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COVER by STEVE STILES with words by me. BACOVER by JOHN D. BERRY

INTERIOR ART by MIKE SYMES-5; JACK GAUGHAN-6, 32; JOHN D. BERRY-9, 38; BILL ROTSLER-8, 12, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21, 27, 34; RAY NELSON -45, 46; STAN TAYLOR-47.

> NOTE: I have mislaid the addresses of MIKE SYMES and STAN TAYLOR. Somebody help!!

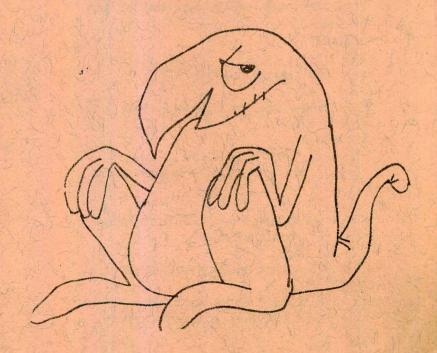
PSYCHOIIC is a product of the passionate, lovesick and fevered mind of the mad hermit of Venice ...

> name of: Richard E. Geis 5 Westminster Venice, California 90291

Published on the arm destroying Psychotic Press, PSY is issued for trades, contributions and a new high price of 50¢ per copy.

REMEMBER: no mail addressed to "Psychotic" or "The Mad Hermit" will reach me. It all goes to Joe Pyne.

Copyright 1968 by Richard E. Geis. All rights are assigned to the writers and artists who contributed material to this issue. May an enchanted GROG! always quard their door.



THE COUCH

WHERE THE EDITOR RAMBLES ON AND ON AND ON AND ON

"All right, Geis! Stop whimpering like that! A grown fan like you!"

"I can't help it. W-where have I gone right? It isn't as if I don't try! I do! I eliminate letters I'd like to print...I cut letters to the bone...I manfully resist the impulse to print articles and art and schedule them for future issues...and I thought with this new micro elite typer the zine would only come to f-forty p-pages at the m-m-most. And L*O*O*K!! Fifty pages...fifty pages! FIFTY PAGES!"

"Calm, Geis, calm..."

"But, it isn't fair!"

"It rarely is. Such are the *sigh* burdens of greatness. You'll just have to reconcile yourself to a bimonthly of fifty pages."

"But-1

"Is there anything you can cut? Any column, any article. any department?"

"Nooo ... "

"Then you'll just have to accept the fact of fifty pages and bi-monthly."

"But Rick Sneary and Lee Hoffman won't read the zine anymore!"

"They will...they will..."

"Y-you think so?"

"Of course."

"Well...in that case... One thing I am going to do and that is raise the price. Each copy of PSY #24 cost more to produce and mail than the 25¢ I get on a subscription!"

"So raise the price!"

"I'm going to have to. Especially since I have some plans for upcoming issues...and the page count is likely to go even higher..."

"What plans?"

Smirk

"Come on, Geis, you can tell me!"

"Nope."

"Alright, be that way...see if I care... What is the new price going to be?"

"Fifty cents."

"FIFTY CENTS? That's outrageous!"

"No it isn't. Don't you think PSY is worth a penny a page?"

"Well..."

"Don't you get at least a penny's worth of amusement, entertainment, instruction per page?"

"Put in that light..."

"And all current subscriptions will be honored at the old rate."

"You sure you couldn't cut the size down?"

"Yes, seriously, I am sure. It would destroy the

Unity and function of PSY. The zine HAS to have a looning letter column; it HAS to have a balance of faanish and sercon material; it HAS to have all the departments. The size is built in, I'm afraid."

"Okay, okay, you've got me convinced, but there will be criers of doom and warnings of disaster."

"I know. All I can say is that PSY is slowly finding its natural size and schedule."

"I reserve judgement."

"Time will tell. I am confident."

"Ummph. I notice you are copyrighting this issue. Care to explain that?"

"No mystery. It occurred to me a couple months ago, soon after I received Bob Bloch's excellent review of 2001—A SPACE ODYSSEY, that his material, mine, and the writings and drawings of all the contributors to PSY should be protected. As the notice says on the contents page, all rights are assigned to the contributors. It's something all serious fanzines should do, I think. I just recently received my first trade copy of NIEKAS and I see that Ed Meskys and Felice Rolfe have done this, too."

