

NOTES



Inside!

Deindorfer rambles on interminably.

Ted White remembers Charlie Mingus.

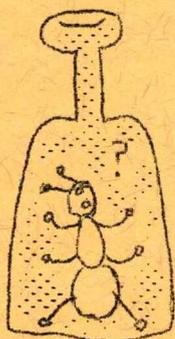
John Koning doesn't get the first installment of his column in on time.

And other such.

You spent twenty years carving a figure out of a mountain. So why did you have to make it a fan?



the ant in the bottle



IT HAS BEEN thousands of years since I last batted out an "Ant in the Bottle," and in that time a few interesting things have happened. For instance, a thief broke into the home of Russell Gass of Trenton and robbed him at gunpoint. Gass' wife, Myra, was watching "Wagon Train" the whole time and didn't realize there had been a robbery until her husband told her.

Trenton is the very same place where a monkey fell out of a tree and died. This tragedy of our time occurred at the local park, which sports a modest zoo. From all reports, the monkey was cavorting in the special tree in the park reserved for monkeys when he slipped and fell fifteen feet to the ground. He sustained head injuries and died of a cerebral hemorrhage while being rushed to a hospital. Isn't that ridiculous? When a monkey can't even make it in his own element, he has gone to hell. He had obviously been around Man too long.

It was Halloween around here recently, or All Hallows Eve, as some rustics call it. All sorts of little children tapped on our door and then skipped in wearing their little rabbit, camel, duck, pirate, or what-have-you suits. This is still kind of a new neighborhood for us, so at first I had a bit of difficulty when they said, "Betohā can't guess who I am."

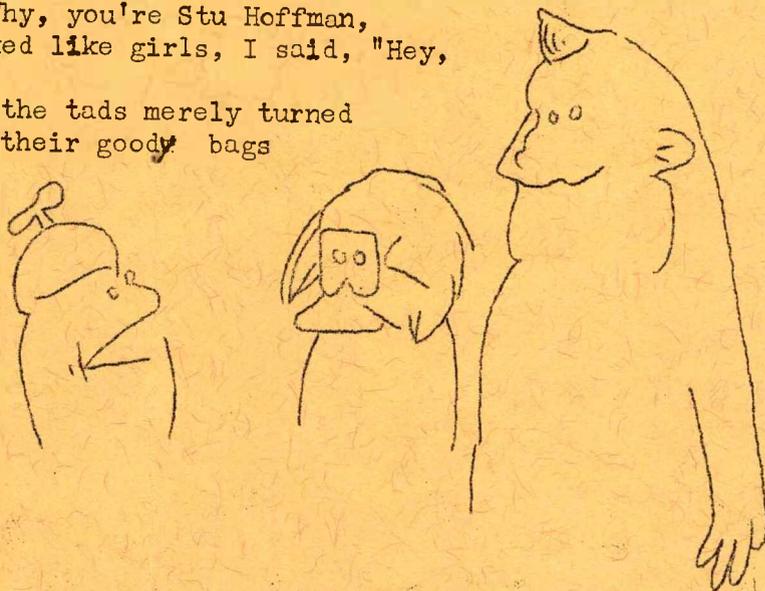
During the early part of the night I said, "I'll be damned if I can." The little tads then laughed very loud and took a few of our candy bars and galloped out of the house. But then I decided I could at least make a stab at figuring identities, so every time a child posed me that little question of his or hers, I said, "Why, you're little Jill Janowski, aren't you?"

Now, I didn't know any little Jill Janowski, and I still don't. I don't even think I want to know one. I should have stayed with the phrase I was using earlier in the night, for after I asked a child if he or she was Jill Janowski, I got kicked in the shins and the little tad said, "Boy, but you are a stupid man."

Later on that night I finally changed my tack. I said to all the beings who looked like boys, "Why, you're Stu Hoffman, aren't you?" To all those who looked like girls, I said, "Hey, you're Karen Anderson, aren't you?"

I recommend this gambit. All the tads merely turned and ran. They even forgot to fill their goody bags with candy bars.

This chatter reminds me of my own Trick or Treat days, as you might expect that it would. For instance, there was the time when I was very, very young and tromped out with a group of my cronies with my treat bag. I was dressed as a ghost. While we were standing around in one family's kitchen, about 3/4ths of our rounds made, I suddenly had to go to the bathroom in a very big way. I all very diffidently asked the womzn of the house if I could make use of her bathroom, and she spluttered and then called into the



"Hello, Shirley Camper and son Fred."

The Ant in the Bottle---II

living room for her husband, brother-in-law, mother, sons and daughters, and anybody else who might have been in there at the time. They all came running out to the kitchen. Then she pointed at me and said, "That ghost there has to go to the bathroom." They all fell out laughing, and I turned and left the house with my tiny friends, walking down the street under pressure.

Then there was the day of the first grade Halloween Party. Everybody in the class had come dressed in a Halloween costume except for one little colored girl. "Why aren't you too in costume, small Negro child?" teacher asked.

She replied, "I am not in costume because my family is very, very poor and they cannot afford such luxury items as Halloween costumes."

Teacher then smiled with boundless compassion and went off to a corner of the room where she began fussing around with a pile of newspapers lying there. Soon she came back to the girl and said, "Here, I have made you a costume from newsprint. You can be the Paper Girl."

Teacher placed a paper hat fashioned from the business section on the girl's head. From the funnies and editorial pages she had rigged a paper dress which the girl slipped on.

It was so beautiful and sentimental an occasion that the entire class began sobbing and couldn't stop for three months.

A couple of years ago, a group of Halloween types clomped into the house. Among a group of kiddies all of two feet tall stood a person dressed in a porpoise outfit. He was about 6'2". I naturally assumed he was the parent or guardian of the surrounding tots. "Of course you're seeing that these small children don't come to any harm on their rounds," I said, smiling broadly.

From behind his porpoise mask he replied, "No, I just sort of fell in with these kids. I'm an out of work man."

I dropped a canned ham, three pounds of hamburger, a couple cans of peas and a filot of sole into his bag, because I didn't know what else to do. It didn't strike me until later that instead of being an out of work man he was a big liar, since out of work men don't have the money for porpoise suits.

As a last little tale of Halloween, there was the time when I was in third grade at Julius Watkins Grammar School. The week before the big night, all my third grade friends and I were excitedly discussing what we were going to wear on our rounds. "I'm going to wear my Kodiak Bear suit," I said proudly. "And I am going to wear my Spaceman outfit," said somebody else.

Finally, after everybody else had announced what he was going to dress as, a last boy said, "I'm going to dress as a nude girl. I have a nude girl suit at home which I plan to wear."

We didn't believe him and said so. "Well," he said archly, "wait until Halloween."

Halloween arrived, and we were all dressed up in our costumes as we went to our friend's house. I knocked on the door, and he answered it, dressed in a goblin outfit. "Yaaaa," we chorused, "we knew you didn't have any nude girl suit!"

His mother, who had been standing behind him, said quietly, "It didn't get back from the cleaners in time."

That's enough in the way of Halloween reminiscences, I feel.

A FEW WEEKS ago I witnessed a policeman pinning a parking violation ticket on the windshield of a woman's station wagon because it was parked illegally. He was a lean, hard looking fellow of about forty-five. He had probably been on the force for a long time, since he had acquired the determined, even nasty, look which policemen seem to get after a while at their jobs.

He was just walking back to his motorcycle which he had left parked behind the station wagon when a dumpy, harassed looking woman came storming out of a drug store and began yelling at him. It was obviously her car which he had ticketed. He listened to her haranguing for a while, standing stolid before her frenzy, and then he took the ticket from behind a windshield wiper, and handed it

to her with a small bow. She read it, sniffed, and got into her station wagon and drove away, defeated. It was a magnificent moment for the policeman. The considerable crowd that had gathered began cheering and clapping.

He bowed to the crowd and then strode over to his motorcycle. He leaped on it and slammed his foot down on the starter, planning to roar mightily off with a great skid around the corner and much smoke and similar stuff.

But it didn't start. Grinacing, he slammed his foot down on the starter again, and again the motorcycle failed to start. He did this five more times without success. The crowd began breaking up; the policeman was losing his audience.

Finally only one old woman, a small boy with chocolate from a candy bar smeared all over his face, and I were left watching him. He tried three more times to start his motorcycle without success. Then he leaped off it, carried it forward to the "No Parking" zone in which the station wagon had been parked, and began pasting parking violation stickers all over it. Then he kicked it a few times, cursing loudly all the while.

After that he swaggered down the street and walked out of our ken around the corner. The three of us looked at the motorcycle, and then left to follow our various routes, coughing and blowing our noses.

A COUPLE MONTHS AGO I received in the mail a flyer announcing the opening of an art movie house in nearby Lambertville. All sorts of wonderfully arty and esoteric movies were listed in the badly mimeographed thing. Playing the first weekend of the movie's opening was a double bill: a Japanese movie called "The Mists in the Valley" and a Mexican movie entitled "Four Stories."

