlier is supposed to justify this."

Hmmm. Seems to me I must see T & J in a different light than you do. I hate to drag in a load of crappy symbolism - fuck knows there's enough of that kind of rubbish around already - but it seems fairly obvious to me that Tom the cat is a symbol of authority...somewhat stupid, rather vicious, pompous at times...and Jerry the mouse symbolises the rebel we'd all like to be. He goes up against Authority and wins.....most of the time. Often it's Tom who starts all the trouble, and Jerry only fights back because he's picked on.

Now you mention it, I remember the box-top thing vaguely, but the aliens not at all. I wish they'd bring 'em back.....preferably in nice thirty-minute chunks, replacing 'Crossroads' and 'Coronation Street'. If I ruled the world.....

Paul Hudson (102 Valley Road, Rickmansworth, Herts.) sent a letter detailing his experiences with the Reality Tester on a London commuter train. Interesting, but unfortunately difficult to quote from.

Something which arrived today which may be of interest to some of you is the tenth issue of the Goon Show Preservation Society newsletter. The society was set up nearly three years ago in response to the increasing interest in the Goon Show and the Goons themselves resulting from The Last Goon Show Of All, the books of scripts, re-runs on radio etc. etc. Membership is approaching 2,000, including many from overseas. The newsletter is very informative, and membership is good value at 50p per year (£1.50 overseas, including airmail postage) for at least three issues. Anyone interested should contact Michael Coveney, 7 Frances Gardens, Ramsgate, Kent, CT11 8AF.

THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF EDEL MURPHY TO THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE BEHAVIOUR OF
INANIMATE OBJECTS

Edsel Murphy's laws must surely deserve as much recognition as Parkinson's laws or the Peter Principle. In this feature, his law is stated in both general and special form and examples are presented to corroborate the author's thesis that the law is universally applicable.

The man who developed one of the most profound concepts of the twentieth century is practically unknown to most engineers. He is a victim of his own law. Destined for a secure place in the engineering hall of fame, something went wrong. His real contribution lay not merely in the discovery of the law but more in its universality and its impact. The law itself, though inherently simple, has formed a foundation on which future generations will build. In fact, the law first came to him in all its simplicity when his bride-to-be informed him that his boss had 'gazumped' him to the altar.

I. INTRODUCTION

It has long been the consideration of the author that the contributions of Edsel Murphy, specifically his general and special laws delineating the behaviour of inanimate objects, have not been fully appreciated. It is deemed that this is, in large part, due to the inherent simplicity of the law itself.

It is the intent of the author to show, by references drawn from the literature, that the law of Murphy has produced numerous corollaries. It is hoped that by noting these examples, the reader may obtain a greater appreciation of Ed sel Murphy, his law, and its ramifications in engineering and science.

As is well known to those versed in the state-of-the-art, Murphy's Law states that "If anything can go wrong, it will". Or, to state it in more exact mathematical form:

$$1 + 1 \text{ --@--} 2 \quad (1)$$

where --@-- is the mathematical symbol for 'hardly ever'.

Some authorities have held that Murphy's Law was first expounded by H. Cohen, when he stated that "If anything can go wrong, it will during the demonstration." However, Cohen has made it clear that the broader scope of Murphy's general law obviously takes precedence.

To show the all-pervasive nature of Murphy's work, the author offers a small sample of the application of the law in electronics engineering.

II. GENERAL ENGINEERING

- II.1 A patent application will be preceded by one week by a similar application made by an independent worker.
- II.2 The more innocuous a design change appears, the further its influence will extend.

- II.3 All warranty and guarantee clauses become void upon payment of invoice.
- II.4 The necessity of making a major design change increases as the fabrication of the system approaches completion.
- II.5 Firmness of delivery dates is inversely proportional to the tightness of the schedule.
- II.6 Dimensions will always be expressed in the least usable term: velocity, for example, will be expressed in furlongs per fortnight.
- II.7 An important Instruction Manual or Operating Manual will have been discarded by the Receiving Department.
- II.8 Suggestions made by the Value Analysis group will increase costs and reduce capabilities.
- II.9 Original drawings will be mangled by the copying machine.

III. MATHEMATICS

- III.1 In any given miscalculation, the fault will never be placed if more than one person is involved.
- III.2 Any error that can creep in, will. It will be in the direction that will do the most damage to the calculation.
- III.3 All constants are variables.
- III.4 In any given computation, the figure that is most obviously correct will be the source of error.
- III.5 A decimal will always be misplaced.
- III.6 In a complex calculation, one factor from the numerator will always move into the denominator.

IV. PROTOTYPING AND PRODUCTION

- IV.1 Any wire cut to length will be too short.
- IV.2 Tolerances will accumulate unidirectionally toward maximum difficulty of assembly.
- IV.3 Identical units tested under identical conditions will not be identical in the field.
- IV.4 The availability of a component is inversely proportional to the need for that component.
- IV.5 If a project requires n units of a component, there will be $n-1$ units in stock.
- IV.6 If a particular resistance is needed, that value will not be available. Further, it cannot be devised with any available series or parallel combination.
- IV.7 A dropped tool will land where it can do the most damage. (Also known as the Law of Selective Gravitation.)
- IV.8 A device selected at random from a group having 99% reliability, will be a member of the 1% group.
- IV.9 When one connects a 3-phase line, the phase sequence will be wrong.
- IV.10 A motor will rotate in the wrong direction.
- IV.11 The probability of a dimension being omitted from a plan or drawing is directly proportional to its importance.
- IV.12 Interchangeable parts won't.
- IV.13 Probability of failure of a component, assembly, sub-system or system is inversely proportional to ease of repair or replacement.
- IV.14 If a prototype functions perfectly, subsequent production units will malfunction.

- IV.15 Components that must not and cannot be assembled improperly will be.
- IV.16 A dc meter will be used on an overly sensitive range and will be wired in backwards.
- IV.17 The most delicate component will be dropped.
- IV.18 Graphic recorders will deposit more ink on humans than on paper.
- IV.19 If a circuit cannot fail, it will.
- IV.20 A fail-safe circuit will destroy others.
- IV.21 An instantaneous circuit-breaker will operate too late.
- IV.22 A transistor protected by a fast-acting fuse will protect the fuse by blowing first.
- IV.23 A self-starting oscillator won't.
- IV.24 A crystal oscillator will oscillate at the wrong frequency - if it oscillates.
- IV.25 A pnp transistor will be an npn.
- IV.26 A zero-temperature-coefficient capacitor used in a critical circuit will have a TC of $-750\text{ppm}/^\circ\text{C}$.
- IV.27 A failure will not appear till a unit has passed final inspection.
- IV.28 A purchased component or instrument will meet its specs long enough, and only long enough, to pass incoming inspection.
- IV.29 If an obviously defective component is replaced in an instrument with an intermittent fault, the fault will reappear after the instrument is returned to service.
- IV.30 After the last of 16 mounting screws has been removed from an access cover, it will be discovered that the wrong access cover has been removed.
- IV.31 After an access cover has been secured by 16 mounting screws, it will be discovered that the gasket has been omitted.
- IV.32 After an instrument has been fully assembled, extra components will be found on the bench.
- IV.33 Hermetic seals will leak.

V. SPECIFYING

- V.1 Specified environmental conditions will always be exceeded.
- V.2 Any safety factor set as a result of practical experience will be exceeded.
- V.3 Manufacturers' spec sheets will be incorrect by a factor of 0.5 or 2.0, depending on which multiplier gives the most optimistic value. For salesmen's claims these factors will be 0.1 or 10.0.
- V.4 In an instrument or device characterised by a number of plus-or-minus errors, the total error will be the sum of all errors adding in the same direction.
- V.5 In any given price estimate, cost of equipment will exceed estimate by a factor of 3.
- V.6 In specifications, Murphy's Law supersedes Ohm's.

(*) (*) (*) (*) (**) (*) (*) (*) (*) (*) (*) (*) (*) (*)

(The above is reprinted from ELECTRONICS TODAY INTERNATIONAL - October 1972)

No, that's not a commercial, it's an opinion. Ten minutes ago I entered the den, all keen an' rarin' to go on the stencil-typin', an' what did I find? I found three, count 'em, three, flies buzzin' around in there. I hate flies.....nasty, dirty things. Besides, it's difficult to concentrate on de glitterin' prose with all that buzzing, sorry, buzzin'. So I picked up the first thing that came to hand, namely Bryn Fortey's RELATIVITY 4, and with three (or was it forty-seven?) mighty swipes helped these creatures onto the next plane of their existence.

Possibly, on reflection, it was an ill-considered move. One shouldn't treat fanzines like that at any time, especially when they're next on the pile for reviewing.

So...carefully unrolling the crumpled pages, what do we find? We find 40 castigating various faneds, including me, for being nasty to Lisa Conesa and her ZIMRI. Now then, here's a little fannish general knowledge test for you:

Q: Who is the new co-editor of ZIMRI?

No, I'm sorry, you don't get even one guess at that, it's too obvious.

Anyway, the gist of his remarks are that we didn't ought to be "so fucking condescending just because the editor happens to be female..." In my review of ZIMRI 6 in LURK 7 I had said that I got an impression of pseudiness from the magazine, and it is this that Bryn apparently objects to. Having read all of what Bryn had to say, I was simmering at about Mark 5 (Gas Regulo 350^oF), but I was determined not to go off half-cocked as I have in the past, so I got out my copy of ZIMRI 6 and read it through again, cover to cover.

And I see I was wrong. Nobody who puts that much effort into fan-publishing can fairly be accused of fakery and insincerity. No. So I am forced to the conclusion that Lisa doesn't communicate on the same level as I do. Possibly we live in parallel universes which are slightly out of phase, or something. The thing is, you see, that the great majority of female fanwriters are, to me, very communicative in their writings. Names that instantly spring to mind are England's Mary Legg, Australia's Sue Clarke and Shayne McCormack, America's Sheryl Birkhead, Canada's Susan Wood and Argentina's Mae Strelkov. There are probably more I can't think of at the moment. All good writers, especially when writing personally. Lisa's writing, what there is of it, just doesn't come across that way at all. To me. I suspect that this difference led me to make my accusation of pseudiness, which I now withdraw.

However, I did not intend to be condescending in my remarks, and as far as I'm concerned, the sex of the editor is totally irrelevant to the argument.

I think you were over-reacting a bit, Bryn boyo.

But what about the other 95% of the zine? I hear you wail plaintively. Well, I liked bits here and there. It's a bit like a cross between ZIMRI and FOULER.

Now to more serious things. This morning I received a sample copy of RUNE, the magazine of the Minnesota SF Society, edited by Fred Haskell. I was happy, 'cos it was nice of them to think of me, even at this late stage (it was number 44). And then I opened it up and read the following words:

"Vaughn F. Bode died last week. He suffocated while meditating."

There was more, in the way of a personal tribute from Fred, who was a close friend. But those two sentences stuck in my mind, and all during today they've been running through my head. If meditation, which is supposed to be beneficial, can do this, then who needs it, huh? Who needs it? What a senseless, stupid waste.

Not a good start to the week. I hope things improve. The zine itself is quite substantial, neatly produced, with a long lettercol and the usual features, but as with a lot of clubzines the standard of writing doesn't seem all that high. There's enough of interest to make trading worthwhile, though.

An issue of MOTA goes a long way towards improving any gloomy situation, and number 11 is no exception. And I'm not saying that just because Terry printed my loc. Not just because. Bob Tucker's piece herein is a bit below par, I thought, but Bob Shaw makes up for it with an utterly incredible piece about oysters. Yes, that's what I said, oysters. Add a good lettercol and some really fine artwork, and you'll see that Terry packs a lotta quality into twenty pages. The new green paper was pretty nice, too.