"But I sense an ulterior motive in your devious little mind, Geis."

"My motives are as the driven slush."

"Exactly. You are hoping more professionals will contribute to PSY, knowing their material is copyrighted and re-useable at their pleasure and opportunity in the paying markets."

"That HAD crossed my mind..."

"Oh, sneaky, sneaky...eh? What's that horrible thing below us?"

"That is a picture of me/us."



"Have you no shame?"

"Nope. And if you want to really fill your eyes, dig the picture of Carol Peters in the Second Session.

It was taken last year when she dyed her hair blonde, and— Hey, where!d you go?"

"Just taking a peek."

"Voyeur!"

"What the hell, Geis! You're the one who's publishing it!"

"True, but it's censored. The inky nipple is not shown."

"Really? I thought I saw...let me take another look!"
"Come back here. Dirty old man."

"Pot calling kettle black!"

"As a psychiatrist you're supposed to have more aplomb."
"Sure, sure, but Carol wrote a fan telling him she had
a pair of 42-Ds and I was only estimating..."

"Estimate on your own time."

"She won't let me get near her! Can't you put in a word for me, Geis? Iell her I'll give her a free analysis."
"Nope."

"Tell her she has obvious symptoms of exhibitionism and schizophrenia."

"I don't see her that much anymore."

"You saw plenty of her last year!"

"Well..."

"All right...all right...I just thought I was your friend."

"Can we change the subject?"

"If you insist!"

"Yeah, I do. I--"

"Did she give you permission to publish that photo of her?"

"Of course!"

"Oh ... okay."

III_II

"You got any other pics of her in the...ah...nude?"
"Nope. Now do you mind if we get off Carol Peters?"

"You can get off if you want, but I'm staying rightht here."

"I'll do a monolog, then."

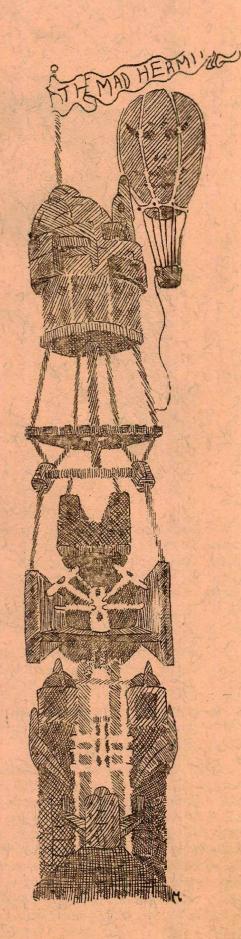
"Be my quest."

"Thanks! As most of you fans will notice, I have acquired a third class bulk mailing permit, a la YANDRO. And thank you, Buck, for explaining the process and leading the way. For a zine of PSY's size it means a tremendous saving in postage and I believe an actual improvement of service, since the zines are sorted and tied in bundles when they are delivered to the P.O. and can be sent right along by the P.O. to various states without waiting in a corner for weeks, sometimes to be mislaid and lost, perhaps forever, as happened, apparently, to QUIP.

"This means more work for me, but I kind of enjoy sorting envelopes by zipcode, bundling them and tying them with

"If PSY were an official, accredited non-profit organization, or a religious magazine, I could save even more!
But, alas, 3rd class bulk is what PSY is—junk mail, as is YANDRO.

"Which fanzine will be next to declare itself refuse?"





Between 1900 and 1960, thousands upon thousands of westerns were made, ranging from the crude one-reelers of "Broncho Billy" Anderson to the highly-acclaimed STAGE-COACH, HIGH NOON and SHANE. They were shot in the East, they were shot "on location" in the West, they were shot abroad; they were filmed on budgets high and low. Yet almost all of this vast output could be easily divided into three basic categories.

The smallest group consists of the "epics"—the historical western, as exemplified by THE COVERED WAGON, THE PONY EXPRESS, THE BIG TRAIL and HOW THE WEST WAS WON.

The second grouping is the <u>modern</u> western, set in today's west—the "today" of Tom Mix's period, or Gene Autry's, or even Paul Newman's (HUD).