"They sound pretty good," I thought, so I called up a girl and told her what was playing there, and did she want to go. "No, I want to see 'Pillow Talk'." I decided she was anti-intellectual, so next I called up an incredibly arty girl I knew slightly. She had long and stringy black hair which she never combed and probably never washed either. She never plucked her eyebrows and she didn't wear lipstick or such things. She went around all the time speaking of Henry James and Mondrian although she probably only knew about them what she had studied up on in the public library during her lunch-hour. "I'd be awfully glad to go," she mumbled when I asked her about accompanying me to the art house.

It was a dark and rainy Saturday night, and after much cruising around Lambertville we finally found the art theater on a tiny back street off the railroad tracks. It was located in what had probably once been a vacant store. We walked in and a sycophantic looking middle-aged man walked up to us and sold us two tickets. He then simpered and said, "Would you like some ice coffee? We have free ice coffee for our patrons."

I wasn't in the mood for ice coffee since it was cold and wet both outside and inside the theater. My date wanted some, though. While he was pouring out her ice coffee he looked at me again from behind his smudged glasses, and he said, "I truly wish you would have some of our free ice coffee. It's compliments of the theater and is offered to all of our patrons. It's good ice coffee, if maybe you're afraid that it won't be."

I changed my tack and explained that I had a rare disease such that drinking ice coffee would be fatal to me. His eyebrows shot up and he said, "Oh...I didn't know. Please, please forgive me. I'm very sorry. I didn't know, as I might have said a few seconds ago."

He went walking over to a group of people who had just come in and began pushing ice coffee onto them as he took their ticket money. My date and I stood around in the lobby along with all the other people who were there. I watched her sip her ice coffee as we talked of Griffith and all the progress which had been made in the art of film making since his time.

"I hear now they've developed such techniques as the 'fade' and the 'cut,' not to mention the 'pan' and the 'color windmill'," I said quietly.

She agreed politely, as I thought she would.

The Ant in the Bottle---IV

Soon there were hundreds of thousands of people standing around in the lobby. Everybody was sipping ice coffee except for a group of frightened looking women wearing severe gray suits and metal framed glasses. The theater proprietor noticed me looking at them and he came over to me and whispered, "They must have the same thing you have."

He then scurried over to the curtain hung doorway into the interior, or "business," portion of the theater. "Okay, kind ladies and gentleman. The show is ready to begin. You can come in now!" he said.

Everybody pushed into the interior of the theater while he rushed upstairs to the projection booth. It was becoming more and more obvious that he was running a one-man show.

"I'll bet he's also the usher," I said to my date. "In fact, I'll bet he even changes the toilet paper in the men's room."

She didn't laugh at that because she was too arty. I couldn't help thinking that the girl who had wanted to see "Pillow Talk" would have laughed.

We sat down in our seats. They weren't theater seats, but folding chairs. I don't know what it is with me, but I always seem to go to places where there are folding chairs when one would expect something better. There's that church of mine I wrote an account of going to, for instance. Then there was the time when a neighbor took me for a ride in his Piper Cub and instead of airplane seats there were folding chairs because it was the cheapest Piper model. The seats weren't even attached to the floor of the plane. Someday I expect to go to a place where one would normally find folding chairs, like a PTA meeting, and find pews or movie seats or somesuch.

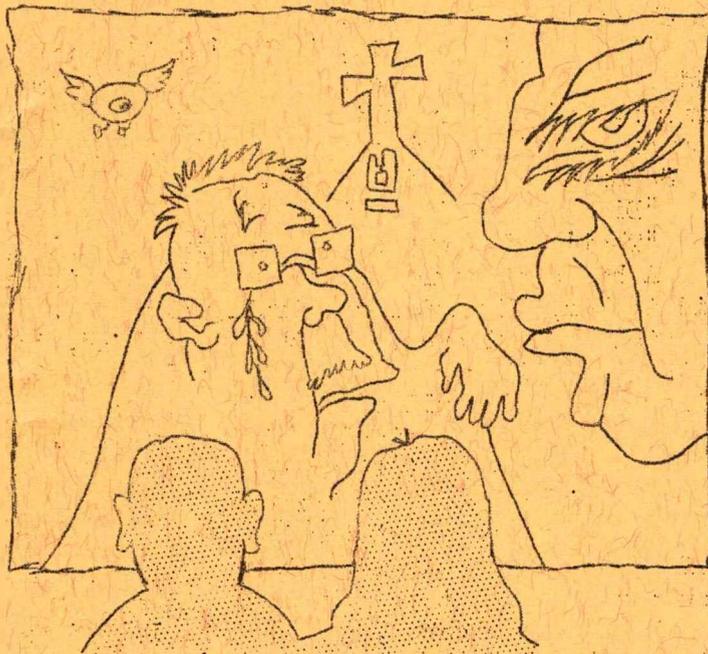
But I digress. Anyway, we sat down in our folding seats and everybody else sat down in their folding seats. Then there was a loud noise as thousands of wadded paper cups were dropped to the floor. Then the lights went out, and the first movie began.

This was the Japanese movie called "The Mists in the Valley." It was allusive and subtle. I know this because my date told me so about halfway through it after the lead character looked down at a broken piece of pottery out of deep black eyes and the pottery turned into a wood nymph who ran away from under his bold gaze.

The movie concerned a person who thought he was a great Samurai and clanked around the streets of his village in full Samurai gear even though it was 1960 and Samurai soldiers were beings of the long past. There was much mist and much Japanese music plinking off in the background and many tears from the wife of the Samurai since all the village thought her husband was insane and she knew he was not.

For me the high point of the film came when the Samurai was dragged away to a mental hospital and a wise old man of the village said to her, "But he is."

Anyway, "The Mists in the Valley" ran on for three hours and it was a wrenching emotional experience for my date. How can stringy haired, homely girls become all involved in such stuff? They couldn't possibly be as sensitive as they would have the world believe. At least the girl I was with couldn't be.



The Ant in the Bottle---V

The house lights came on and there was an intermission between the Japanese movie and the Mexican one. My date began explaining the significance of the title of the Japanese movie to me.

"You see," she said, "the 'mist' represents the villagers. They have forgotten the proud and noble heritage of their past. They have left the ways of the Samurai, and as a result they are the faceless people, the insubstantial people. They are as mist. They are the mist, and the mist is they. On the other hand, the Samurai is a solid figure. He has harkened to his past. He is man."

"Did you first draft that?" I asked.

"That's all compliments of Time magazine," she said.

A boy about our age who was sitting in front of us turned in his seat and said to her, "I must respectfully disagree. The mist is just mist. It has no special significance. On the other hand, the 'valley' of the title is all-important. The valley represents the valley of the mind, the valley of the soul---the valley of deadly dull routine into which the villagers have all fallen. The Samurai is a pillar standing in the valley. He is life, he is truth, he is the courage-of-your-convictions and hard-candy-in-your-hand."

"That's courtesy of Harper's," he added.

The theater proprietor had come down from his booth and was pushing ice coffee onto people again. He came to us, and my date took some more, and I said, "How can you expect to make a profit if you keep handing out free ice coffee?"

He looked shocked, and then he looked around at everybody sipping their coffee. "You know, I think there's something to that," he said to me. Then he set his large coffee jug and his tray of cups down on the floor and ran around grabbing cups full of ice coffee away from everybody. "What are you all trying to do, ruin me?" he said in a loud voice.

He scurried back to his booth with his jug and a tray now full of confiscated cups of coffee. The lights went down and the "Four Stories" movie began.

As the title sort of suggests, these were four stories. As the squib in the beginning explained, they were four tales of Mexican life written by Juan Carlos Somebody-or-other Perez Luis Rey. They each lasted about half an hour and were about identical to each other. The first was called "The Dust." All I remember about it was that there were a man and woman living together in a mud hut in a dry flat area and the woman was forever breast feeding her tiny baby and the man was forever hoeing the ridiculously sterile land. Occasionally he stopped hoeing long enough to try to catch a chicken of his which kept trying to escape from its little cardboard pen. The dust was always blowing. It was altogether a rotten thing. Once he and his wife and child went into a village to try to barter their chicken for some cloth and a frying pan, but the arrogant proprietor of the store with whom they were attempting to trade insisted on money. He kicked them out of the store and they trudged back to their hut and I never did learn what became of them.

The next story was called "The Priest." For half an hour this priest talked to a stolid Mexican woman while a one-eyed bird or bat flew about in the sky. Finally the woman scratched hard behind her right ear and then walked away.

The last two stories were called "The Cow" and "The Automobile." In "The Cow" a small boy was shown painting a scene of a blind beggar on the side of a cow. Once in a while old people carrying large baskets came up and stood watching him for a while and then they walked away. In "The Automobile" a young boy stood atop a 1939 Ford and did a dance. Two American tourists came along and began throwing money at him until they were set upon by a bunch of enraged Mexican townspeople who stoned them.

The lights came up, and immediately the boy in front of us turned and said to my date, "How is that for fearless portrayal of the human condition?"

"That was even more of a wrenching emotional experience than 'Mist' was a wrenching emotional experience," she replied.