Gadzooks, the fanzines are really piling up. I'll have to see if I can read some at work tomorrow. Meanwhile a letter from Keith Freeman, 128 Fairford Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG3 6QP.:

"I re-read very few books - when I do I'm almost always disappointed (but how much of this is because deep down somewhere you know the outcome so that what, on your first reading, came as a surprise is now an expected event?) Certain books I can re-read time and again.....all but one of Thorne Smith's all-too-few books and a few other odd ones.

"I'm surprised at your book reviews.....do you read nothing but sf? I've generally found readers of sf to be fairly voracious readers of all other kinds of literature as well.....at a guess I'd say in my own personalzine I "reviewed" about as many non-sf as sf books. If you do read other than sf then I think your readers would probably appreciate comments on those books as well."

I tend only to re-read books that I enjoyed greatly the first time, but my disappointment stems, not from remembering the ending or anything about the book except in vague terms - I have a poor memory even for generalities, and a poorer one for specifics - but from the change and development in my tastes in the interval between readings. As with you, there are a few books I can re-read without much sense of loss - Raymond Chandler, some of Ian Fleming, some of Leslie Charteris - but not many of them are sf.

So you see I do read something other than sf, but not much, and not as often even as I used to. Apart from fiction, I read quite a bit on jazz, my main

musical interest; I also enjoy reading about, as well as drinking, alcohol in its various forms. And that's about as deep as I go. The 'classics' of literature have never held any attraction at all. The only Shakespeare I've read is what I had to read at school. I've never read any Dickens or any of the other great names of English literature. Maybe I will someday, but I can't imagine when. The only magazines I take on subscription are WHICH?, JAZZ JOURNAL and PRIVATE EYE; apart from those I read the odd music trade paper, the odd photographic magazine, and that's about it.

"The wages of gin is breath."

(Norm Browne: MidWesCon 3)

Tuesday 12th. August

Yeah, I managed to get some fanzines read today, like I said. Terry Carr sent me DIASPAR 16, impeccably produced, rather like MOTA in appearance, which isn't surprising I suppose since until recently they shared the same duplicator. The main item is a Fritz Leiber story - pretty good, but not up to his best. I'd guess he was unable to place it on the pro market. Also there's a very interesting piece about an Indian mushroom ceremony in Mexico.

The second issue of BLAZON, this time under Keith Freeman's editorship, I found a bit of a disappointment; there was too much that was only average. The Christopher Hodder-Williams reprint from a computer magazine was dull and largely incomprehensible.....and it sets my teeth on edge to see a professional sf writer using the term 'sci-fi'. Mike Healy's 'appreciation' of Poul Anderson was rather shallow. Book reviews were a bit mediocre. The best bits were the lettercol, edited by Eric Bentcliffe, and Eric's expansion of his thoughts on fannishness which first appeared in BURK. This last item was very good, but for me it didn't save the zine from being wishy-washy, neither one thing nor another, with no real sense of identity or purpose.

In with it was the second issue of SF INTERNATIONAL NEWS, Keith's and Dave Kyle's newszine, consisting entirely of a list of forthcoming UK sf books. You'll have to do better than this, fellas.

THE SPANISH INQUISITION 5 is the first ish of that zine I've seen, and it too was a bit of a disappointment. A thick zine, impeccably produced of course, but not enough editorial presence, and not enough strength in the contents to carry it through. The lettercol was too relevant to the previous issues, which in my view is a mistake. One item I really enjoyed, though, was Jon Singer's column 'The Technocrat of the Breakfast Table' in which he discusses, intelligently and at least 60% seriously, possible future improvements in reproduction processes. Plenty of Skull artwork herein - that man seems to be in every U.S. zine these days.

HELP!!! I FEEL AN ATTACK OF MAD SCIENTISTS COMING ON!

13th August

I finally got to see METROPOLIS, thanks to the dear old Beeb who put it on last night. I think this is the first 'silent' film I've seen all the way through, hence I've no way of knowing whether the slight tendency to drag is

a characteristic of all pre-sound films. That's not to say I didn't enjoy it though - I did - and I doubt if many other films a half-century old would hold up so well today. METROPOLIS is still enjoyable and successful because its twin messages (Don't make a god of technology/We must love one another or die) are just as relevant now, maybe more so, as they were when it was made. The symbolism and social comment may seem a little heavy-handed now, but this was possibly the first time such views had been expressed on film. (I noticed that many of the doors in the inventor's house had the sign of the pentagram on them - the science/black magic tie-up. A lovely touch.) The sets and effects are truly marvellous, even today, though I was amused at the contrast between the extensive use of steam power (in the year 2000? When electricity was already quite common in 1926!) and the 'prediction' of the videophone towards the end of the film. The specially-made electronic soundtrack, by somebody-or-other whose name I forget, was only partly successful: better than total silence, yes, but sometimes obtrusive, distracting my attention from the visuals. Incidentally, I wonder if Peter Sellers got the idea for his portrayal of Dr. Strangelove from the metal-handed Rotwang, the mad scientist?

Truly a classic film, then. But I can't help wondering how much better it might have been had Lang waited two or three years for the advent of sound.

Nothing pleases a bug on a radar-screen more than being taken for a visitor from another planet.

doug barbour, 10808 75th. Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6E 1K2:

"i'll get the one small voice of complaint out of the way first -- & ensure my place as a fan of no sense of humour at all in the bargain -- by saying that i don't really get off on the title, tho the explanation goes a long way to helping me out. it's still sexist, & there goes any reputation my sense of humour may have.

"on the whole i choked at most of the topline quotes -- giggling has that effect on me. being a rather sercon type, i think i would like a bit more from you on the books & mags you review; & why not more talk about your favorite recent lps? it strikes me -- & the skelzine tends to back up this view -- that we often say a lot about ourselves when arguing that aspect of pop culture which touches us all these days (well, nearly all, i mustn't overstep the bounds of believability here) -- music. & the arguments over not only favorite groups but why they are favorite groups or singers are often deeply revealing about personality & character. i enjoy reading about what other people like in music anyway. but to get back to the books, because you don't even say enough about your reaction, let alone give us a 'review', i found myself nearly skipping them. (note the 'nearly', i actually read the whole damned zine.)

"so what stood out in KFN? the homey stuff, the people stuff, most especially Wednesday 30th. April. the letters are also always fun, paul skeltor's taking the prize for the issue if only because he gets so personal in such a nice way. i'd like to believe him, & i do, except i also believe your reply. but your report of the weekend together tends to prove quite conclusively his comments on friendship & that's nice too."

Well, doug, I tried to stick to your lower-case style of writing, even though it meant a greater-than-usual use of corflu. I seem to remember reading some-² where, probably in one of your letters in a fanzine, that you said you did it out of convenience/laziness, to save using the shift key. On my typer, though, using '&' and '()' not to mention ", necessitates a change to upper case, so why not use something else? I think that by doing this you may be laying yourself open to association in people's minds with those who do the same thing for a different reason, maybe a wrong reason? Anyway, that's just my opinion, and I'm not meaning to be offensive...but it is bloody hard to read, sometimes!

Anyway, on to your letter. Now that you mention it, I must admit that the title could have sexist connotations, but I would have expected a woman to point it out first. All I can say in my defence is that that aspect just didn't occur to me at the time. As a matter of fact, since choosing the title I have done a bit of self-analysis and have decided on the real reason why it appealed to me: it's a piss-take of the old pulp sf mags, with their scantily-clad females on the cover and their space-opera inside, neither having much to do with the other. "Knockers From Neptune" is a story that ought to have been eminently suitable, but which they wouldn't have published for obvious reasons. So you see, it really shows how anti-hypocritical I am. Yeah.

I agree that music touches nearly all of us....but different types of people get touched by different types of music. I can't imagine Terry Jeeves or Eric Bentcliffe getting off on (damn! another American phrase I've picked up) my perceptive comments on the latest Santana or Leo Kottke LP. And whereas Eric might just enjoy my searing analysis of the latest Woody Herman platter, I doubt if you would (though I may be doing you an injustice there.) My taste in music is fairly wide, I think, but a lot of people's isn't, which is why I've been reticent about music in the past. (Another reason is that some years ago, in my fannish youth and for another fanzine, I wrote a four-part history of the jazz guitar, spanning some twenty pages, and was roundly criticised for it. Not because of the content, I hope/feel, but because of the context - it was out of place in that fanzine. It was something I wanted to do, and I did it, but the trauma still lingers.) Anyway, your comments have decided me: I will write more about music. It is, after all, one of my major interests in life, and this is, after all, my damn fanzine. Thanks, doug, for helping me realise that.

On books: first let me say that I never (I think) claimed to actually review the books I read - just to give my personal reaction to them. I thought I might be reacting too much: you say it's not enough. I'm confused. Unless you can be more specific about what you actually want to see from me, I'll just have to carry on the way I am doing. I can't really afford to devote more than 10 lines or so to a book, else the zine would be even bigger than it is already.

CLOSE TO CRITICAL - II

14th August

As well as getting through that pile of fanzines I mentioned earlier, I still seem to have managed to fit in a few books as well. James Blish's YEAR 2018! (aka THEY SHALL HAVE STARS) is one I read some time ago - forgot to include

it in the last batch of comments, in fact. Not really surprising, as I thought it a fairly forgettable book. Very little seemed to happen in its 159pp. As you're probably aware, it's the first of the 'Cities in Flight' tetralogy, in which the star-drive is developed as a result of experiments with the 'bridge' being built on Jupiter. I couldn't really get interested in this one, somehow - maybe I wasn't in the mood for it - and now, only a few weeks after I've read it, that's just about all that sticks in my mind.

In view of the disappointments I've had on re-reading some old favourites recently, I was a little chary of tackling Bradbury's THE SILVER LOCUSTS (a beautiful title, that!) for the third time. I needn't have worried. Although some of the earlier stories have lost a bit of their magic, the later ones, dealing with the return to Earth, its destruction, and the few who escape, seem better than ever, and rank among my favourite sf shorts of all time. Bradbury's Mars is scientifically ridiculous, of course, but he portrays it so beautifully, so vividly, that it doesn't matter. And of course it really doesn't: Bradbury is just using Mars as a convenient hat-peg on which to hang his little moral tale. This is definitely one of the classic works of sf, twenty-five years old now, and still as fresh and vital as the day it was all put together.

John Brunner's THE WORLD-SWAPPERS is one of the early run-of-the-mill adventures that he doesn't seem to have got around to rewriting yet. No use my detailing the plot - the book isn't important enough for that - but it, like the characters, does seem shallow and not fully thought out, so I would have thought that this obscure half of an old (1959) Ace Double would be a prime candidate for reworking. As it stands it's still quite enjoyable, but with a little more thought, fleshing out here and pruning there, it could become quite a worthwhile novel.

MAN OF EARTH is Algis Budrys' first novel, now long out of print. In it, we encounter the hero, Allen Sibley, a spineless businessman in a spineless Earth society. A shady business deal in which he is forced to participate misfires, and to escape the consequences he uses the services of Doncaster Industrial Linens, a mysterious organisation who completely transform his body, including fingerprints and retinal patterns, by a method which is not made clear. The part of the deal of which he isn't aware until too late involves a one-way trip to Pluto, one of two colonies (the other being on Venus), both of which were left to their fate by Earth when a mining venture failed. John Sullivan (he has a new name to match his new body) joins the army, along with a lot of recruits from the Venus colony, ostensibly being prepared for an invasion of Earth (!), but the real purpose turns out to be rather different. The whole thing is rather improbable, but the strong characterisation of Sibley/Sullivan, and to a lesser extent of the minor characters, carries it along pretty well. First novels are always interesting to compare with later works, and but for the high price you'd probably have to pay for a secondhand copy of this, I'd recommend it.