By far the largest group is the so-called traditional western, laid in the period between 1865 and 1885, give or take a few years, and including the stock characters and situations with which all movie-goers are familiar; the clean-shaven cowboy, the menacing indian, the Hibernian hordes of the U.S. Cavalry, the rustler, the renegade, the outlaw, the gunfighter (including the reformed specimen who wants to hang up his guns) and those "town characters", the gambler and the Marshall (including the sheriff who wants to hang up his guns and the deputy who may have a hangup about his guns). And, of course, the "good bad man" or

2001

"good-Harte-d" type.

Only in the last half-dozen years or so have westerns really made any radical departures from what had become the norm. And audiences, by and large, are still prone to considerthe western in terms of these three familiar categories.

They know the location of the story—the continental United States and its territories, west of the Mississippi River. They know the chronological background—a historical period, the present day, or the twenty-year span immed—

iately following the Civil War.

And they know, with an intimacy born of lifelong accuraintance, the standard characters and the standard

quaintance, the standard characters and the standard plots.

As a result, when one speaks of the western movie, it is understood to be a film which can be easily fixed in space and time, a film with a certain predictable plot-line and recognizable characters. Thus we define a film category.

If we follow this reasoning—if we define a film category in terms of characters, plot, locale and chronology—then we are faced with the fact that there is no such thing as "the science fiction film".

Because, by their very nature, science fiction films have no limitations in time, space, characters or plots.

A few examples should serve to illustrate this point.

Time: ONE MILLION B.C. is set, as its title indicates, in the distant past—feminine makeup notwithstanding. THE POWER is set in the present. 1984 takes us to the near future. METROPOLIS is laid in a somewhat more distant future. THE TIME MACHINE begins in the Victorian era, moves up through the present, and whisks us to the far future, all in the same film.

Space: THINGS TO COME, WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE and many other films have earth as their locale. DESTINATION MOON and its numerous "space-flight" companions have an outer-space setting. And such disparate offerings as FORBIDDEN PLANET and FLASH GORDON take us to other planets. Nor is that the limit; consider the recent film, FANTASTIC VOYAGE, in which much of the action took place within the human body itself—so much so that the film might justifiably have been retitled INSIDE DAISY CLOVER.

Characters: They range from the cave-dwellers of ONE MILLION B.C. to the present-day scientists of THE POWER; from the "typical" small-town inhabitants of IN-VASION OF THE BODY-SNATCHERS to the monkey-rulers of

A SPACE ODYSSEY REVIEWED BY ROBERT BLOCK

PLANET OF THE APES—and include the myriad monsters of GODZILLA, THEM and a hideous horde of other atypicalities.

<u>Plots</u>: The usual phrase is, "The sky's the limit". But in science fiction films, the sky <u>isn't</u> the limit. We have films with spectacular special-effects such as WAR OF THE WORLDS and THE GIRL IN THE MOON, alongside films with very few effects, such as FAHRENHEII 451, which really dealt with en <u>idea</u> rather than relying on elaborate visualization. And the boundaries of science fiction are shadowy and indistinct; FRANKENSTEIN, in which a living entity is created from bits and pieces of corpses by allegedly "scientific" technology, falls within the canon.

further instance and elaboration would seem unnecessary. The problem is obvious—there is no one specific type of film which can be recognized and agreed upon as science fiction by all critics and all members of the audience. And, predictably, the tastes of individual critics and inoividual audience—members vary greatly, depending on which of the many widely—divergent types of science fiction films they happen to enjoy.

It therefore follows that any attempt to criticize or evaluate 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY in relation to a fixed genre is foredoomed to failure. The frame of reference is too wide. To further complicate the situation, 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY is a mixture of many "types" of what we hazily recognize as science fiction.

The prologue of the picture takes us to Four Million B.C. and its characters are hominids. One cannot compare these creatures to the denizens of PLANET OF THE APES, nor their activities to those of the specimens of primitive man depicted in ONE MILLION B.C.

The bulk of the first portion of the film then is enacted in 2001 A.D. -- in space-craft, on the moon, and again in space-craft on a voyage to Jupiter. This sizeable segment caters—and caters most magnificently—to the tastes of those Gernsbackians who have clamored for "scientific accuracy" and "pure technology" in cinema offerings. It is truly a triumph of special effects. We see the operation of a space-craft, and the complicated mechanisms involved. We are subjected to the discomfort, the monotony, the tension of prolonged interplanetary flight, minus such previous comforts—of—home as the shapely sweat er-wearing girls seen in earlier purported representations of such voyaging. We catch glimpses of alien landscapes and of outer space which conform to the latest available data on such locales, and the emphasis throughout is on scientific procedure.