She didn't look wrenched, and neither did he. I left them talking there and began walking out of the theater. The proprietor stopped me and said, "Next week

we'll have a profound story of disease among the Russian peasants of the Tsarist era as well as a touching and probably brilliant movie dealing with a mouse who lives in a house of prostitution in Bombay."

I left the theater, wondering if Mexican peasants ever went to see movies about the life of a meatcutter in Hoboken, and if prostitutes in Bombay ever had wrenching emotional experiences while looking at movies about little boys living in Kansas City who paint cryptic designs on sidewalks.

A FAN CALLED ME LONG DISTANCE for the first time a few weeks ago. I picked up the telephone and a voice said, "This is a fan. Guess who." I said, "Phil Harrell, because he is always calling fans up."

"No, this is Calvin Derron," said the voice.

All the way across the great continent of America Calvin Derron was calling. That sort of grabbed me, so I found I did not have a damn thing to say to him. All I could do was mumble about the wonders of science, enabling two people to talk into a little plastic and metal device and send their voices through funny wires across thousands of miles.

He wanted to know what the hell I was referring to and I said I meant the telephone. "Whenever people talk about the wonders of science, they always describe them in Kid language, so that a phonograph record becomes a 'little black vinyl disc,' and a television set becomes a 'strange box with a window in it' and all," I said.

There was a long pause, and then Biff said, "Say something brilliant and scintillating."

That of course is a ridiculous request to make of anybody, especially of me. As I remember, I said, "Shirley Camper." I don't know why, really. Calvin replied, "That's brilliant and scintillating."

I asked him why he had called and he said he didn't know, actually. Then I said that he didn't talk in Capital Letters over the phone the way he does in print. I immediately hoped he would say, "That would cost me too much extra," but he didn't.

Then he said he had to hang up so we said good-bye and he hung up.

Why the hell do fans call each other long distance?



THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE already read the letter column will have noticed that I made a comment to Norm Clarke about planning on becoming a Name in fish fandom. Well, that was in reference to this then unwritten column segment.

One of my uncles was over at the house recently. He dabbles in tropical fish raising. For some reason which I forget he brought along a copy of a mag for fish fans called The Aquarium.

I was surprised that fish fans turned out amateur magazines too, and I asked him whether he would loan me the mag to look through. He said, "You can keep it," and walked out of the house, trailing billowing clouds of cigar smoke behind him.

The Aquarium is a printed, handsomely produced affair full of serious articles on the care of guppies afflicted with dropsy, breeding killfish, news of fish fan clubs around the country, profiles of prominent fish fans, and reviews of fish fanzines. Its masthead proclaims that it was founded in 1932, and it is evidently as prestigious a magazine among fish fanzines as

Warhoon is among science fiction fanzines.

If I am to judge by this magazine, fish fandom is now at about the level of development that stf fandom was around 1935 or so. This mag and the other fish fanzines reviewed in it are concerned primarily with fish and the raising of fish, just as the fanzines of 1935 were by all accounts concerned primarily with science fiction. The entire tone of The Aquarium is an incredibly sophomoric one. The editorial, written by somebody living in Norristown, Pennsylvania named Helen Sinkatis, concerns the joys of the Fourth of July, or "the Glorious Forth," as Miss Sinkatis calls it. It is full of the sort of wonderful editorial platitudes which children writing for their grammar school newspaper are so adept at spinning out. The mag as a whole vibrates with a deadly seriousness and a frightening fervency of dedication to things fishly. Again, from all accounts, the stf fanzines of 1935 were mostly sophomoric and dreadfully serious and fervent.

But The Aquarium is full of signs that fish fandom is beginning to become aware of itself as a microcosm, and to become interested in itself for that purpose. News about fish fans and profiles of fish fans as well as fish fanzine reviews all point to that.

Now, I have decided to help fish fandom along the road to sophistication and ingroupishness. My position is that of the alien from a Type 16 planet who comes to earth, rated a Type 9 planet, and attempts to bring up its rating. Whether fish fans want to enter a more advanced stage of fandom is unimportant. My duty is to make them do so whether they want to or not.

I plan to write to Miss Sinkatis, editor of The Aquarium, and subscribe to her magazine. I will also request that she loan me her mailing list. After reading a few more copies of The Aquarium to become more completely oriented, I will be ready to inject the elements of our sophisticated fandom into primitive fish fandom.

I will **start up** a fish fanzine, but it will contain the elements of a faanish fanzine translated to fish fannish terms. Sarcasm is absent from fish fandom, so I will introduce it. My fish fanzine will have some sort of title like The Broken Gill or Neurotic Guppy News. Since fish fans make a big thing out of their elaborate equipment and their rare and expensive fish, I will make it clear in the first issue's editorial that I don't really give a damn about raising fish but just sort of fell into it. I will write in glowing terms about my 25¢ goldfish which I bought from Woolworth's, and how he is thriving in his little bowl. I will say that I feed him once a day when I remember to, and that I change the water in his bowl "every once in a while."

The lead article will concern my guppy raising days. When I was eight years old, a neighbor who raised guppies in a huge tank gave me around a dozen of them. I put them in a bowl, expecting them to thrive and flourish. The next day the first guppy died. Just about every day thereafter another guppy passed away, so that after two weeks I had no more guppies. My article will end, "I didn't like the lousy things anyway."

Lastly, I will introduce my scapegoat. This will be good old mythical Dean Ford, and he will be a neighbor of mine with all sorts of elaborate fish raising equipment. He will be a stolid and fanatic fish devotee. He will represent the archetypical fish fan of the time. The gambit will be that his fish are always dying on him, and the more he spends on them, the more of them die. I will play up Ford as a true schmuck, thus introducing the faanish concept of sercon fans being inherently stupid, fanatic people. (This, of course, is not really true, but it has long been a faanish tradition to regard sercon fans in this light.)

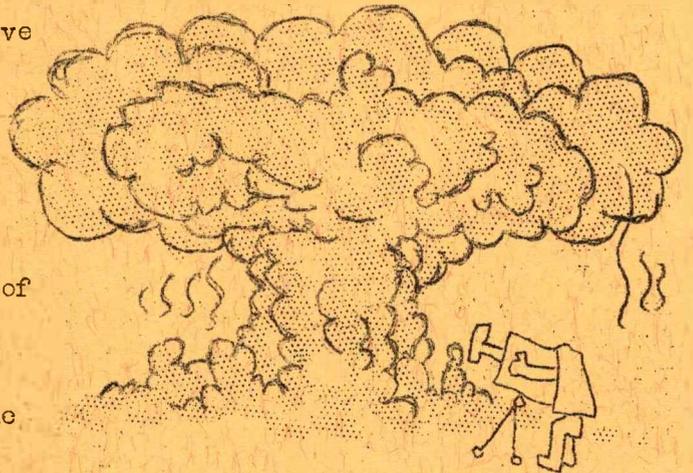
Going by Miss Sinkatis' mailing list, I'll mail the first issue of my mag to fish fans all around the country (and, indeed, the world). They will of course be horrified by my cavalier attitude towards fish fandom, but they will also be fascinated by it. People will begin putting me down in their fish fanzine reviews as not having the proper outlook on the wonderful hobby of raising fish, but that will only be the initial reaction. As I mail out more copies of my fanzine, each issue becoming progressively more sarcastic and biting, people will begin

emulating my approach. A whole crop of the younger fish fans will make light of the older, serious fish fans with their expensive equipment and rare fish. The younger fish fans, following my example, will brag of their goldfish in tiny bowls. They will write slashing satires on the old guard fish fans. And, inevitably, they will become ingroupish, in an attempt to isolate themselves proudly from the ploddingly serious followers of the hobby. They will adopt all sorts of inside words and scatter allusions all over the countryside. They will, in short, be faanish, and fish fandom will have become more like our kind of fandom.

And, of course, I will be regarded as a legendary figure by the new group of fish fans. I will be looked up to as their mentor, and whatever I should happen to write or say, no matter how unimpressive it might seem from an objective standpoint, will be cooed at and aahed at.

Does all this remind you of anybody in our own field? I mean, did you ever wonder if Burbee came to us from a higher form of fandom?

EVERY NIGHT FROM 12 midnight to five in the morning a fellow named Long John Nebel runs an interview show on WOR radio. It is sometimes a fascinating show, for he frequently invites interesting people to guest on it, but it is even more frequently an infuriating show, for the number of infuriating remarks made in the course of the usual show is frighteningly high. If I were Ted Pauls, I could devote the whole of "The Ant in the Bottle" to turning over the fuggheaded remarks made on the show, picking at them from this angle and that one, and in general making a very big thing of it all. But I am not Ted Pauls, but, according to a few of the people who wrote letters of comment on this issue, am a gay, carefree-as-hell faanish fan, and as such I couldn't care less about writing pages on Mr. Z's stupid opinions re medical aid, or Mr. Q's ridiculous comments on the Mississippi segregation problem.



But I can't let pass without comment something that was said on Nebel's show last night, even if I thereby shoot to hell my say-nothing-about-the-world-situation image.