Ah well, downward to the drekk, exemplified by David Duncan's novel OCCAM'S RAZOR. A real eye-waterer this, involving a military island base staffed by incredibly thick military types, an eccentric professor, a space-race involving Australia and Argentina as well as the more usual contenders, and a pair of beautiful people (one of each, natch) who arrive from another contin-

uum in a soap-bubble. I kid you not! (Well, not much.) I have no objection to novels which rely mainly on pseudo-science, as this one does, provided that the author makes it convincing, which this one doesn't. With characterisation at its usual stefnal minimum, there is nothing else to sustain reader-interest, and the whole thing collapses into boredom.

IT IS A PROUD AND LOFTY THING TO BE A SPAN (Sign on the Golden Gate bridge)

Roy Peacock, 139 Green Street, Eastbourne, Sussex, writes:

"Perhaps I could spend a little time in telling you about what is going on down here in the sun-trap of the South (quite believable over the last few days). Over the last six months, a group of us began to meet regularly in a local pub and swop songs, poetry and general chit-chat, and the meetings have now become a regular occurrence. We decided we needed a name, but couldn't think of anything suitable, so we have just evolved into the Eastbourne Arts Workshop. We have already become fairly well-known in the area, and we often get visitors to our meetings from other parts of Sussex. Needless to say, however, that some meetings are very well attended, others are quite the reverse, but there is a strong and enthusiastic nucleus. In the past we have played on Eastbourne bandstand in aid of National Mental Health week, and the project is under consideration for the BBC series 'Open Door'. A session for Radio Brighton is also in the air (no pun intended) and one of our members has just had a single released (Driftwood's 'Sweet Summer Nights'). I think it would be fair to say that the project was gathering momentum.

"Within the group, I have introduced an sf element, mainly via poetry, although I have attempted to write some sf songs, although my complete lack of vocal ability has meant that they have yet to receive a public airing. I have even read short stories, and they seem well received. I would be pleased to hear from anybody interested in the group, and I would also like to receive any sf poetry."

Sounds like a pretty active group you have there. I'm surprised I haven't heard about it before. Incidentally folks, I remember Roy asking in a previous letter for information about Bill Steele, the Canadian who Vera Johnson mentioned in her TORCON 2 report. I'm sure Vera would be able to help, but I don't know her address. If anyone does, I'm sure Roy would be pleased to hear from you.

What have you got in that bottle, Klein?

Monday 18th. August

Let's have a look at a few more fanzines: I'm beginning to get a much more representative selection of stuff in trade these days, and something I haven't had before is WILD FENNEL, the tenth of that name. This is a rather unique thing, being properly printed, double columns, justified margins, and on newsprint. Just like a newspaper. No staples either. Yep, just like a newspaper. Inside there's Ed Cagle at his inimitable best, and Donn Brazier and

Ben Indick somewhat below their best. Plus a large fiction section, which would ordinarily turn me right off, but, beguiled by the professional format, I read it all, and was very pleasantly surprised. This represents the highest standard of amateur fiction I've seen in a current fanzine. Particularly good was 'Shoot-Out at Cold Comfort', a novel fragment by Roger McCain, with its intriguing combination of wizardry and magic with a Western setting. Lots of other nice stuff, nothing to arouse passionate comment, but all very interesting and enjoyable. I'm still not sure of the relationship, if any, between Pauline Frames, the publisher, and Pauline Palmer, the editor. I used to think they were one and the same, the change of surname being due to marriage, but that can't be right. Enlightenment, please.

Wow, a Dean Grennell column! This is gonna be good, I thought. Unfortunately the first instalment of Dean's new column in TABEBUIAN 20 isn't all that good - just reminiscences about photography in the old days. As always, TAB is a mixed bag of shortish pieces, some good, some bad, but never, absolutely never boring. Dave Jenrette has a style I really like, but it'd be nice to see a bit more from, by or even of, Mardec.

Couple issues of SON OF THE WSFA JOURNAL (nos. 189, 190) also came in. Must be one of the comprehensivist newszines around, with a wide coverage of most aspects of sf and fandom, tending towards the bibliographical. It might be worth your while to trade, since Don gave me a three-issue trade-sub for the copy of IURK 7 I sent him. And you'll get a review, too.

"I'm an ignorant fanzine editor!" says Keith Walker in the editorial of FANZINE FANATIQUE 11. I'll decline to disagree with that. Anyone who's been publishing fanzines for six years and still extols the virtues of a hand-fed, hand-linked, semi-rotary abortion of a duplicator must be purty iggerant. Reprinting articles on fanzine-publishing dating from 1960 isn't exactly helpful, either, especially when the old postal charges are reprinted too. Things change in fifteen years, and it is no longer true to say that "most British fan artists prefer to put their own work onto stencil." All in all, this must be the least useful fanzine to come my way this year. What are you trying to do, Keith? Bring us all down to your standard?

Oh, gawd. I suppose I should have realised that, as sure as night follows day, Ian Williams would change his mind about personalzines again. So I shouldn't really have been surprised to see SIDDHARTHA 6 on the mat when I came downstairs last Thursday morning. Page one has lots of really bad reasons for doing a personalzine ("...there's nothing worth watching on tv until eleven...") and the standard of the rest is about what you'd expect from that. Look, Ian, you know and I know that you can do better than this, much better. GOBLIN'S GROTTO is pretty reasonable, but I'd much rather see you expending your energies on a personalzine. Trouble is, on this evidence you don't seem to have all that much energy left to expend. Something that reads like it was typed out on the hog, between strainings, just ain't worth it.

'Amin for TAFF!' it says on the cover of the Dunlops' new zine, ARDEES 1. I'd call that a really Idi-ous attempt at humour. Actually, I'm stuck for something to say about this that won't seem unduly negative and maybe discouraging. I get the impression that Ruth and Andrew wanted so much to publish a fanzine that they made the mistake of rushing out their first issue

without any contributors, which is excusable for a firstish, and without anything much to say, which isn't. I just hope you don't get a lot of negative reaction that'll put you off pubbing permanently, people. The more zines the merrier.....and we've got to keep this UK fanzine revival going.

STARVE THE LIZARDS! I NEARLY POINTED PERCY IN ME PETROLS! YOUSE WOULDN'T FLAMIN' READ ABOUT IT!!* 20th August

Well, actually you would. Or will. Read about it, that is. 'It' being the new Barry McKenzie film, 'Barry McKenzie Holds His Own', of which I'm pleased to report that the sequel is better than the original. The first film stuck fairly closely to the 'script' (the PRIVATE EYE comic strip by Barry Humphries and Nicholas Garland) but was rather disappointing because Barry Crocker, although visually authentic, wasn't really convincing as McKenzie because that quaint Austral phraseology just didn't come naturally - he looked embarrassed to be using phrases like 'rod-walloping' or 'syphon the python' (sorry, Mike). Almost all the material in the current film, however, is new. Odd incidents, characters etc. from the strip are used out of context, modified, or otherwise rearranged, but that's all. I'm not sure if this is the reason for the improvement, but Crocker seems to have got rid of his hangups, lingowise, and the whole thing swings along pretty well.

What's that? The plot? Ah yes...the plot. Well.....Count Plasma (Donald Pleasance) of Transylvania, that little-known member of the Eastern bloc, wants to kidnap the Queen to boost his country's tourist trade. His two bumbling agents, on the same plane as Barry and his Auntie Edna, mistake her for Her and Barry for a bodyguard. She gets kidnapped, of course, and after many adventures and incidents, Barry and a commando crew of cobbers have to be parachuted in to rescue her from the evil Count's castle. Meanwhile, the Foster's foams fantastically, the chunder flows like.....whatever it is that chunder flows like, and Auntie Edna comes out with classic lines like.....

".....lesbians have always left a nasty taste in my mouth."

Great stuff. See it if you can, even if you too were disappointed with the first one. (And there's still about two-thirds of the original story-material left - enough for at least one more film. Goody.)

I've been trying to work out why the strip appeals to me so much, ranking along with THE PERISHERS, FRED BASSET and THE CLOGGIES (also from PRIVATE EYE) as my favourite cartoon strips. Part of it is the colourful and inventive use of language.....and part of it appeals to the xenophobe in me, I think. The emigrant Aussies depicted in the strip consider England to be 'the Arsehole of the Universe' and their homeland 'God's own country', and by doing so only succeed in pointing the finger at their own shortcomings. Social comment of a sort, I suppose, and one aspect of the new film I didn't care for was the crude and artless way this was over-emphasised.

* "Goodness me! I was almost rendered incontinent, fully-clothed! A most extraordinary occurrence!!"

Another film we've seen recently was 'The Donald Duck Story'. Now I'm a sucker for cartoons, as you know, and from the title I was expecting maybe a new full-length biographical feature, or at least some sort of potted history of the development of the character. No such luck. After a pathetic 'live action' opening, purporting to depict the 'invention' of Donald Duck back in 1928, we got about a minute of the first-ever DD cartoon.....then just a load of more recent ones, strung together one after another with no attempt to link them. Disappointment. One thing I did notice, though, was that the last one in the set was much newer than the rest - maybe made specially for the rehash - and it was a hell of a lot funnier. The only one to get me really laughing, in fact. Despite the great number of cruddy cartoons around today, I feel that the nostalgia for the older stuff is ill-founded in many cases.

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A sweater-girl is one who pulls your eyes over her wool (Leon Sosnoff)

*** * *** * *** * *** * *** * *** * *** * *** * *** * ***



That rather strange-looking creature over there looks a wee bit dejected, doncha think? And with good reason, I feel. Everywhere I look in fanzines these days it's 'Bilbo for TAFF', or 'Vote for Bowers'. Obviously there are a lot of sadly de-luded fans in the world today, but you don't have to be one of them. Vote for Tackett, good people. I know I have. Tackett, as I

may have mentioned before, is undoubtedly the ticket. And what is more, Roy is unquestionably the Boy. (Wish my advertising agency would come up with a few new slogans.)

pushing sixty pages!! And that, my friends, is just too damn much, especially for a fanzine of this type (no articles or art, simple layout, etc.) So....what to do? How to cut down? What to leave out? I dunno, really, because I don't want to leave out any of the sort of things I'm putting in at the moment, and would like to include a deal more.

This is where the (*shudder*) statement of policy comes in. What do I want KNOCKERS to be? ~~*****~~ Well, it's gotta be an all-purpose sort of thing, really. Primarily it's a personalzine, where I waffle on about me, and my reactions to anything interesting that happens. Then it's got to be a reviewzine, albeit in a very personal way; because I enjoy reading fanzines, and I enjoy reading sf, and I enjoy setting down my very personal reactions to both on paper. And, it's got to be a letter-substitute, because I get to write about one fannish letter a week, on average. If I didn't do a fanzine I'd write more, certainly, but I still wouldn't respond to anything like all the fanzines I get. This way I do at least respond to everything I get, somehow. So it's got to be all those things rolled into one, and at the present rate it's taking about two hundred pages a year to do it, maybe more. If I could publish more often, it would be great: a nice little twenty-five-pager every six weeks would be much more manageable to produce and to read. But I can't publish more often, because I can't/won't afford the postage. The paper and ink are bad enough, but the postage.....

So, unless you lot out there can come up with any dynamically brilliant ideas - preferably constructive ones - you're just going to have to put up with a fifty- or sixty-page issue every quarter. And the only thing I can suggest to ease your incipient mental indigestion is: don't 'ee knock it all back at once. At ten pages a day you can read it in under a week, and hopefully you won't get fed up with it that way. Okay?

This has been a desperate statement of non-policy, brought to you by Polecat Publications - the organisation that really cares.

"++"

The only trouble with a typewriter is that you can't chew the end of it.