But along with our astronauts (two of whom are animated and three of whom are in hibernation to conserve vital energy during the voyage to Jupiter) we are given another member of the crew—not the aforementioned shapely female assistant, but a computor mechanism actually in charge of the space—craft and the destinies as well as the destination of the rest of the astronauts. Ihis computor has been granted a speaking voice, which gift may or may or may not offend the purists.

There is little doubt, however, about the purists being offended by the <u>nature</u> of that speaking voice. Instead of cold, flat, mechanical tones, we hear a cultivated Anglo-Saxon voice registering <u>emotion</u>. The question as to whether or not a computor <u>can</u> be endowed or self-generate an emotional reaction is (if MGM will pardon the expression) paramount with the astronauts during this portion of the film. Unfortunately, the audience already knows the answer; the tonal quality of its voice is a dead—or live—giveaway. And when the computor mechanism seemingly goes berserk, its voice begins to register the intonations of a "smoothie" Vincent Price villain. Another style of cinema has been introduced, at complete variance to what has proceeded.

The second portion of the film, after the intermission, veers off in another direction. We are given the equivalent of a psychedelic "light show" in the form of a journey through space and time—in other words, the subjective fantasy of a "trip" as it might be experienced by an acid—head. In terms of visual effect, this is a truly unforgettable experience—but those who will appreciate it the most are perhaps less likely to relish everything that has gone before.

And the <u>finale</u> of the film involves a most confusing and obscure metaphysical premise in which the remaining astronaut is apparently transformed into an embryonic star with infant features faintly glimpsed from within an ovoid—like encapsulation.

The deus ex machina (or is it machina ex deus in this case?) is a mysterious cylinder of unknown substance which is first discovered by the hominids in the prologue, embedded in earth. Contact with the cylinder and its "astral choir" of voices which seemingly surround it, causes a mutation in the ape-like creatures; the specimen touching it takes on the first attributes of humanity. I regret to say that this in-

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dication of "humanity" consists in discovering that a bone can be used as a weapon to kill a fellow-creature.

Discovery of another (or, perhaps, the same) cylinder on the moon in 2001 A.D. leads to the voyage of the space-craft, which encounters the cylinder floating in outer space. Apparently this cylinder is responsible for the "trip" of the surviving astronaut and his eventual metamorphosis into a star or a planet.

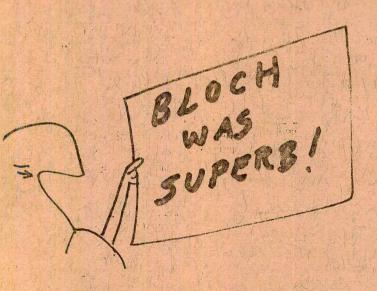
If this sounds a trifle confusing, it's because it is a trifle confusing. Is it mankind's destiny to assume planetary form? Is the cylinder the avatar of First Cause? If so, is it necessary for the astronaut to take this "trip" through the cosmos and then return to a highly-stylized room in an unspecified locale and confront himself as an elderly man eating dinner, then become that elderly man and confront himself as a dying man, then see the cylinder and be mutated into a star? These questions—and interpretations of their answers—will fascinate some moviegoers. But there are others who will be irritated by the lack of "science" in this resolution of the film.

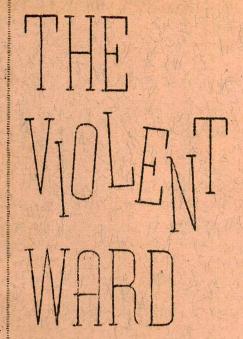
What we end up with is a motion picture representing perhaps the greatest technical achievement ever attained—but complicated by a mixture of styles of presentation and plot elements that present a problem for its audiences; many questions and few answers.

In terms of both artistic and commercial success it will be up to critics and audiences to decide for themselves if such an amalgam is satisfyingly significant.

For my part, I can only tell you that the film is not to be missed. But, to insure greatest enjoyment, I will make this suggestion—take your eyes along and leave your logical feculties at home.







This is the Beginning of an endless road. Yea! fanzine reviews

Here I sit with a staggering quantity of fanzines to record, review, comment upon... At least two long months of them, and they have sat upon the shelf, muttering to themselves at my ignoring them, and in revenge they have multiplied like cancer cells out of control, until now not even radical surgery will help. Ihere's nothing for it but to put them out of their misery...