Last night a newsreel man named Charles "Chick" Peadon was guesting. He has been in the newsreel business since 1927, says he, and has been in on filming most of the major events in the world during that time. He has a gruff, no nonsense manner of talking and an opinionated way about him which I found only mildly annoying as I listened to him reminisce on his days in the business.

But then one of the other guests on the show said to Peadon, "Well, if World War III should come at least you won't have to worry about filming the action."

There was a long silence, during which time only the carrier hum could be heard coming out of the speaker, and then Charles "Chick" Peadon said in very heavy tones, "What do you mean? A newsreel man must always be prepared to get the news. We will cover World War III just like we would cover anything else, of course."

"But, Mr. Peadon," said the other guest, "what if word comes that an ICBM is on its way towards New York City and will arrive in twenty minutes? You mean you people will be covering that?"

"No doubt about it," replied Peadon. "News is news. If such word comes, the crews in New York City will be out there with their cameras, ready to cover anything that happens."

"But, Mr. Peadon. Everything will be atomized in the city. What would

be the sense of taking pictures of everything blowing up, even if the camera and the film in it and the newsreel man behind it weren't blown to nothing as soon as the bomb exploded?" asked the other guest.

"News is news," Peadon repeated. "It is our job to get that news under any circumstances whatsoever."

I turned the radio off at that point.

No goddamn comment.

AROUND THE TURN OF THE CENTURY a midwestern humorist named George Ade wrote fables of slang. They were incisive, sharply satiric, and contained what as far as I know was an innovation: the use of Capital Letters for Humorous Effect. Ade placed in initial majuscles the catch phrases of the time, thereby heightening their essential shallowness and blandness. He spoke of Well-Bred Young Ladies, of Industrious and Ambitious Young Bookkeepers in the Employ of the Firm, and the like. I first discovered his work five years ago when a friend of mine loaned me a copy of his Fables in Slang. I became an immediate convert to George Ade. Even at their most cynical, I liked his fables. I was especially taken by his clever use of Capitalized Words for Humorous Effect.

That was around 1957, and I was a neofan at the time. Having come across George Ade, I found that fans occasionally used capitalized words for humorous effect too. They used them sparingly, and I found them funny. Boyd Raeburn was the foremost practitioner of capitalizing words for humorous effect at the time, with references to Fancy, Expensive Restaurants and Big Name Scientists and the like.

I gafiated in late 1958 for sundry and mundry reasons and lived in cold, cold mundane for three years. (Actually, it wasn't cold, cold at all. I had lots of fun during those three years.) Then in late 1961, for reasons as complicated and various as the causes for my going gafia, I returned to fandom. I immediately discovered Calvin W. "Biff" Derrmon and his work. I found his writing style a delight, and in its clever use of capitalized words for humorous effect I was happily reminded of George Ade's writing. In my first letter of comment to Biff, I said, "Your writing sounds like George Ade's." Calvin replied, "I have never Heard of George Ade. I'll bet you are Kidding me." In return, I mailed Biff an Ade fable, and wrote on it, "See the resemblance?" He replied that, yes, he and Ade wrote very much alike; namely, they were both Funnier Than Hell.

On that I couldn't agree more. Calvin's use of Capitalized Words is fresh and funny, perhaps more than anything because it is not an affected thing with him but is the way he actually thinks. In reply to a question from me on why he wrote so extensively in capital letters, he replied, "I write in Capital Letters now mostly because it is a habit. I think like that. Every word which comes out Capitalized on paper of mine has been mentally given a sort of Funny Accent which is reserved for words on which I am about to put Capital Letters."

He means that. I know it. But increasingly in the past six months, piles of other fans have taken to using capital letters for effect extensively, presumably because they have caught the habit from Biff Derrmon. Some fans use capital letters even more than Biff does. The only trouble is, on them it isn't natural. And for many of them it has become a nearly compulsive thing. Even Biff admits that it is a habit with him. But at least he uses capped words with sense. And, actually, his use of them is only a small facet of his style. Given the lower case, most of his stuff would seem just about as unique as it does with caps.

But with the overuse of capital letters on the part of so many people, the whole thing has long passed the saturation point. If you will pardon me, it has become a giant Pain.

I foresee that very soon every word in a sentence will be capitalized, so that when emphasis for humorous effect is desired, the lower case will be used, sort of like, "We Will Mail Out Copies of Foggyputz #16 real soon now, Everybody." Then the pendulum will swing all the way to that side and everybody will become archies and methabells. O tempora, o mores! O Noble Shift Key; I adore Thee!Dorf

ONE
HOUR
WITH
CHARLES
MINGUS

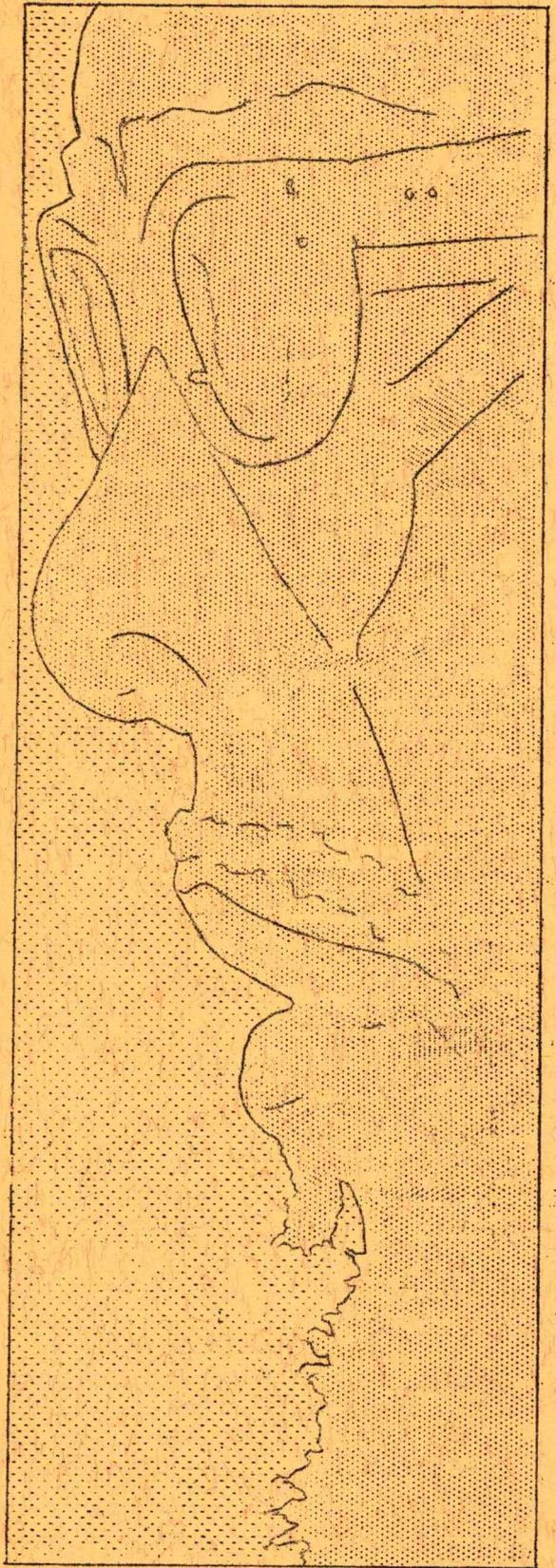
BY TED WHITE

ONE OF THE MARKS OF GENIUS might be inconsistency---that is, a genius is difficult to type-cast. Every time you think you have him neatly pigeon-holed, he does something which dumbfounds you.

Charlie Mingus' career has been a wide and varied one; his music has explored many areas, uniformly with a flair uniquely Mingus'. Recently Mingus "retired" jazz, laid down his bass, and began to write a book.

He had immersed himself in this activity for a period of over several months, when he was prevailed upon to appear one evening at Columbia University for what was billed as "An Hour with a Serious Jazz Musician."

Mingus was introduced by the Reverend Ginzel, who also introduced himself ("I speak as a close friend of Charlie Mingus ...he comes to my church..."), and made a few preparatory remarks about Mingus and the fact that Charlie had decided to stop playing the bass, and was indeed coming out of retirement in order to appear that



CHARLIE
MINGUS

One Hour with Charles Mingus---II

night.

Mingus, looking like a cross between Faust and Orson Welles, wearing a curly full beard, then moved over to the piano. He fumbled for a few words, paused for a long and pregnant silence (during which the audience seemed to hold its collective breath), and then sat at the piano. Out of range of the microphone, he murmured to himself, "If no words come out, well, you gotta play."

He spread his hands over the keyboard and began a piece which sounded improvised. It was two-handed, out of tempo, reminiscent of his Scenes of the City, and not without a touch of Gershwin. The music rolled out, waves upon the peopled beach, and then ebbed into silence.