"++++ + "++"

"HANDS ACROSS THE OCEAN", or, "THE MAN WITH 3,000-MILE-LONG ARMS" 27.8.75

Or, in other words, we're definitely, but definitely, going to America in 1977.....provided civilisation hasn't collapsed or blown itself to bits by then. Increasingly over the past couple of years I've had this yen to go to a Worldcon, and every time I read a Worldconrep this yen gets revalued. Meeting Mike Glicksohn and Sheryl Birkhead at Seacon gave the exchange rate a big boost.....just think of all those equally nice people, lots of 'em, I could meet if I could get to a Worldcon. Trouble is, going to Worldcons needs lots of monies. It is indeed true that we earn lots of monies, but equally true that we spend it all. Saving was never one of my strong points. (Come to think of it, I'm not all that sure I have any positive ones.) Anyway, the decision has been took, and the TAMF (Trans-Atlantic Meara Fund) currently stands at £20 - about enough to get us to the airport and..... Christ! Our passports need renewing! Forgot all about that. Why 1977, I

could probably hear you asking if you weren't so far away? Well, it's pretty obvious, isn't it? I'm surprised you had to ask. In the first place, it'll definitely be on the East Coast (thanks to Dave Rowe for this information), which cuts down the travelling expenses, and in the second place, Orlando is where the siting of the '79 Worldcon will be decided, and Britain, as you may know, is not three bad in '79. MEARAS FOR TAMF! MEARAS FOR TAMF!

"I admire spirit in a woman.....so long as it isn't my Scotch."

The above is a one-liner I thought of at the Skeltons' anniversary party last weekend. I was talking to Irene Bell and Rob Jackson when it came to me in a blinding flash. They begged me to tell them it, but I coyly refused, fearing that if they didn't laugh I'd feel all inferior and silly. (This way, I'll only know for sure they didn't laugh if they take the trouble to write and tell me.) Much peeved, they assured me I'd forget it before the evening was out. Well I didn't, so nysaah to the both of you!

The party itself was much enjoyed. Kittens, Gannets and Mad-Groupers rolled up at various times and from various directions, until the house was so full that it was difficult if not impossible to circulate. The homebrew went down (and stayed down) reasonably well - some even professed to like it. Rob Jackson was voted the Man Most Likely to produce the Great British Fanzine, and I'm sure many other equally meaningless but equally enjoyable conversations took place elsewhere.

Auntie Cas's Handy Economy Hint: "If you run out of bog-roll during a party weekend, take an ordinary roll of paper kitchen towels and saw it in half with a bread-knife. Voila! Two bog-rolls!"
Uncle Mike's Guaranteed Hangover Non-Cure for Masochists: "If you wake up with a terrible hangover the morning after a party, go and strain on the bog for twenty minutes or so. You'll feel three times worse."

Along with Janice's letter a couple of pages back came a brief note from Dave Rowe which said nothing except "great issue" in about five different ways. This in-depth, constructive criticism is what I need. Later came a strange unclassifiable thing: three photocopied pages of close-packed handwriting, with a few comments written on the back. A sort of informal fannish news/letterzine, and ghu knows we need one, now that CHECKPOINT seems to have folded. Nice one, Dave.

A short, lovely quote from a letter from Terry Hughes, 866 N. Frederick St., Arlington, VA 22205, U.S.A.:

"You use the diary format quite well, discussing what things you discover in your mailbox yet frequently getting sidetracked and telling us what things you've been up."

Yes. What a pity you noticed the mistake and wrote in 'to' afterwards, Terry.

Terry then went on to relate a rather interesting Tit Tale, as follows:

"Here in Washington D.C. there is a considerable amount of construction going on. Now construction sites are not known for their beauty so the government has paid for some artwork to be placed up to make things easier on the eyes. Birds and stuff to be put on the outside for the public, but for the construction workers inside the board fences they have this huge pin-up girl painting. The artist originally did it as a nude but the officials said that was going a bit far so he had to paint a bikini on her, which he did and in safety orange colours too. He also used water-soluble paint so that the first heavy rain will wash away her garments, leaving the painting as he had originally intended. So the construction workers are happy to have the pin-up girl brighten their work and every day they perform a rain dance."

UNHAPPY DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN.....

1 September

.....or more precisely, kiddies' school holidays are here again, wouldn't you just know it. Actually, though, if like us you're a couple whose union has not yet been blessed - praise be to Minilyn! - you wouldn't tend to suspect it, and the full horror of it might only dawn on you if you did something rash, like going to the cinema for instance. So.....amid the screaming and shouting, the thunder of tiny feet up and down the gangways, and the sounds of empty plastic soft-drinks containers being trodden on en passant, we managed to take in a surprisingly large proportion of THE SEVENTH VOYAGE OF SINBAD, which is the sort of film which is dragged out time and again (ever since 1958, in fact) for such occasions. Negligible plot and worse acting don't seem to matter much. (Kathryn Grant as Sinbad's bit of fluff may be very charming, but as an actress she ranks a few steps lower than Margaret Thatcher.) No, what the kids want is plenty of action and plenty of monsters. What we wanted was plenty of monsters, and we got the usual quota. Best of the bunch was the Cyclops; it featured more heavily than the others, so it may have had more care taken with it. In addition to the obligatory roars - standard, de-luxe and large economy size - it had a measure of.....personality? Thingality? The baby roc (two-headed, of course) was also rather cute in the five minutes or so between hatching and being speared for lunch. Big Mummy roc was less impressive. There was one o' them butane-burnin' dragons, looking rather too friendly; a rather impressive fight with an animate skeleton (though nothing could match that marvellous battle scene from the later JASON & THE ARGONAUTS); and the only bummer of the bunch - a snake-woman, who cavorts about as erotically as a montage of used condoms before nearly being strangled by her own tail - the best bit of the whole scene. I kind of assumed that Harryhausen had done the animation, so I didn't particularly look for his name in the credits; however, my 'Movies on TV' says it was Nathan Juran. Nice one, Nathan.

Ken Cheslin, 46 Gerald Road, Wollaston, Stourbridge, Worcs. DY8 4SA:

"Singing titles and suchlike from fanzines (viz Cagle p2) seems to me to be a lost art nowadays. Back in my youth, in the merry days of Alan Ris-pin and Jhim Linwood, it was not unknown for faneds, suitably oiled, to sing each others' fanzines in public! No less!! Ah, if you've never heard a loc sung in Liverpuellian you haven't lived. Actually this was

quite an artform in its time (hark ee young marsters). The skilled fanzine singer had, of course, certain tricks of the trade to enhance the singability of the zine, whether for good or ill purposes. One of the most important of these was in the pronunciation. I'll sing you one next Novacon, ghod willing; it's difficult to reproduce the effect in writing. Besides, there's the musical accompaniment too.....the classical instruments in the singing of fanzines were beer bottles and spoons. Occasionally tin trays proved effective.

"Bottles are more effective than the uninitiated might suspect. For instance, a whole pamphlet might be written on the art of blowing across the tops of beer bottles, in various states of merriment, using nose, mouth and a variety of fingers in various positions. Then there are the various ways of striking the bottle, or stroking it. Ah! I'd forgotten the 'rubbing the finger round the top of the beer glass' gambit.....and the variation in the contents of the bottle. Trays were most useful in oriental variations; I remember that my YangTse Boating Song went down very well. There was an invited audience of thousands.....er.....well, there were a dozen of us....."

All very informative, Ken - especially the second paragraph, which reads more like an extract from some esoteric sex-manual - but I'm not really surprised that it's died out....it all sounds too horrible to contemplate. Not even you and Jim Linwood could do much with an hour's worth of extracts from RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY, for instance. So, Ken, please tell me what I have to do to avoid this fate worse than Lena Zavaroni that you're threatening me with?

If Harry Warner ever gets around to writing up the next decade of fannish history, I reckon you'll get a chapter all to yourself. Possibly you could arrange to give away one of those flimsy plastic demonstration records free with every book.

FANZINES, FANZINES, EVERYWHERE.....

.....nor any stop to think. Or something. Just get on with it, will you? Sorry.

PROFANITY is an odd zine; some parts are really interesting, and some are dead boring, and I can never tell which type of bit is coming up next. Bruce Pelz is an avid fanzine collector and bibliographer - even has 'em bound into sets! His comments on cataloguing and its problems were interesting, because I collect and catalogue 'em too, on a much smaller scale. These comments, together with a discussion I had recently have given me an idea for an article which I may inflict on someone, if I can find the time to write it. Also of interest were the two letters from Jessica Amanda Salmonson, fandom's first known bisexual. I get the impression she's deliberately trying to shock people, which seems a bit silly if it's true. Apparently, a couple of male fen have claimed they're going to cure her of lesbianism when she attends Westcon 28. What a remarkable blend of stupidity, chauvinism and insecurity that shows! That was issue 10, by the way.

DILEMMA 8.....hell, another title I haven't had before. My expansionist

policy is obviously paying off. I'm quite impressed with my first sample: it's got the kind of lettercol I like, where the editor really talks back to the hacks. But, it's a bit insubstantial (only one article, and though it's by Dave Locke, it's all about religion again) and - a common complaint from me - there's not enough editor in it! I look forward to receiving zines edited by women; most of them have that elusive knack of being able to write personally without seeming foolish or offensive. Possibly too many male faneds spoil their stuff by letting their egos get too much in the way. No matter: do your own thing, Jackie, and I'll look forward to receiving more DILEMMAS.

"I'm a sexist. Period. I know it, and so do all my female friends, and even though most of them are women's advocates, they still think of me as a friend, and I still think of them as friends. I'm sexist in the old way of saying it; I believe in equal pay for equal work, but I also happen to believe that there's a fundamental difference between women and men."
(Mike Kring, from a letter in Denis Quane's NOTES FROM THE CHEMISTRY DEPARTMENT 12)

TRUFANNISHNESS IS.....

3 September

.....typing a loc left-handed, because you've broken your other one. In just such a predicament is...well, well...Jackie Franke, Box 51A, RR 2, Beecher, IL 60401:

"You know, this isn't going too badly at all. I've only hit a few keys by accident, while reaching across the keyboard for another, and considering my normally abysmal typing accuracy and speed, this letter is going rather well. In the interests of Science I'm trying out two methods. The One-Hand Skip, and the One-Hand, One Index-Finger (at a most atrocious angle!) Limp. The single extremity method is somewhat slower, but at least I can see all the keyboard, and not have this un- gainly mitt block my vision when reaching to the y, h, b row. At least knowing that I can type, even if awkwardly, should lessen the distress I'm feeling at not being able to write, or draw, or *sob* cut the illos for the next issue of DILEMMA, which I was going to begin this coming week. If I couldn't type, well, I just don't know what I'd do. A day without crifanac is unimaginable, and our budget simply couldn't stand the strain of performing it via long-distance telephone.

"I approve of your list of sucker-plots. My particular list includes first contact tales, generation starship plots, mutant yarns, and a couple of others I can't recall at the moment. It's odd how a person is totally willing to suspend whatever sense of judgement one has when reading whatever falls into the 'sucker list', though, naturally enough, once the book is finished all sorts of disparaging words and phrases are thought and uttered. Why is it that so few good books are written with hackneyed plots? There's nothing intrinsically wrong with using a

hoary plotline, writers have been doing it for millennia, but somehow the word gets out that certain types of stories will sell in our genre, and all the cruddy writers latch on to them. *sigh*.

"You seem to be fond of using the term 'sod you'. While I can get a glimmer of an idea of its meaning from context, would you care to give a precise definition of the term for your American readers? If you wouldn't care to, would you do so anyway?"

That sounds like an offer I can't refuse. Ghods, it never even occurred to me that everybody wouldn't understand that phrase. Trying to explain it, though, is difficult. Well.....let's try it this way: if sodomy is second-best to fucking (and I presume most people would agree), then 'sod you' is second-best to 'fuck you' in terms of abuse, insofar as 'fuck you' is always abusive, whereas 'sod you' can be used in a jocular, I-didn't-really-mean-it sense, which is the way I always use it in print. (Though I wouldn't say I was 'fond' of using it, exactly.) It is merely an instruction to go away and not be so silly as to disagree with the writer's opinions. (As in 'I think such-and-such, and if you don't agree, then sod you'.) When I said 'second-best' back there, I was deliberately ignoring such other sexual variations as cunnilingus and fellatio; I mean, 'cunnilingus you' just doesn't have any bite to it, does it?

I agree with you in your 'suspension of judgement' idea, insofar as I'm always keen to begin a book that looks suckerish from the blurb, but if by p50 or so it hasn't lived up to my preconceived idea (or exceeded it), that's when I start using the disparaging words and phrases. I can't put a book down once I've started it, though. Quite literally, I could number the sf books I haven't been able to finish on one hand. I'm a compulsive finisher, I guess.

I do sympathise with your broken hand and your consequent typing problems, but I must point out that all my typing is done with the index finger of my right hand. I am a pure, 100%, one-finger typist. (OK, I cheat: I use my left thumb to operate the shift key.) I've tried Advanced Typing Systems, like (goshwow) both index fingers, but I can't even manage that, and give up in disgust. I reckon I'm a trufan too, in my own way. Either that, or stupid. I don't have much trouble with typos, though: only about three or four times per stencil do I have to reach for the little sticky bottle. Except when I'm pissed on too much home-brewed brown ale, that is (like now), in which case you could double or treble that.

But Jackie, you missed out the most interesting bit! You didn't say how you managed to break your meta-carpal bone at around 3am on a Saturday morning!

Jim Linwood would definitely think this was much too low for an interlineation. (Too long, too.)

Blackberrying is essentially a solitary occupation. I speak from vast experience, having picked, during the past week, no less than fourteen pounds

of the things (with help from Pat, of course). Despite that, I have found that it is far better to pick separately and solitarily, rather than having a gang-bang on the same bush. In this way, one can commune with Nature in silence. One can also have one's trousers snagged and one's knitted shirt ripped to shreds amid loud swearing noises, but that is by the by. One can also avoid wifely cries of 'hey love, I've found some fantastic ones over here', which tend to make one's many struggles through a ditch and up a one-in-one slope, only to be confronted with a distinctly mediocre bush, look rather pathetic. (Did I say 'many' back there? I did, didn't I? This may be true in itself, but what I meant to put was 'manly'. See? This brown ale will have to go. Down my neck, most likely. All future utterings of this date should be taken with a pinch of Alka-Seltzer.)

But why do we do it? Why? Why? Well, fourteen pounds of blackberries make three gallons of blackberry wine, plus one bloody huge or two quite large blackberry pies. Okay?

"I vote Evelyn Gold and Bea Mahaffey as the editors to whom I would most like to submit." (Bob Bloch)

Ahhh....now here's what I call a fanzine. Rob Jackson, if he doesn't lose interest or go bankrupt, is obviously going to take MAYA a long, long way. Number 8, the second of the Jackson-edited issues, reads great and looks nearly as good. (The only criticism I have of the zine is that the layout is too cramped - but I gather Rob realises that anyway.) The lettercol is good, the artwork is good, the articles are good....every damn thing in it is good. Here at last is a zine that can compare with most U.S. zines in overall quality. More power to yer, Rob! (Though I still say that a zine doesn't have to look good to be a good fanzine. Look at KWALHIOQUA. Or ~~TITLE~~. Or FOULER. But those are/were very individualistic zines; I suppose a genuine, in all senses of the word, has to look good to make an impact.)

LAZLATHEA 1 is a one-sheet (sic) from Frank Balazs, whose new address, if you don't already know it, is 2484 Indian, Sunya, Albany, NY 12222, U.S.A. Apart from that, the most interesting things are this really deep quote 'Light is darkness lit up' (Wonder if 'Deep Quote' is a faanish version of 'Deep Throat'?) and Frank's reaction to 'Monty Python and the Holy Grail'. I get the impression that Americans don't really understand MP. That is to say, if anybody understands it, Americans understand it less than we (the English) do. I have a cutting here, from THE SUN a few weeks ago, I think, from which I quote: "Pythoneer Terry Jones, 34, says 'The reaction (to MP in America) is incredible, considering our humour is so basically British'". The article goes on to say that the Public Broadcasting Service (the U.S. equivalent of the BBC in that it doesn't have commercials), which is broadcasting the shows, is always having to raise cash. During an auction, apparently, a rejected Python script brought \$350, and an original Gumby hat (a hankie with knots at the corners) fetched \$90. Incredible. Good news is that "we'll almost certainly be doing another film in Britain next year after the success of 'Holy Grail'". No more TV series, though. *sob* Incidentally, this might be a good place to mention that if anyone has tapes of shows from the first MP series, I'd be extremely interested to hear from

you. I could trade with tapes from later series, or I'd pay real genuine money, if there is such a thing left in the world. Let me know, anyway.

And who have we here? Ben Indick, no less (who sent a photo to prove it), who resides at 428 Sagamore Avenue, Teaneck, NJ 07666:

"I would have replied instanter to your zine, but this has been a summer of various discontents...business aggravations, expenses -- HAW! speaking of same, how would you like your little wife, mother of your (annoying) children, chief cook and bottle-washer to call you to the garage to help her with her WELDING! Yes, I spent \$700 to equip our garage electrically so my wife, who loves welding as a sculpture medium, could bother me in exactly this way. (She has recently had a one-artist show, etc., etc.) -- tiredness, and a perfectly desultory season insofar as fanaticism is concerned. I felt disinclined, in general, to everything.

"However, I am chipper (after my own style) again, and I rush to loc.

"Pg. 22. Stop bitching about turning 27. Another reason for my recent despondency was August 11, and on that day, Junior, the old redhead became officially 52. FIFTY TWO for crissake, 52 aching damn decrepit years. Will you talk to me after that? Will my choppers fall out if I reply? FIFTY ACHING TWO...Sigh...can sixty be far behind?

"I have zoomed to the end, and I still have found no original book-length novel, no discussion of 'new-wave' sf, no interview with Roger Elwood, and no article on how to work a mimeo. WHAT'S WRONG WETH YOU GUYS?"

A question I/we have often asked my/ourselves, Ben. Thank you very much for the photo -- I wish more overseas fen would send photos. It will go in our album, anyway.

Welding, eh? Don't I remember a J. G. Ballard story about a welded piece of art which suddenly became animate and took over the world or something? 'Mobile', I think it was called. You could have a dangerous wife there, Ben...I should watch her closely, if I were you.

Okay, so you're nearly twice as old as me.....so what? At every birthday there's something you could/should have done when you were younger. At every birthday. As I see it, you have to have the courage to make every now-moment as happy as you can, otherwise you'll always be regretting things you didn't do. I'm 27 and I'm regretting things I didn't do when I was 17. Aw, hell. Now you've got me all depressed. When I'm into my fifth pint of home-brew I'm very easily moved. Sometimes I wish I could be like this all the time. Then I realise that if I was, I'd probably go mad.

When you join the Common Market, stick an onion up your bum*.

A week or so ago I got a letter from a Mr. Peter Wright, of Bulwell, Nottingham. * ass, arse, anus, posterior, anal orifice, rear end, bottom, Richard Nix

ingham. Although a long-time reader of sf, Peter has only just found out about fandom - exactly how he did this I'm not sure yet. In his letter he mentions contacting someone in the Brum Group, who put him on to me. He's all enthusiastic about fanzines (though he hadn't seen even one when he wrote to me), he's an artist, and he works in the printing business. He's coming over to see us in a fortnight, so if the next issue of KFN is all-litho, with photographs and full colour artwork, you'll know we got on well.

4 September

STARLING 31 is a special all-mystery issue. All quite interesting reading, but it doesn't really inspire me to comment much. I have never been very enthusiastic about this genre, with the exception of Raymond Chandler's books which I enjoy greatly - but not for the plotting, the 'mystery' element. I like his style, and the characters he draws, and his ability to conjure up clear pictures in my mind of whatever he's writing about. I wish that more sf writers could do that.

On the basis of number 12, the first I've seen, NOTES FROM THE CHEMISTRY DEPT. is quite unique in the way that it is so steffnally-orientated but warm and friendly with it. Dick Geis is the only other I can think of who gets the same effect, but he gets it in a different way. Although Denis apparently prefers to write about sf and scientific things, his letterhacks think differently; this issue's lettercol is mainly devoted to feminism, for instance. I'm not sure whether this dichotomy is typical or not. I wish I'd picked up on this earlier.

On the other hand, the best thing about VECTOR 69 is the fine AMES cover. All the rest (well, a good proportion) is either reprinted, trivial or just boring. This is obviously a stop-gap issue, though, until the BSFA gets properly on its feet again. Don't laugh, it's cruel. I'm not even sure why I got this, since I'm not a member. Maybe I won't get any more. I won't be too sad. New editor Chris Fowler seems a nice bloke; doesn't sound a bit like a masochist or a champion of lost causes. Odd.

"I don't give a damn, for mutton or lamn."

(Dean Grennell)...

Jim Meadows III (31 Apple Court, Park Forest, IL 60466) really got his buttons pushed by my mention of the Rocky and Bullwinkle cartoons. He wrote me three single-spaced pages about them. It's all interesting stuff, but I haven't got the space to print it all. Tell you what I'll do: for the benefit of the fans of that show (and it seems there are plenty) I'll try to summarise what Jim wrote:

The show was produced by Jay Ward and Bill Scott, and was really the descendant of CRUSADER RABBIT, the first made-for-TV cartoon, in the late 50s, which had a similar offbeat style, limited animation and heavy reliance on the soundtrack for humour. In its first weeks on network prime time on NBC, THE BULLWINKLE SHOW featured a Bullwinkle puppet emcee, whose satirical barbs at the network were too much for NBC. They dropped it and it was taken up by ABC. Other Ward productions included DUDLEY DO-RIGHT OF THE MOUNTIES (featuring Dudley, his unrequited sweetheart Nell Fenwick, Inspec-

tor Fenwick, her father and head of the Mountie camp, and the heavy, Snidly Whiplash), HOPPIITY HOOPER (a less than inspired series of 4-part shows featuring a frog, a bear and a wolf named Uncle Waldo) and GEORGE OF THE JUNGLE (one of three cartoons in a show in the Hanna-Barbera mould: three different subjects, 7 minutes per cartoon, no serials. Apart from dumb-guy Tarzan-type George, there were Super-Chicken (an urbane millionaire chicken named Henry Cabot Henhouse III, who changed into a Righter of Wrongs when he drank his super-sauce) and Tom Slick (a racecar driver similar in character to Dudley Do-Right)). A common feature of all these shows was their use of the narrator/announcer, who would often engage in backchat with the characters. In the late 60s Ward had his own animation studio and began doing tv commercials, notably Captain Crunch. (I presume that that thing which keeps turning up like a bad penny during film shows at British cons could be one of his.) He now does nothing but tv commercials, since the networks are unwilling to let him produce a show on his own terms.

Thanks a lot for the information, Jim. Now I wish they'd bring back the shows over here. Of the other Ward productions you mentioned, DUDLEY DO-RIGHT sounds a bit familiar, but I don't remember any of the others.