He reached for the microphone, and pulled it towards him. "I started out playing piano," Mingus told the audience, "but then I heard Art Tatum." An appreciative sound rippled through the room. "Now I want to go back to my first love. I want to play piano again. Here's Fats." Then he rolled into a gentle, rollicking piece with a pumping left hand, the music sounding less like Fats Waller than it did Fats Waller as reinterpreted by Charlie Mingus (in a way like Mingus' Jelly Roll), and at one point Mingus burst into a snatch of song.

"Art Tatum played with both hands," Charlie said. "But a lot of musicians today have lost one hand. And Art used harmonies that are more advanced than anything they play today. Like, the way he did All the Things You Are with a contrapuntal melody..." He began playing the song, a piece which has fascinated him on many occasions, but this time it wasn't going right. His fingers seemed stiff, and he had trouble negotiating some of the arpeggios. Sensing this, dissatisfied with what he was doing, he brought the tune to a quick halt, and then, with a transitional chord, began Sophisticated Lady.

Without comment, he followed that with an untitled piece which hinted at many earlier Mingus tunes, snatches of it strongly reminiscent of the earlier Mal Waldron solos for Mingus. His hands seemed to be limbering, but he was still searching, still uncertain of the direction in which to move.

Then he announced, "This is a piece I haven't recorded, and you probably haven't heard it, called Carol, for my daughter." The tune was to be his last.

He rose from the piano, and recalled Reverend Ginzler to the stage. "I told you I wasn't ready tonight," Mingus said. "So I'm not going to play any longer. I'm going to ask you a question. Where is God?"

"Where is God?" repeated Ginzler. "Why, I don't---well, he's all around you, uhrrm, everywhere...I'm not God."

"What I mean is," said Mingus, "here you asked me to play here tonight, and I told you I was not ready. I'm not playing my bass any longer, I'm going to play piano. But I've got things inside me which have got to come out. I know they're there, but I'm not ready yet; I'm not ready to do that yet. Now you asked me to come here tonight, and you made it hard for me, because I didn't make it, man. When you introduced me, you said I might find God here tonight. Well, I didn't find God, man; I couldn't make it. That put me on the spot. So now I'm putting you on the spot. You tell me---where is God?"

"Well, Charlie," replied Ginzler, searching for words, "I don't know. I mean, I don't know if you'll find God." The audience laughed, and Ginzler reddened. "I don't mean it like that...Charlie and I are---were?---good friends... What I mean is, I don't know how you'll find God, Charlie. Each man has his own way; maybe God will find you. Maybe he already has. But then again, maybe I'm wrong, and maybe I don't know you as well as I think I do. I'm only human; I have human frailties. I can be wrong."

"Then why are you wearing that suit?"

"Why am I wearing this suit?"

"Yes, when you wear that suit I can't think of you as just a human being like me. I can't see you that way. If you're as human and all as I am, why are you wearing that suit?" Mingus demanded.

"You mean, this collar, and---"

"The whole scene! You oughta take that suit off, man."

One Hour with Charles Mingus---III

"Well, now, you mean I should stand here naked?"

"Yeah. Maybe that would be closer to the truth," Mingus said, and the audience applauded. "I'm not putting you down, personally. You know that. What I'm saying, that suit is a symbol, and when you wear that suit you should be God. If you're just another human being, you should dress like one, baby."

The audience closely applauded this, and Ginzel changed the subject. He brought up again Mingus' retirement from jazz.

"I've quit jazz," Mingus said. "The things that are going on in jazz today have nothing to do with the music of Charlie Parker. I'm not going to name any names, or pin any labels, but some people in jazz are trying to make jazz into something it shouldn't be. So I've left jazz. Or maybe it's left me. I'm still playing music, but I won't call it 'jazz' any more."

One of Mingus' objections, he says, is to the "back to Africa" movement in jazz. "I'm proud of being black," he said, but he insisted that "I'm an American Negro, and jazz is a product of my culture. It isn't 'African' any more than it's Chinese. The Negroes who have grown up here should be true to their own heritage," he said. "Well, some of them haven't, and they're getting racist and corrupting jazz. So now I don't play jazz."

Charlie also talked about his book. Apparently a novel drawn heavily from his own life and experiences, Mingus calls it Beneath the Underdog. "I've read parts of the manuscript," Ginzel said, "and I think it's a good book. It says a lot of important things."

"I've been saying things with music," Mingus replied, "and now I want to say them with words."

"I'm not really educated. I'm from the streets. I'm saying these things because I've been there."

"Now, Charlie," said Ginzel, "you have a lot of important things to say, and I don't think you need to apologize for any lack of education. You don't need to put yourself down, Charlie."

"You misunderstood," said Mingus, eyes twinkling. "I was bragging."

The hour reached its end, and Mingus asked if there were any questions from the audience.

The first question was a foolish one about the date of the recording sessions for the Candid Newport Rebels (the album notes furnish the dates). "It's a bad album, Charlie," the questioner said. "Well, we had a little rhythm section trouble," Mingus admitted, "but Roy Eldridge was great."

"What is this Rotary Perception you were talking about a while back?" asked another.

"Well," replied Mingus, "that was one way of looking for another way to play music instead of calling it 'jazz.' I wanted to get away from the label, see? So we tried that. It uses an implied beat...like a classical beat, where you feel it but we don't play it."

Another asked, "What do you think about combining classical music and jazz, like the Modern Jazz Quartet?"

Mingus looked at him and shook his head. "I don't know," he said. "I'm sorry, I just couldn't answer that right now."

"Well," said Ginzel. "Our time is about up...would you like to play just a little more, Charlie?"

"No," Mingus said. "I don't. But there's a cat here who likes to play piano and can really play. I know he's here; I saw him come in a while back. I heard him up at the Berkshires last year, and...umm, yes...you---" He pointed to a member of the audience over on one side. "There he is."

A shy young blond man rose hesitantly, and the audience applauded. His name was Ran Blake, and it seems more than likely that his name will gain wider currency in the jazz field in years to come.

This cat can really play piano," Mingus said. Then he turned to Blake and told him, "Play like I heard you play before."

Blake sat at the piano, and stretched his arms. Suddenly he struck massive discords at both ends of the scale, and launched into a short percussive piece studded with Bartókian harmonics. He played with fire and fluency, and whether intentionally or not, he startled the audience. He was heavily applauded when he finished. He rose to leave, but Mingus called him back for a second piece. More at ease this time, he played a longer, more lyrical piece, softer at times, and in a style startlingly reminiscent of that of the late Dick Twardzic. The fiercely personal style was also akin to that of Cecil Taylor, although a closer comparison from such a short hearing would be impossible. His music was immediately emotional in its appeal to the audience, and as he left the stage he was again heavily applauded.

But, as Mingus said in closing, "I could say I 'discovered' him, but I won't. Somebody's going to 'discover' him and cash in on him, and try to milk him, own him, and ruin him." He turned to Blake. "You oughta leave the country," Mingus said.

Postscript: Mingus appeared later that fall at Birdland, leading a new group starring Roland Kirk, the blind multi-saxophonist, and he played piano throughout the engagement. Atlantic Records has since released Mingus' first album with this group, Oh Yeah. (But Mingus' piano playing can be also heard on the early fifties Bethlehem/Jazztone album, Jazz Experiment, where he doubled on piano for several tracks.)

Ran Blake has made his first album, as an accompanist for a female singer, for RCA-Victor.

---Ted White

Probably the most anomalous beast on the African Continent is the "lion." This most fascinating of beasts has the strangest habits of any as yet discovered wild "preying" creature. What other animal gives birth to its young only to enclose it inside an egg and force it to break out of its ellipsoidal prison? What other animal sleeps until the noon hour and then rises for a time of hunting until it retires at five in the afternoon? What other animal has such very acute hearing but such deficient senses of smell and touch? What other animal kills its prey by leaping upon its back from a tree limb and then jabbing the stinger on the end of its tail into the creature's right foreleg? What other animal avoids man so sedulously only to come running to him when he holds out a bag of popcorn for it?

---Charles Compton-Shaft, Little Known Beasts of the World, Premier, 1872.

It was a purplish, reflective night. I was peering at the starry void when the revelation came. Suddenly as I watched the firmament I knew the stars were holes poked in the black cloth of space, through which a million watt light shone. I knew that the planets were billiard balls running through the heavens on metal tracks. I knew that the world was a tri-dimensional creation fashioned on the back of a turtle by a bored godling. I knew that Life had come into being and that Life would fade out of being, and that pawn tickets and wicker chairs and potato bees would vanish with it.

I cried aloud into the night in ineffable joy, "By God, I am insane!"