Then, in his second letter, Jim commented on the rest of the issue!:

"Your slight embarrassment at the phrase 'nigger minstrel' is not isolated. Go buy a recent recording of Gilbert & Sullivan's THE MIKADO and you'll hear in 'I've Got a Little List' the phrase 'nigger serenaders and the others of their race' changed to 'banjo serenaders.....'. The word 'race' is still confusing, but the teeth are removed. Check Hugh Lofting's THE VOYAGE OF DR. DOOLITTLE which won the 1922 Newbury Children's Book Award. The people of a south sea island, originally called niggers are simply natives in later printings. And then there's the school board in this country which back in the early '60s censored each mention of the word 'nigger' from library copies of HUCKLEBERRY FINN. This sort of thing is wearing off though, as true racial unity becomes slowly closer to reality, and we get less self-conscious. For instance, at this campus anyway, you can show old films of AMOS & ANDY and get laughs. Now, I don't know how high the number of blacks giggling at the show is, but the show harbors no direct racial slurs. It's merely about some silly people, and in fact is quite similar in flavor to a current US tv show, SANFORD & SON, our version of STEPTOE & SON. It's primarily done with a black cast, and is about some silly people. Of course, it has been accused of having been written with a white viewpoint in mind, not thinking of how a black junkdealer and his son would really react to things. But still, people realize that the humor in the series does not rely merely on the blackness of the characters, and that when it does, it isn't a slur on the blacks of this country."

I wonder if you've seen anything of our long-running tv series THE BLACK AND WHITE MINSTREL SHOW? I doubt it somehow. The nature of the show is obvious from the title, and to me the whole thing is totally tedious and to be avoided, but there are regular complaints about the show's possible racist interpretation. To me, the only offensive thing about the show is that it's 100% schlock.

Yes folks, the long-dreaded SPACE 1999 has finally arrived. And is it as bad as we thought it'd be? YES! I must admit, though, that it is better than UFO. But then, what isn't? Basically it's just another super-puppet-show. Even though the actors are real live (I think) humans, I sometimes thought I could see the wires holding them up. The Andersons should have stuck to the kids' stuff, since they apparently haven't yet learned that if you have a big explosion on the moon, it doesn't go boom-boom-boom. It's the vacuum, see? Anyway, I was misled; I thought that in the first episode the radioactive waste from Earth (all dumped in only two places - very careless) suddenly went critical and blew off a chunk of the Moon. But no.....it's the whole shemozzle that gets blasted out of orbit. The unstable radioactive matter acts as a giant reaction motor, see? Why're you laughing? Anyway, last week we left them zooming off into space, and just by chance they're heading towards this mysterious planet whose name I forget, which just by chance happens to be drifting through our solar system at just the right moment for an interesting plot situation to develop. Maybe. We shall see. (Or rather, you may but I won't, since I'll be away on business and with any luck I'll miss the second episode.)

A famous sf writer took an ocean voyage to write, and locked himself in his cabin. He made up his own bunk.

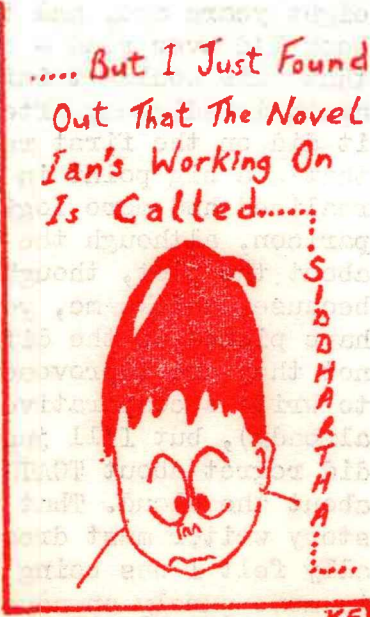
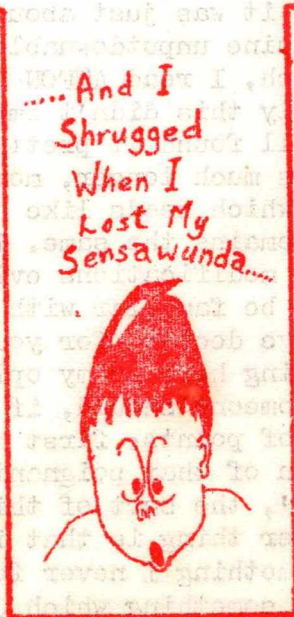
CLOSE TO CRITICAL - III

Recently I've been comparing Arthur Clarke's AGAINST THE FALL OF NIGHT, the original version of the story, with his 1953 re-write THE CITY AND THE STARS, to see if I could decide for myself which I think is the better book, since the opinions of others seem so divided. I'd read TCATS once before, about eight years ago, and thought then that it was just about the greatest sf book I'd ever read - one of my few genuine unputdownables, in fact. Hoping that this wouldn't influence me too much, I read ATFON first and then TCATS again immediately afterwards. Admittedly this didn't impress me as much as it did on the first reading, but I still found it pretty enjoyable, and that's a big point in its favour. It is much longer, more complex, more fully realised and more logical than ATFON, which reads like a first draft by comparison, although the basic plotline remains the same. I'm not going to talk about the plot, though, or the various modifications evident in the re-write, because, unlike me, you should already be familiar with both these books, have picked up the differences, and have decided for yourselves whether or not they are improvements. All I'm giving here is my opinion. I don't want to write a comparative essay (though someone should, if it hasn't been done already), but I'll just make a couple of points: first of all, one thing I did regret about TCATS was the omission of that poignant introductory piece about the cloud. That was a real 'hook', the sort of thing every adventure-story writer must dream about; the other thing is that in TCATS I occasionally felt I was being lectured at - something I never felt in ATFON, which is more purely an adventure story, and something which Clarke could doubtless have avoided if he'd done the re-writing in 1973 instead of 1953. Finally, I venture the opinion that Clarke's work might not stand up too well

to re-reading. I think he has written a good proportion of fine novels and shorts, which give tremendous pleasure upon first reading; but they're too simple and direct, too much on one level, for one to get anything more from them on subsequent readings, which only serve to destroy cherished memories - not a good thing, in my view.

Pat reviewed M. John Harrison's *THE COMMITTED MEN* some time ago, in *DURK*. She didn't like it, said she'd wasted her time reading it. It's another of those disaster stories that British writers love so well (and write so well); mounting radiation levels have caused the collapse of society, but eventually a stable, adapted human mutation appears, and the efforts of a group of old-style humans to deliver a baby of the new species safely to others of its kind form the subject-matter of the book. For a first novel it's not bad. The quality of the writing is variable, and the handling of flashbacks I thought was clumsy, but that should improve with practice. More disturbing are the bits I didn't understand: what is the significance of Nick Bruton and his repeated appearances throughout the book? Why doesn't he suffer from skin cancers like everyone else...and is that significant? Is this book attempting more than just storytelling? Rather a puzzling book, then, but I couldn't say it was a waste of time.

No doubt about John Jakes' *MENTION MY NAME IN ATLANTIS*: storytelling, pure and simple. His 'real' explanation of the mystery of that fabled island is very plausible, perhaps too much so, since the book then has to depend solely on the writing and the characters for its humour.....and it is supposed to be humorous. Generally, it works quite well: Conax the Chimerical is a lovely take-off of the Conan-type hero - all thews and no clues; and Hoptor the Vintner, whose name it is that we are frequently exhorted to mention, is interesting too, especially if you like your 'vintages' with red hair and in a



SIDHARTHA.....

KE 18-3-75

38-24-36 container! Yes, it's quite amusing.....and succeeds in showing once again how difficult it is to be really funny at novel length.

Christ! Another disaster story! It's a wonder I'm not feeling suicidal. This one's called IMPLOSION, by D. F. Jones, wherein some loony Anglophobe in a research lab. in an unspecified country in the Eastern Bloc devises a sterility-inducing drug, which he promptly arranges to have dumped in Britain's water supply. Result: ninety-odd percent of our women become permanently sterile. We hit back at them with their own medicine, of course, but that's not the point. What Jones is asking is: what would be the better thing to do in such a situation? Do we try and maintain our normal lifestyle, remaining as civilised as we can, and thereby run the risk of becoming extinct as a nation through not maximising the remainder of our resources; or do we opt for maximum fertility, by placing all the remaining fertile women in breeding camps, to become nothing more than artificially-inseminated baby-machines, and by minimising deaths among children by placing them in carefully supervised boarding schools, and thereby run the risk of losing our essential humanity? Jones lets us know what he thinks in the way he portrays the latter alternative. So far, so good. But I feel he drives his point home much too far by backing on a rather arbitrary unhappy ending. An upbeat, or at least an inconclusive ending would have made a much stronger book. Apart from this, though, it's a very good book.

IT'S A SHAME I DON'T LIKE HORSE-RACING.....

9 September

.....because there's an excellent view of Aintree racecourse from the top storey of the depolymerisation plant. Yes folks, this section of KFN 2 is being typed on location - in room 3 of the Orrell Park Hotel, actually - as the deadline is getting near, and I have to have something useful to do in the evenings whilst I'm stuck here on this crummy plant supervision job. At least half the space in my suitcase was taken up with fannish gear. So what can we find? Well, there's four foolscap pages from Mae Strelkov, all about bread-making, and different types of knockers, and grappa, and bread-making, and...and...bread-making..... Very difficult to quote from, in fact, and I've too little time and space to print it all. This next one looks a little easier: it's from Pauline Palmer, 2510 48th., Bellingham, WA 98225:

"Right off you refer to your house being quiet as a mouse. Perhaps English mice are better-behaved than their American counterparts, but it seems that recently our house has been noisy as a mouse -- indeed a whole mouse family. (It's the time of year -- got a bit chilly for the poor critturs outdoors & they're nesting in for the long cold winter.) Anyway at night when we're trying to sleep, they're all skittering about inside the walls having some sort of mousish orgy. At first we tried throwing the cat out of bed in the general direction of the rumpus but he'd just yawn, stretch a bit, then climb back under the covers where it's warm and cozy (a wise old cat, he is.) Still occasionally he'll condescend to finish one off in the middle of the night, but since he's got terrible table manners we've found trying to sleep through the steady crunch*crunch*crunch of his mid-night snack is even worse than the original mouse-scrabbling was.

"Feeding "Wednesday 30th. April" gave me the giggles, which would seem to prove the theory that humor is at its most successful when the scenario

is embarrassingly familiar.....(no not that you two were being familiar with each other but that the episode reminded me of...oh rot - best I go on to some other comments....)

"I love all those neat one-liners on the page-tops, yes I do, and I mention it right now because all this thinking about familiarity caused me to think of...

Familiarity breeds ... content

or perhaps a just plain

FAMILIARITY BREEDS!

(Make a good bumpersticker, that one, methinks.)

"Hey, did you really not know what a boysenberry is? Why, any berry freak can tell you they're, well, they're ... DELICIOUS! ... a blackberry/loganberry/raspberry hybrid created by one Mr. (*surprise*) Boysen. My grandparents had some in their garden when I was a kid and we have some growing wild in one of the less habitable areas of our own private outback. Well, come to think of it, it's mostly the boysenberries (with a little able assistance from some thistles) that make it uninhabitable. Anyway, in spite of the vast dangers to me delicate little bod I do manage to pick as many as I can each year but never enough, alas, to make any boysenberry wine, which I'm sure would be delicious. But the berry that'S REALLY strange is one my parents grow, called a 'pewterberry'. It's something weird like a blueberry/gooseberry cross -- large and round and reddish-blue and right nasty to eat straight from the vine. But they DO make up into one helluva good dark wine (a bit elderberry-ish, actually.)"

And neither of them available over here, alas! Never mind...there are four gallons of blackberry wine burbling happily away to themselves back in Spondon. This has the advantage over elderberry, which we made last year, that it's ready to drink much sooner after bottling.

Just what was it that reading 'Wednesday 30th. April' reminded you of, Pauline? Come on now, you can't keep it to yourself like that... 's not fair.

I enjoyed your Great Free Gift limerick so much that I decided to let it display its charms on the front cover. You obviously have a gift for these things.

Wednesday 10th September 1975

is undoubtedly an excellent day for looking at a couple of substantial fanzines. For why? For because I happen to have them here in front of me, that's why. I tend to look kindly upon fanzines which supply me with mind-croggling facts or thots, hence I like Frank Denton's ASH-WING 17 because on p7 I learn that Tom Robbins is writing a novel called EVEN COWGIRLS GET THE BLUES, which, he says, "is a serio-comic philosophical thriller based on the smells of the female body." Ohhh boy. Croggle, croggle. I must look out for that. The rest of the zine is mostly fine in a relaxed, friendly sort of way, without inspiring much comment. I did greatly enjoy

Don Keller's music column, though. There aren't very many such columns in fanzines, which is a shame from my point of view, and Don writes pleasantly about music which is mostly to my taste (Clapton, Neil Young, Led Zeppelin). The column fits in perfectly with the zine because it has the same relaxed feel to it.

And the other substantial fanzine is Victoria Wayne's SIMULACRUM 1, which must be the best-produced second issue I've ever seen (the first was the VATI-CON III PROGRAM BOOK). Okay, so she had help from Mike Glicksohn, who's published a few smart-looking items himself, but even so..... Your self-stylisation as Anti-Mush Woman in this all-sex issue is largely a matter of sour grapes, as you yourself admit, Victoria. So I was surprised to find that your views on sex in sf were quite rational (i.e. they paralleled my own). I agree that it is not good writing to pad out a plot with what your columnist Smythe aptly describes as 'fuck scenes'. I would add that, equally, it is not good to pad out fuck scenes with a plot, as exemplified by the pale-blue-movies to be found at the local cinema. Occasionally I get the urge to go see one of these, and the only thing that puts me off is the knowledge that the 'good bits' will be dressed up (not a good choice of phrase, but you know what I mean) in a bad plot with worse acting. If I'd wanted to see a plot and acting, I'd have gone to see another film. But I didn't: I wanted ninety minutes of groping, fondling, sucking and fucking.....or as near to it as you can get in this so-called permissive age. So you see, there are two sides to the picture.

The other thing of interest was Wayne MacDonald's illo on p27, depicting a young girl apparently engaged in some form of sexual activity with a caterpillar- or snake-like alien. Neither looks as though they're quite sure about the whole business, and there are copious quantities of sticky-looking liquid oozing over the girl's thighs. You ask: "Does this illustration provoke nausea in you? If 'Yes', you are artistically tolerant but morally loose; if 'No', you are artistically tolerant and also very likely a prude." I'm afraid I don't follow that at all; if it doesn't provoke nausea then I'm a prude, right? Okay, if you say so, I'm a prude, but in my defence I have to add that I'd have to know a little more about the story behind the picture before I could decide about the state of my stomach. Appearances can be deceptive, is what they say.

As you might have guessed, I enjoy writing and thinking about sexual matters, which is partly why I've devoted so much space (relatively) to SIMULACRUM 1. But it was, from cover to cover, one of the most interesting zines I've mentioned this issue, and not least because of your own contribution.

DICK TURPIN WAS HERE LAST WEEK.....

14 September

.....he was helping the Murphy brothers fix our gas leak. In case you should think that a flintlock pistol is not the ideal equipment for such a task (though the face-mask could have come in handy), I ought to make it clear that I refer, not to the DT, but merely a DT, and I haven't got the DTs 'cos it really happened. (Of course, you knew it wasn't the DT I was talking about, but I have to start off these paragraphs somehow, y'know.)

It had occurred to me, y'see, that my few days' absence in Aintree might be a good chance to get something done about the gaseous aroma which had been

bothering us for a week or two, since Rule 1 in such circumstances is 'if in doubt, dig up the driveway', and I wanted me and the car to be far away when that happened. Sure enough, they did dig up the driveway (or some of it, anyway), they did find the leak and they did, according to Pat, replace a great length of rotten old metal pipe with trendy newfangled plastic stuff. What they didn't do was reconcrete the drive like they said they would. I shall give them a week - more than generous, really - and then we shall have words, the East Midlands Gas Board and I. Actually, I really am glad I was elsewhere, since what with our next-door-neighbour extending his kitchen (hammer-hammer-thump-thump-thump) on one side, and the EMGB doing their thing (drrrrill-dr-r-rill-crunch-kerthump) on the other, 61 Borrowash Road was not a good place to be, fanac-wise.

"I was going to give him a piece of my mind, until I found out he was only a fragment of my imagination."
(after Fred Feitelbaum)

Time for more letters, I theenk. First, a brief quote from a semi-loc from Jerry Kaufmann:

"KNOCKERS FROM NEPTUNE and INFERNO were forwarded to me..... Of the two, I found more to amuse me in KFN, in part because there is less in INFERNO (Skel cheats on thinking by filling up pages with lists of fanzines come in the mail.) But it does seem rather that your two families are merging into one: your zine even begins to resemble theirs. Maybe you should combine into one and publish INFERNAL KNOCKERS (affectionately to be known as UNHOLY TITS.)"

I think it's a bit unfair to say that Skel cheats on thinking by filling up pages etc. Personally I think it's a bit pointless to mention fanzines without actually saying anything about them, and I think that he's changed his mind about this. I agree, though, that our publications are similar; LURK was largely inspired by HELL, and KFN by INFERNO, and I suppose that it's not impossible that we might co-edit a fanzine at some later stage, but from our recent experience with the holiday one-shot I would say that it must take a very strong friendship indeed to withstand the strains of co-editing.

Friendship is.....co-editing a fanzine.

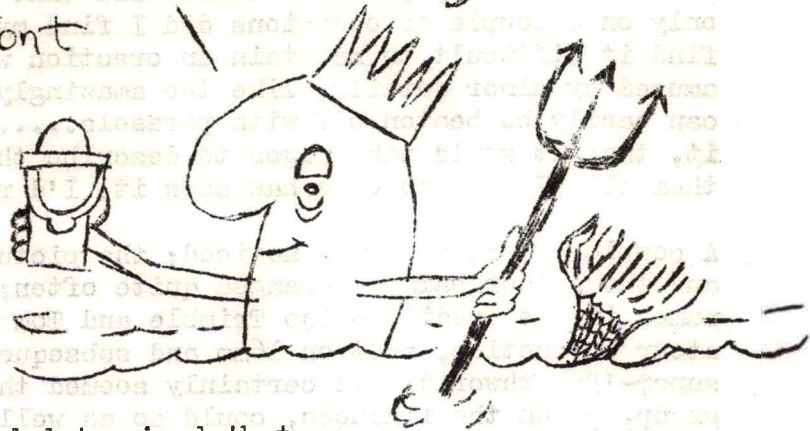
And now, the Man in the Meteor speaks:
Sam Long, Box 4946, Patrick AFB, Fla 32925:

"'Jarlsberger!' may become as famous a fannish cry as Bob Tucker's 'Rosebud!', and for many the same reasons...I'll tell you about 'Rosebud' as Bob told it me one of these days. By the way, Guinness (or should I say 'Chuinness'?) is the only drink other than Jim Beam bourbon that Tucker had deemed 'smoooooth'. I gave him a bottle at a con in Kansas City a month or so ago, his first Guinness, in fact, and you should have seen his face light up as he drank it.

"Uhh, page 12...
at that same
Kansas
City con,
there was
a game of

'strip' Hangman. You know
Hangman, the guessing game?
Well...there was a poor
loser there too, but he
was extruded from the game,
which then went on to its
bare-assed conclusion. I
was only a spectator....

Hereze, Mearae, something
for your front
door!



"I used the Reality Tester, and determined that
I'm both real and alive; but I must point out that one really can't test
the reality of crocodilians with it because the reptiles are armored and
wouldn't feel anything. However, a lion or tiger, say, is a different
matter, since they're not armored. Using the Tester on members of the
Household Cavalry is likely to be futile too, because they're armored as
well.

"How about 'Roquefortcannon's World'?"

"Well, that's about it for thisish. I see where the postage's going up to
8.5p pretty soon. Ghad! But that's the way the Mercedes Benz."

Quite. You're right about the Tester, Sam: I can see that some development
work is necessary. 'Strip' Hangman? I can hardly believe it. Not how we
used to play it at school, anyhow (more's the pity.) It sounds, though, like
an instance of what I was talking about re SIMULACRUM.....padding out the
sex with plot. Skel and I came across the notorious Jim Beam in a Welsh pub
during the holiday, so we sampled it out of curiosity. I don't think Skel
was very impressed, and personally I feel it's not a patch on a really good
single malt, like Glenmorangie or Talisker. I would like to know about this
'Rosebud' thing, though. Nothing to do with 'Citizen Kane', I presume?

I loved your illo, Sam, and since it seemed suitable for hand-cutting I
thought I'd have a go. Hope I didn't ruin it too much.

FLUSH WITH FLASHES OF FLESH.....

.....is FLESH GORDON, which finally came our way a couple of days ago. I'll
say here and now that I think this film is completely successful in what it
set out to do, and that I find it difficult to understand the lukewarm press
~~reaction~~ it has received. I would agree that to appreciate it fully, one
should have seen the original on which it was based (the 1936 serial, I think,
which was strung together for re-release on the circuit a year or so ago),
but much of the humour is independent of that. The three instances where an-
imation is used are marvellous, especially the Penisauri, and as good or
better than Harryhausen's work. The other special effects are good too, and

I was especially pleased to see that the firework-powered rocketships had been retained. The sex content, surprisingly, is mostly pertinent to the plot: it was undeniably pleasant to see all that female flesh jouncing about, but only on a couple of occasions did I find myself getting excited about it. I find it difficult to maintain an erection while giggling. I was continually amused by minor details, like the amazingly incompetent guards, whose swords can easily be beaten off with parasols.....there were so many good things in it, that it would take pages to describe them all, even if I could remember them all. If anyone else has seen it, I'd really like to know your opinions.

A couple of odd things I noticed: the picture quality was always quite grainy, and the colour balance changed quite often; also I noticed a couple of fan-names in the credits -- Bjo Trimble and Tom Reamy. So was this in fact an amateur production, shot on 16mm and subsequently blown up to 35mm? A sort of super-'Breathworld'? It certainly seemed the sort of film that an amateur group, given the finances, could do as well as any professional organisation.

"O for a verse about rabbits

..... That doesn't mention their habits!"

(Ron Fleshman).....

The thing that struck me most about UNDULANT FEVER 1, Bruce Arthurs' continuation of/replacement for his personalzine POWERMAD, is the way he writes so entertainingly about trivialities. I mean no put-down when I say that: it's a real art to be able to do it. I wish I could do it better in KfN. All you folks out there who like personalzines will really love this one. This is the sort of zine that gets to me most, I suppose: there aren't too many of them around.

ZYMUR-WORM is one zine in which the co-editor thing seems to work really well. Really it's two zines (VardeBob's insanity in one, Patten's typos in the other) plus a lettercol; each does his own thing relatively independently. Presumably the saving in postage is the incentive to get together. Anyway, it's all good stuff, and Harry Morris' cover is very effective. A pity it didn't occupy all of the available space, though, like on 2lh.

Gil Gaier, 1016 Beech Avenue, Torrance, CA 90501:

"I have tried the Reality Tester on three neighbours...make that ex-neighbours. The pointy end got red twice and green once. I am now worried about your WARNING letter c). I have done the dance of purification and bathed myself in scotch. Is there anything I've forgotten to do to protect us from the alien menace?