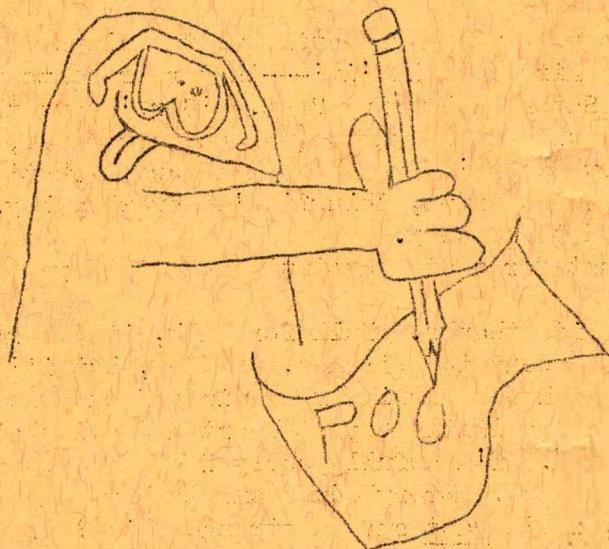
---Peter Ribbon

Why, after all, is toothpaste necessary? What has toothpaste done for humanity in the five hundred years since its invention by the Arabian genius, Omar Khayyam? Has it led to ameliorating world tensions? Has it imparted to humanity a freshness of vision?

The answer, of course, is a broad "nay". The truth is, when we dare face it, that toothpaste has done nothing for humanity. It has not given him sweet smelling breath, since liquid oral detergents do that better. It has not killed decay germs, because decay germs are tenacious and sometimes have been found to be immortal. Toothpaste is actually an insidious substance and should be abolished. ---B. Freeg

FAWNING PUBLIC WRITES DEPT.

GOLDEN MOUTHINGS



THE OTHER MEMBERS of this family have tuned in the Jack Paar Show and've begun reveling in the happy flouncings and prancings of that person, and I've decided suddenly that it would be a good time to climb my rope ladder up to my room and begin another issue of Lyddite. (A few people who have visited me here in Trenton can testify to the fact that I honestly do reach my bedroom by climbing a rope ladder.) And, of course, what better place to begin an issue of a fanzine than at the letter column?

Some of you people will remember that I said last time that I would continue doing Lyddite if I received lots and lots of wonderful letters of comment. Well, I didn't get lots and lots of them, but I got a fair amount of them. Enough to give me reason to go on with all this, anyway.

I think I may have got many more letters than I did if Lyddite were less the carefree, free-of-comment-hook fanzine and more the Kipple sort of pub-

lished-on-brown-paper, no-funnies-in-this-magazine sort of affair. But, when one gets right down to things, is it better to receive a jolly half-page letter from Dean Grennell or two serious, Concerned, three-&-a-half page letters from Mike Deckinger and David Locke?

DEAN A. GRENNEILL, FOND DU LAC, WISCONSIN

Thank you for Lyddite #3 (The Brisant Fanzine), which appears to have materialised on my desk here. I enjoyed this more than somewhat. Permit me to say that you have a very nice editorial touch. This is something which, apparently, is sometimes possessed but rarely acquired.

The ant in the bottle is a good title for a few pages of editorial belly-rumbles. I particularly enjoyed your explanation of a fanzine to Mr. Hughes. I also yakked at your Timex commercial. I had a Timex once. It ran and still does but after the first six months, it became the first watch I have ever seen which couldn't stay within an hour of the correct time, even if reset every hour on the hour. Owel.

Gun fans sometimes also experience the almost instantaneous rapport you describe. Sometimes they don't, too. The other evening a couple fellows were shooting out at the club's outdoor range. I went down to see who they were and we hit it off at once, almost like the jazzman and yourself. Never saw 'em before (as a matter of fact, they were two brothers, both from Hungary) but we had a bond in common and that's all it took. One or two of the biggest schnooks I know of, though, are also gun fans so tha's howit goes.

Stiles 'tobns were all fine. Specially liked the "That's not too many" one.

The Encounter is a bit baffling (like I don't get it) but otherwise good.

ARCHIE MERCER, CHELTENHAM, GLOUCESTER, ENGLAND

Like as I was passing this slan-shack, I heard slan-type nbises coming out of the top window. "It certainly is a wonderful thing" -- "Goshwowboyoboy."

"Sit down on the step and listen," suggested Pimple, who just happened to be there at the time.

"I thought your landlady didn't like fans sitting on the step," I demurred.

"It's not the landlady you're thinking of," said Pimple, "it's Dave Kyle. Sid down and listen."

"A lot of rubbish, isn't it," I opined as I sat and listened.

"'Tain't," said Pimple, who just happened to be in a laconicadictory mood.

"Haven't you ever heard the story of what it all means?"

"No---go on."

"Well, it's like this. It represents the mundanes beating up the slans. Take 'It certainly is a wonderful thing.' First of all 'it'---that represents the mundane hitting the slan with a rolled-up Saturday Evening Post. 'Sir,' says the slan humbly. 'Tell me,' says the mundane full of arrogance (mundane arrogance, of course), 'is I wonderful, thing?' 'Goshwowboyoboy' says the fan in awe. That's how it goes. 'It.' 'Sir.' 'Tell me, is I wonderful, thing?' 'Goshwowboyoboy.'"

But then Dave Kyle came out and we had to go away.

I printed that whole damned thing just for that beautiful punchline, you know. Hoog.

Anyway, the third Lyddite is to hand with thanks. Bulk for bulk, it doesn't impress quite as much as the last one, which went to extremes, sort of, but it's still muchly goodly. Er---the raisin sandwich was missing from mine; I suppose I'm too old to qualify? As long as you are a little boy at heart and all that we will let you enter the Land of Beyond, etc. I'm awfully sorry I had to go and make that joke about the raisin sandwich, though. Everybody seems to have made comments about not getting one. Actually, who'd want such a strange thing? I doubt it would be edible. Or even potable.

LeeH's bit was decidedly of interest. From a distance, as a far-flung reader of Caravan, I watched her over much of her course, and I'm glad to see the full story.

What happens every time you smash a little piece of Calvin W. "Biff" Demmon?

CHARLES WELLS, ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Steve Stiles' cartoons have the usual fault of leftwing political cartoonists: they are overdone. I refer to "Jesus Loves Me," the crucifixion one, the JBS man, and the preacher. (Well, political and religious.) The others were of variable quality, but none of them had that lack of subtlety, that hit-you-in-the-face-with-it quality of the ones I named.

Lee Hoffman's article was absolutely fascinating. I'm very impressed and now I go around telling people the Girl that Taught Me All About Fandom (when we both lived in Savannah) Was Singlehandedly Responsible for the New Lost City Ramblers, by Ghu. (I always did think that the NLCR was a great name for a singing group.)

NORM CLARKE, AYLMER, QUEBEC, CANADA

Unaccustomed as I am to Making Comments, yet I would like to say that Lyddite is a fine fanzine, all full of serious discussion of Science Fiction, as well it should be; for is that not the purpose of a fanzine? I hope that Mr. Hughes will not get a Wrong Impression of fanzines and fandom; just as I hope that fanzines and fandom do not get a wrong impression of "bop" from Mister Hughes. His is a clever and almost convincing explanation of the origins of bop, and of course there is a measure of Truth in his thesis: one can readily recognize the connection between the onomatopoeic "bop," "bo-bop," "nop" sounds and clubbing of Negroes by Square white cops who do not like jazz. But, let Mr. Hughes explain, if he can, the equally important "bop" phrases "oobladee," "shoobedoobee," "Speelyada" and "vout." Anyone who ignores these fundamental "bop" phrases com-

pletely misunderstands the meaning of "bop" and its contribution to World Culture. Dig? Orooney.

Stiles is a Funny Cat: my only cavil being that I have read the line "...that's not too many..." seven hundred and twenty times. 720 times? That's too many. Stiles' cartoon was of course a commentary on the overuse of that phrase.

Your little vignette concerning the Instant Communication with a stranger ---a tenor player---needs just a little bit added to it to make it a hilarious little bit of fiction. The ending? You Meet Again, some time later, at a session, and neither of you can blow worth a God damn. That's what happened.

But all of "The Ant in the Bottle" was real hoo-haw, and a ball right from the top---especially the bit about conversing with a South Sea Islander. And the fillers and interlineations were very funny, too.

Is there a sort of Cult or something growing up around Calvin W. "Biff" Demmon? If you mean the Calvin "Demmon" who lives in Berkeley and who is a whiz at tying his shoes, yes; only we refer to it as "Apa X."

Lee Hoffman's story of Building Her Own Fandom was very entertaining and Good, and it made me wince with nostalgia; for, once upon a time, I intended to start a Jazz Fandom. I had discovered Jazz and Fandom at approximately the same time, and thought it would be a Wonderful Thing to publish a fanzine full of articles and things by Serious Young Jazz Musicians: "What Lee Konitz Says to Me, Subjectively," and "How I Finger My High F# and Others." That sort of stuff. But I somehow Never Got Around to It. Maybe, Gary, you'd like to...? What with the Hughes story last time and Ted White's article this time I think maybe I'm on the verge of publishing a jazz fanzine already. I don't really have any desire to do so, though. I'd rather concentrate on becoming a Name in fish fandom.

DICK SCHULTZ, DETROIT, MICHIGAN

Hoffman, natch, stole the whole issue. Her information on Folknikdom was fabulous. And besides that, she had a number of those NICRA cards with her at the ChiCon. If only I'd read this article 'fore going to the ChiCon... At any rate, Lee made it to the Con. She and Grandpaw Tucker and Bloch and Willis were at it again, as they say. Willis was musing over the past and I noted that all that was needed was for Keasler to walk through the drug store doors.