"And speaking of drinking. "...I've finally managed to concoct an alcoholic drink that tastes exactly like...piss." Ghod, Mike, you're THE FIRST man I've ever known who's admitted he's drunk piss before. (Well, you had to have done it to have made the comparison, right?)

"Second FUNNIEST LINE: "As Pat and I were lying in bed the other night, waiting for something to happen..." Oh, you conservatives. Ya gotta start in the kitchen or on the telly or in the john. Why is it that we bachelors are always left the task..."

"Favorite FUNNY LINE: '...while the kids ran around desecrating various items of historical interest.' You know why I enjoy KNOCKERS? 'Cos you funny."

I reckon any self-respecting alien menace would be so horrified at the sight of a apparently intelligent being wasting good liquor by immersing his body in it, that he'd get the hell out, real quick. "Hey Rnkskwfl, lookit this guy, bathing in booze. Must be a nut or somethin'. Let's quit this crazy planet. Warp factor three and set course for Deneb."

Well, I've never actually drunk piss, but I have tasted it, in my youth, just out of curiosity. Hasn't everybody? Or am I odder than I think I am?

In the kitchen, huh? That's nuthin'. Lissen, you ever make it in a darkroom? I made it in a darkroom once. I bet there's not many people can say they made it in a darkroom. Especially while the Camera Club are meeting right next door. Hmmm.....maybe I am odder than I think I am, at that.

...How do ghosts reproduce? By means of a spirit duplicator! (A Wesley)

IF YOU READ ANY FURTHER, YOU'LL FALL OFF THE EDGE

15 September

Because this is the final section of the current instalment of KFN. Just a couple of fanzines left in the file, and a few books to mention, and that'll be it.

Any zine with 6 $\frac{2}{3}$ pages of Leroy Kettle can't be all bad...providing it has more than 6 $\frac{2}{3}$ pages. No but seriously though, this document, 'Polly Put The Kettle On', may possibly be invaluable to those who are able to learn by Roy's mistakes and thereby stand a chance of ending up normal. No, I'm not going to say anything nice about it. Why should I say anything nice about it? Let the others do that. Snif. I will admit, though, that when I've thought of Peter Nicholls at all, I've thought of him as a pretentious pseudo-intellectual. So you were right there, Peter. Now, I shall think of you as a pretentious pseudo-intellectual who writes good conreps. When I think of you at all, that is. Actually, this is a bloody good fanzine, is this WRINKLED SHREW 4, edited by Pat Charnock, all of which I forgot to mention earlier. And I must say I'm really glad to see a woman doing so well in the big wide world of fan-pubbing (as we lads say.) There...that proves I'm not a ~~condemner~~ (sorry, Bryn) fucking condescending male chauvinist pig, doesn't it? It is good though - serio-honestly. But you should have put 'Roll Call' at the beginning, Pat. Don't you realise how doubly disappointing it is for someone like myself (say) to look all through the zine, page by page, for a mention of my name, only to realise that I could have saved myself all that cliff-hanging, thrombosis-inducing, ego-crushing labour by glancing at p33 and not finding my name there. You probably have latent sadistic tendencies. I bet that's why Graham wears those polo-neck sweaters, to hide the latent weals on his back (not to mention his latent rubber corset.)

Bruce Pelz is gonna be awfully mad, that's for sure. Come to think of it, I'm not too pleased myself. I mean, no offense and all that, but who'd pick

Arthur Cruttenden when he could have had Pauline Dungeate. Come to think of it....but anyway, publishing a fanzine as a set of trading cards is sneaky. Clever, but sneaky. And how the hell is poor old Bruce going to code it in his computerised fanzine index? And, what's more, what did I do to get among such illustrious company? It's a pretty assorted group of people you picked, and I suspect that the only common factor is that they've all had their photo taken by Sam Long at some time or other. Right. So much for TAB 21. TAB 22 is a little more conventional...but only a little. Thanks for the Purple Mal-lorn seed, people. I doubt if it'll grow in this climate, and anyway we don't have a large field to replant it in. Maybe you can get high on it? Joe Halde-man's course outline on writing sf was interesting, though I still boggle a bit at the whole idea of actually teaching sf. I was impressed by the reading list: pretty wide-ranging, I thought, for just a 16-week course.

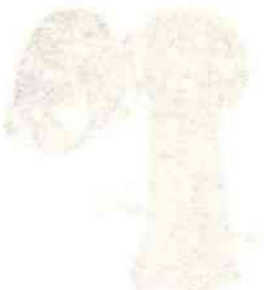
Why would anybody spend a year writing a novel, when you can buy a good one for \$3.50?

WHO GETS THE AND WHY

John ALDERSON (TR); Don ALLEN (X); Jan APPELBAUM (F); Bruce ARTHURS (T); Mike BAILEY (F); Frank BALAZS (T); John BANGSUND (T); Doug BARBOUR (L); Rich BAR-TUCCI (F); Steve BRATTY (TR); Harry BELL (T); Eric BENTCLIFFE (L); Ruth BER-MAN (TR); John BERRY (TR); Sheryl BIRKHEAD (L); Gray BOAK (L); Pam BOAL (L); Bill BOWERS (TR); Donn BRAZIER (TR); Bill BREIDING (TR); Ned BROOKS (TR); John BROSMAN; Linda BUSHYAGER (T); Ian BUTTERWORTH (L); Ed CAZLE; Terry CARR (T); Doug CARROLL (TR); Pat CHARNOCK (T); Cy CHAUVIN (X); Ken CHESLIN (L); Ron & Sue CLARKE; Ed CONNOR; Tony CVETKO (TR); Don D'AMMASSA (F); Bill DANNER (TR); An-drew DARLINGTON; Frank DENTON (T); A & R DUNLOP (L/T); Leigh EDMONDS; Bryn FORTEY (T); Jackie FRANKE (L/T); Keith FREEMAN (L/T); Gil GAUER (L/T); Mike GILBERT (F); Barry GILLAM (F); Bruce GILLESPIE (TR); Mike GLOCKSOHN; Mike GLYER (TR); Jim GODDARD (X); Neal GLOUWARB (TR); David GORMAN (F); Roberta GRAY; Kevin HALL (T); Fred HASKELL (T); Paul HUDSON (L); Terry HUGHES (L/T); Ben INDOCK (L); Rob JACKSON (T); Terry JEEVES; D & M JENNETTE (T); Keith JUS-TICE (TR); A & J KATZ (X); Jerry KAUFMAN (L/T); Leroy KETTLE; Mike KRING (F); Denny LEEN (F); Eric LINDSAY (T); Ethel LINDSAY (X); Jim LINWOOD (L); Dave LOCKE; Sam LONG (L); H & L LUTTRELL (T); Shayne McCORMACK; Christine McGOWAN (F); Wayne MacDONALD (F); Loren MacGREGOR (F); Don MARKSTEIN (TR); Ian MAUIE (T); Jeff MAY (F); Eric MAYER; Jim MEADOWS III (L); Archie MERCER (L); Don MILLER (T); L & J MOFFATT; Will NORRIS (TR); Jodie OFFUTT (F); Pauline PALMER (L/T); D & R PARDOE; Brian PARKER; Dick PATTEN (T); Roy PEACOCK (L); Bruce PELZ (T); Greg PICKERSGILL; Dave PIPER (L); Graham POOLE (T); Pete PRESFORD (T); Denis QUANE (T); Mary REED (L); Peter ROBERTS; Tom ROBERTS; Dave ROWE (L); Jessica SALMONSON (F); Daniel SAY (F); Jeff SCHALLES (F); P & C SKELTON (L/T); J & A SMITH (TR); Rick SNEARY (F); Andrew STEPHENSON (L); Philip STEVENSON-PAYNE (X); A & E STEWART; Mac STRELKOV (L/T); SYDNEY UNIV. SF ASSOC. (TR); Roy TACKETT (T); Don THOMPSON (TR); Victoria VAYNE (T); Keith WALKER (T); Harry WARNER; Janice WILES (L); Ian WILLIAMS (T); Kevin WILLIAMS; Susan WOOD (TR); Peter WRIGHT (F). Add Eli COHEN (TR); Suzanne TOMPKINS.

Code: F = first issue; L = loc; T = trade; TR = trade requested; X = definitely your last issue unless you do something. If there's no code against your name, it means I haven't heard from you during the production of this, or maybe longer. Some of you may be liable for the big X. Don't make me do it?

BARBER TOLD: USE AXE



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BARBER TOLD: USE AXE

Electricity (Continued) ... This enabling legislation gives MPs an opportunity to question the Government on the entire energy situation, particularly the oil stick position.

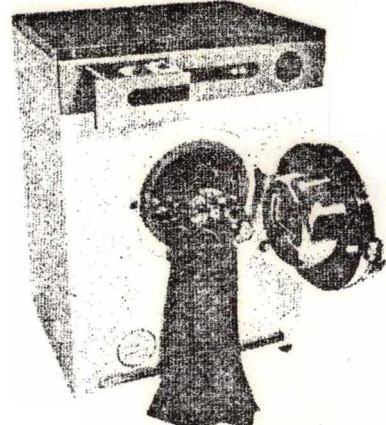
MR Salt was ham

years afterwards. "This is a super job I'm coming to. This kind of job just does not come up and there won't be one as god for another 20 years. "I've not done anything

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1963 Cortina 1200 years M.O.T. nice. 1963 Peugeot 504 Pet. saloon. 1971 - dark green with tan cloth trim. One owner and in triple south condition. 1965

Cod peace statement expected

THE FOREIGN OFFICE was expected

Meanwhile, four Englishmen COULD be playing in the World Cup finals. Four migrants are in the Australian 2-man squad which only has to beat South Korea to qualify for Munich.

spirited woman to cope with her hefty, awkward husband, said the judge.

Even though five of the children were urged under 16, she did all the gardening and decorated every house the family lived in.

Withcare

Old folk's home in sound state

A sound financial position was reported at the annual meeting of the Friends of Southlands Old People's Home, Long Eaton.

Treasurer Mr H. W. Hart reported a balance in hand of £0. Fund raising events had brought in £236 and £276 had been given out in comm

pay dispute.

Hayes is said to have an arm injury. Lever a sceptic too, and Wood a bruised shoulder. Hayes will have an X-ray today.

man rent.

Alan, who can't afford the £1,000 to have it dismantled said: "I've had the organ at the house for ten years. The council have offered me a one-bedroom flat. But I couldn't get my organ into it—even if I could pay to have it moved."



INSEPARABLE: Alan and his half-ton organ.

Tree planting

A YOUNG double-flowered horse chestnut tree is planted (left) by Mrs J. Limb, president of Spondon Asterdale Women's Institute, near Spondon Parish Church

Giant Peacock in goal for Forest

By JEFF HUMPHREYS

GIANT goalkeeper Dennis

BABY Grand piano, very good loc. £250. - Leabrooks 2462. SANDRYN - white river bank. Double door settee, £65 o.n.o.

1971 Renault 4 Silver Fox. 1963 Cortina 1200 years M.O.T. nice. Peugeot 504 Pet. saloon. 1971 - dark green with tan cloth trim. One owner and in triple south condition. 1965

DIVISION 3 British R 3, Southport 1 Huddersfield 1, Shrewsbury

349

There was a young lady named Flynn,
Who considered fornication a sin ;
But when she was tight
It seemed quite all right—
So she kept filling up with gin.

352

A godly young novice in Deal,
Said: "Although sex isn't real,
When Sister Sabina
Dilates my vagina
I quite like what I fancy I feel."³²

358

The Marquesa de Excusador³³

Used to pee on the drawing-room floor ;

For the can was so cold,

And when one grows old

To be much alone is a bore.

355

There was a young lady of Tahaiti,
Whom the neighbours decided was flahiti;
For if Monday was fine,
You could see, on the line,
A rather diaphanous nahiti.