I'm beginning to get a little bugged at Stiles' habit of drawing odious nostrils on every cotton-picking nose he plops on stencil. It's getting to be a little sickening. That, of course, is Steve's hang-up. Other fan cartoonists are hung up on hairy navels, breasts, or Nazi arm bands.

STEVE STILES, NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Mr. Deindorfer, sir, I understand that you are a "fan." I am very interested in becoming a "fan," and in learning more about "fandom." I read science fiction every day, except on Thursdays when the library is closed. Did you ever read Freddy the Pig Goes to Mars??? Very good science fiction (or "scientifiction," as Uncle Gernsback calls it). Anyway, I would like to correspond with you to learn more about this "fandom"; I need a hobby, for my hubcap collection was ~~stolen~~ stolen. I am eleven years old, and am six feet tall. I work in daddy's missile defense plant. Are all "fanzines" as good as Smudge???? It is letters like this one which give a young fanned the strength to go on. Seriously, gang, I think we have a real "coner" in this boy named Stiles, don't you? By the way, Steve, I read Freddy the Pig Goes to Mars back when I too was eleven years old. It was my first scientifiction book and bigosh I was really and honestly "hooked." I finished it in just four weeks and stumbled into my school library and asked the librarian where I could get "more books like that!" She smiled indulgently and reached behind her desk and brought out a paperbound edition of House of Joy. And by Jeez I've been reading "the fiction of the future!" ever since, Steve!

RICK SNEARY, SOUTH GATE, CALIFORNIA

Lyddite came to me at a very good time. I'd just gotten a whole raft of fanzines (a very soggy way to get fanzines) filled with war and rumor of war. It seemed that about half of fandom was out to prove the other half were crooks, idiots, or at least un-American. It got so that I almost felt like reading the newspaper to see something cheerful. Then Lyddite came along, with a whole crew of happy people, People I Have Been Watching. Yes. Well, there are exceptions. I've known LeeH since she was a boy, and of course Langston Hughes is none of our own. (But they is real great folks just the same.) But you, Stiles, Koning, Demmon, and maybe a couple of others have been fighting the trend. You have been swimming against the current. You have been beating your own paths to fame and all that. Or even All That.

How, I can hear you ask. Well, no...I can't hear you ask. You won't ask it until you read this, and then how could I hear you now, even if I could hear you all the way from New Jersey. But never mind that, I'll answer you, just as if I did hear you. The answer is that you are friendly and enjoy life and like people and don't try to make a big deal out of anything. No, you guys write stuff, and when I see it I know I can read it with a good taste in my head. You're going to be clever, and funny, and maybe say something important. You are not going to tell me what a hard world it is, or what a louse so&so is. You're apt to talk about the girls you have raped as Redd Boggs or Harry Warner. You won't reveal how you first took up narcotics, or analyze the social significance of the last UPA cartoon. You won't be likely to be talking about the "German Problem" or how to do away with the NFFF. You don't even try to write like ----- trying to write like ----- . You write fresh stuff. Not all of it is deathless. Some of it isn't nearly as much fun to read as it must have been to write. But that don't hardly take the fuzz off it.

Get me not wrong. I dig Warhoon and its message to the world. I read Axe with baited breath, waiting to see who will sue who next. I roll around and laugh and laugh at some of the sly digs in Void, Shaggy, and Hyphen. But it is nice to pick up zines which I can enjoy, just for fun. You are all part of a troop that I kind of hope might be a new trend in fandom. One that was sort of like Fifth-Fandom---when things were just fun. Thanks a lot for the kind words on our group, Rick, but who is "-----"?

Now, since I got an FM (right now out of whack, as it is a real old set and they don't make tubes for it---and one of the ones that cost \$8.50 has died) I have been digging folk music. Especially Theodore Bikel. I have also dug LeeH for a long time, like I said. So I'm real interested in what she writes. I remember the first days of the craze with her, when she was running folk music fanzines through FAPA, and I didn't understand them any more than a South Sea Islander understands thermodynamics. Then she stopped writing anything for a while but minac. Then a year ago she starts up with more or less FAPA old-timer amounts of material. Never said why she cooled on the folk bit. I understand now. Just like her first time in fandom. She burned herself out.

Stiles is sometimes a little "sick" and sometimes a little too "sharp" but there is no arguing about taste. And he is one of the most talented cartoonists in fandom. A Good Fellow, and these are a first-rate scream.

Koning is serious in his well-written bit of fan-fiction. But unlike other fan-fictionists, he worries that others might take him seriously, and cast him (in name only) into the villain's role. Very good, and I enjoyed it.

Lastly---of the fannish stuff---is A Genuine Biffable. A type of humor that must have a limit. It is so limited in scale and scope that it can't go on being funny forever. But I still laugh at them, and hope that they slowly soften my brain or warp my mind so that I keep on thinking they are funny for a Very Long Time. (If only he would get over killing his characters off. Is there a death wish hidden among all this light-hearted whimsy? Are all your funny remarks secretly messages of hate and despair? Are you all really secret agents of Koning

Golden Mouthings---V

and the DWE movement? Are you planning to undermine fandom by being funny men, and then when the Best Minds in Fandom lay helpless and exposed before you, are you going to pour the acid of contempt upon them? Say! That's a pretty good line isn't it? At 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ a word that would be worth almost a half buck. Why am I wasting such jewels on you? ~~A~~ check for 50¢ is on its way to you. Z

FRED GALVIN, ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

I liked "The Ant in the Bottle" best. The piece about South Sea Islanders really got me; even after I'd read it to myself several times, I still couldn't read it to a friend without laughing.

Why does Calvin W. "Biff" Demmon use such a complicated name? Every time I see it, it reminds me of campaign posters that say, "Vote for Robert W. 'Bob' Anderson for County Commissioner" or something like that: the full name so the voters will recognize it on the ballot, and the nickname for the folksy touch. ~~Why~~ do you use such a complicated name, Calvin W. "Biff" Demmon? Z

BOB "SEFTON" LICHTMAN, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

I dearly love receiving faanish fanzines in the mails these days, because I was brought into fandom during the time when they were perhaps at their zenith (late 1958 and through 1959 was the peak, I think; I came into fandom in mid-1958) and they're My Kind of Fanzine, really, though I've never produced one myself. Nowadays, when the only two non-apa faanish fanzines left that appear regularly or even irregularly are Void and Dafoc, the addition of Lyddite is a significant factor. ~~Another~~ issue of A Bas should be appearing soon. Joy! Z

None of these fanzines quite measure up to the past greats like Innuendo and the earlier Hyphen, of course, for what can? (I read my Inn file, quite complete, thank you, at least once a year, muttering "skatekey" under my breath all the while.) But I sure as hell rejoice each time one drops into my mail box. In fact, the receipt of Dafoc Part VI last week is what's pushed me into writing this letter to you on Lyddite #3 before the season is past, if it isn't already.

I certainly did enjoy Lech's article, even the moreso after I realized that she was telling me Something I Already Knew, though she was casting it into a more solid mold than I'd managed to place around it heretofore. Having lived in the same town as Richard D. Ellington and having talked this summer past to Jock Root, I've already managed to get most of this information from them. Why, I've even skimmed through (and read some of) the file of G'oo on Dick's bookcase. And I have my Very Own Copy of G'oo #7, zowee! The first kid on my block, and all that.

All of Stiles's cartoons were goodgoodgood this time, but the Lincoln one in the lower right corner of the spread was by far the best. This one deserves much, much, much wider distribution than the 75-100 copies of Lyddite in which it appears; perhaps some magazine like The Realist or even New Yorker would be interested. And, hell, the "Man" series, or much of it, is also similar bait for professional publication. Get on the stick, Stiles.

Jeez, but I like what Koning is doing in this series of interlocking stories of his. Ho's taken the old Larry Stark idea of using real names in these stories, though not necessarily applying the real names to the real person's personality, and like that. Of course, the usual running joke of "Dean Ford" and "Gary Styles" is always Nice.

Calvin's Biffable was terribly minor, like he said.

I like Hughes' Bop fable, but somehow this business reminds me of the reprints from Road & Track that Raeburn used to run in A Bas. They were funny, and this is funny, but since I don't understand all the allusions that must be there, I feel somewhat left out. ~~The~~ Hughes story wasn't terribly inside, and it wasn't meant to be funny. Z

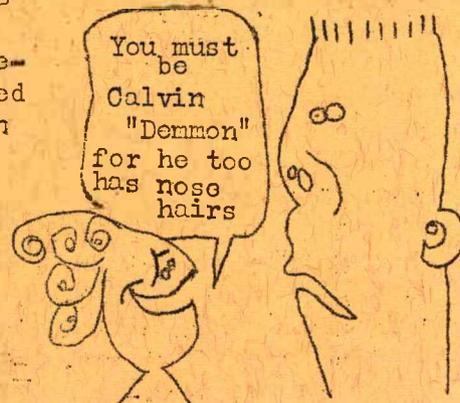
HARRY WARNER, JR., HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND

You are to be congratulated on obtaining that Hoffman item about her old folksongs at home days. Some of this information had come out in partial form in various places but I'd wondered about the whole course of events and this description indicates that the most interesting matters were those that did not slip out piecemeal. The motto, I suppose, or moral, or whatever you might want to call it is that a fandom has a hard time getting itself into the form of a real entity if it hasn't been brought together by the written and printed word.

Your editorial indicates that you haven't been out in the great wide world quite long enough to realize the alarming lengths to which Instant Recognition can go in fields other than our fandom and jazz fandom. On several occasions I've been present at conventions because of newspaper duties, mistaken by this or that individual as an attendee whom he'd never seen before, and almost drawn into water brotherhood with him before I could explain that I'm neither Elk nor Railroad Trainman nor Granger. Now, if all this communication can occur on a one-way basis, with me failing completely to return any of the conversation and stock phrases of the particular group, how must it be to belong to one of these organizations and encounter a bunch of brothers in the group whom you've never seen before? It must be almost as terrible as the voluntarily adopted procedure of those Americans who visit Europe or Asia and spend most of their time planning schedules so they can attend a Rotary club meeting in a different foreign city every day. Strangely believe it, that instant recognition bit of mine was a play for laughs or chuckles or whatever. The joke was that our communication consisted of abbreviated little say-nothing phrases. Nobody seems to have realized this, though. I suppose this can be ascribed to the fact that I didn't develop the segment as well as I should have. As for the people who plan their foreign clime schedules so that they can hit a different foreign city's Rotarian meeting every day, I find that sort of reminiscent of the people who plan their vacation routes so they can hit a different group of faaans every day.

You too fall into the plebian error in your comments on the Glenn journey, when you say "I was watching the flight on television." Doggone it, nobody saw the flight on television, and yet everyone in and out of fandom speaks of having done that very thing. On the tv station on which I followed the Glenn flight, a hand periodically moved a tiny capsule from one point to another on a world globe. I naturally assumed, as a ridiculously typical follower of the whole affair, that I was beholding the hand of God moving Glenn's capsule along its orbital path. I still believe this. I gave perhaps 90 minutes of my time to television for the Glenn flight, a half-hour to Carpenter and none to Schirra for the simple reason that you couldn't see anything that an intelligent dog couldn't visualize without the help of a television set and the sound portion was every bit as platitudinous as the quotations that you cite would indicate. An East Germany correspondent tells me that he saw telecasts direct from the vehicles during the recent twinpack orbit by Russia, and even if those were taped fakes, at least the public behind the Iron Curtain doesn't go around talking about seeing things that were not on their screens.

Jean Shepherd betrays youth or inexperience or something when he gets all excited about an lp record devoted to sobbing. He apparently doesn't know that long ago in the 78 rpm days there was a spectacularly successful record devoted to laughter---giggles, horselaughs, guffaws, tittering, and all shades in between. I heard it recently over the air and thought it was impressively done, considering that they couldn't work with tapes and someone had to keep all those people in a jolly mood for three whole minutes. It would be safe to say that there is nothing so outlandish or pointless produced by the record industry



Golden Mouthings---VII

today that hasn't been exceeded in its dreadful past. ~~But~~ today's outlandish or pointless records are forty minutes long, rather than three or four, thanks to science and various industrious and ingenious people. ~~7~~

I'm glad that you liked Bop because I read it and still haven't found a piece of fiction about jazz that interests me. But I think that the Steve Stiles portfolio is perhaps the most brilliant thing that fanzines have offered in the form of art since Ella Parker's ATom Anthology. ~~Young~~ Stiles will be happy to read that. ~~7~~

LES GERBER, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK, LITHUANIA

Lyddite #3 surprised me, in several ways. First, it surprised me by arriving without a copy of Axe wrapped around it. Second, it surprised me by being more than two pages long, and by containing material by people other than your noble editorial self. And finally, it surprised me by being full of things I didn't like. Now, this doesn't mean I didn't like the fanzine. There are some fanzines you just don't like, even though the material in them may be perfectly hunky-dory; and there are other fanzines you just like, even though you don't like the material in them, like the old Gry of three and four years back, or Yandro when it isn't carrying good material. Lyddite fits into that category. I like the fanzine, of course. But there were a number of things in it that I didn't like. I did like Lee Hoffman's letter, especially since I've been wondering for years who was responsible for those NLCRA tags. (I bought one myself for a nickle in the Folklore Center, and I still have it around somewhere.) But I didn't like John Koning's story, which was curiously inept and uncomfortably written, especially in the melodramatic and ridiculous ending. It sounded like Mike Deckinger trying to write Koning style. ~~That's~~ frightening. ~~7~~ I didn't like the Biffable, which reminded me too much of Kent Moomaw and destroyed the happy-go-lucky hooah type of attitude I usually get from a Biffable. I didn't like the thing by Langston Hughes, which I thought was horridly sentimental. Music isn't produced by being bopped on the head. The same impulses provoke all art, and being beaten on the head isn't one of them. The experiences people have color their art (if you'll pardon the unintended pun), but I can't go along with these theories that attribute jazz or folk music of the Negro to the fact of his oppression. ~~I~~ think the fact of the Negro's oppression accounts for a good bit of the aspect of his music. It does not, of course, account for all of it. But I liked Hughes' story. I'm sorry ~~almost~~ nobody else did. About the most positive reaction came from Ted White when I was talking with him on the phone one day. He called Hughes' story "interesting." ~~7~~

Your commercial for Timex watches isn't nearly so good as the one I saw once, when the watch slipped off the propellor blade and got lost in the tank. I'd always wondered what would happen if one of the Timex commercials went off wrong, and I was monumentally pleased when the Timex disappeared. Swayze covered up pretty well, though. He said something like, "Well, the watch fell off, but if we could find it there in the tank it would be running perfectly...." I wish he'd gotten flustered. I've always wanted to see that.

After all the bitching about the material, I should at least tell about what I liked. ~~Yes~~, you should. ~~7~~ Most of your editorial was OK and up, pretty far up. Lee's letter-article was fascinating, especially to someone who watched the New Lost City Ramblers' build-up from the outside. About half the Stiles cartoons are masterpieces, the masterpiece being "Hell of a cliché." ~~You~~ mean there were only two cartoons? ~~7~~ And while the sandwich was terrible, the paper tasted very good. If you don't publish Lyddite #4, please send me some more of that crunchy good paper.

SOME OTHER WORTHIES wrote, mostly on the backs of postcards. Dian Girard thought Koning's story was very funny. I better not tell her it wasn't meant to be. And Galen Purescent, Wilhelm Furtwangler and Bob Vining sent money.

This was, or will be, Lyddite #4, depending upon whether you are reading this after or before reading the rest of the issue. Table of contents is as follows:

The Ant in the Bottle.....Your friendly editor.....2
One Evening with Charles Mingus.....Ted White.....11
~~Golden~~ Mouthings.....You, you, you and you.....15

All interior artwork is by Deindorfer, and the drawing on page eleven was traced from a Hi-Fi Stereo Review photograph. Cover is also by Deindorfer, although he shouldn't really admit it.

Since two people actually sent money for copies of this Lyddite, I'm dropping a price tag on this mag. It obviously isn't worth 30¢. Gad, some people... Henceforth (or "hereinafter," as Bob Lichtman would say), Lyddite will be available to new readers for loc's promised, selected trades, acceptable contribs, or a kick in the rear.

Those fans already getting this mag need only write once in a while (or "every issue") to signify continued interest and all of that. If they send contributions or trade their fanzines for mine that will make me happy too. ("It doesn't take much to make a little boy happy---maybe a piece of candy, a kind look, a wipe of your handkerchief on his runny nose.")

It strikes me that the above might lead people to say that I am aping Calvin W. "Biff" Derron's colophon writing style. Well, I think one and all should know that I was around fandom when Calvin W. "Biff" Derron was kicking little girls off tricycles, and I wrote like that then, although somewhat more crudely, being but a young lad of thirteen, or "seven."

A letter just arrived today from Boyd Raeburn. He has some stuff on Lyddite that ought just as well be printed here, since it is kind of happy reading. And so, here is a Boyd Raeburn letter of comment:

"Come back for children whose parents say Millions of starving children here and there would love to have your food or whatever, is to say Name One. Another comeback is, fine, let them have it. Third one is, 'If you have to be starving to be able to eat it...' and variations on same theme. However, parents sometimes do not quite appreciate these witty sallies on behalf of their offspring, and retribution can be swift.

"Justified margins are not only a Drag, but also a Waste of Time...for this reader anyway, because unobservant ol' me never notices that they ARE justified unless the editor talks about his justified margins, and then I look again and think, 'Oh yes, they are justified, aren't they. Silly ass editor.'"

Thanks, Boyd. And on that note we will leave one and all. Hope you enjoyed (or will enjoy) this issue, again depending upon whether this page is last or first on your Lyddite #4 reading schedule.

Lyddite, the Brisant Fanzine, from
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