And like Buck Coulson in YANDRO, I'll adopt the old ten point system of rating. <u>Ten</u> being incredibly great, and one incredibly cruddy.

I can hear it now... "Geis gave me a six but Coulson gave me a seven. Just for that I'll give PSY only a 9% and YANDRO a 8%!"

But onward!

GRANFALLOON #2; 30¢, 4/\$1.; from Linda Eyster, Rm. 5B7, 1060 Morewood Ave., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15213.

An engaging, refreshing zine put out primarily by femme—fans. I enjoyed it. Give them than gals a SIX:

YANDRO #s 177, 178, 179; 40¢, 4/\$1.50, 12/\$4.; Robert and Juanita Coulson, Route #3, Hartford City, Indiana 47348. They say they don't want any more subscribers and they keep raising the price. Perhaps the 40¢ level will do the trick. Bob and Juanita dominate the zine with a gruff friendliness that wears well. I have to hang an EIGHT-AND-A-HALF albatross around their necks.

ALGOL #13; 75¢; Andrew Porter, 24 East 82nd St., New York, N.Y. 10028. A quality fanzine with serious but interesting material. But 75¢ seems a leetle steep. I have to pin this at NINE

GOLANA #9; trades; published by the student body of the Polytechnic In-stitute of Brooklyn, Box 439, 333 Jay Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201.

A 54 page half-size photo-offset effort. The material doesn't live up to the reproduction. About a...FIVE.

DYNATRON #35; 25¢; Roy Tackett, 915 Green Valley Road NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87107.

Casual, sloppy, and interesting. Roy earns a SIX-AND-A-HALF.

CØSIGN #15; 35¢, 8/\$2.50; Bob Gaines, 336 Olentangy St., Columbus, Ohio. 43202 Uneven but improved. FIVE.

ODD #17; 60¢, 4/\$2.; Ray Fisher, 4404 Forest Park, St. Louis, Mo. 63108. A beautiful multilith offering. Fashioned with loving care. EIGHT.

NIMROD #10; 35¢; Al Snider, 1021 Donna Beth, West Covina, Calif. 91790. A rather unfocused zine. Some good, some bad. <u>FIVE</u>.

SHANGRI L'AFFAIRES #72; 35¢, 3/\$1. Ken Rudolph, 735 N. Sycamore Ave., #14, Los Angeles, Calif. 90038.

Revived at last, with a good show of life. SEVEN.

ALPHA #22; 20¢, 6/\$1.; Edward R. Smith, 1315 Lexington Ave., Charlotte, N. Carolina 28203.

A dreary THREE or FOUR. The ability just doesn't seem to be there for improvement. Cruel, but true.

LES SPINGE #20; trade, LoC; Darroll Pardoe, 95 E. Twelfth Ave., Columbus, Ohio 43201.

Well done half-size photo-offset, but microscopic print and in red, yet: Fine material. SEVEN-AND-A-HALF.

HECK MECK #16; trade; Manfred Kage, Schaesberg/Limburg, Achter de Winkel 41, Netherlands.

News, reviews, opinions with a different flavor. FIVE.

ARIOCH! #'s 1,2; 35¢, 8/\$2.; Doug Lovenstein, 425 Cool-ville Ridge. Athens, Ohio 45701.

A zine to watch; Doug is a good artist and could mature as a writer of skill and interest. SIX.

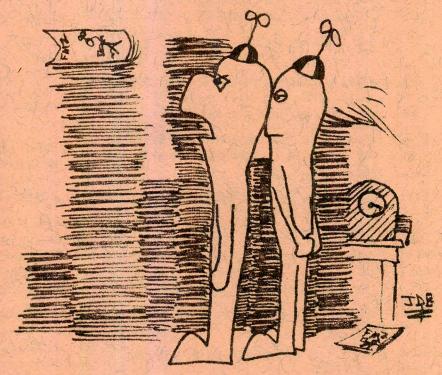
SANCTUM; 25¢; Steve Johnson, 1018 N. 31st St., Corvalis, Oregon 97330. Steve is the main show and can write well. Imperfect repro, but bearable. SIX—AND—A—HALF.

SANDWORM #3; trade; Bob Vardeman, P.O. Box 11352, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87112.

Unpretentious and interesting; Bob is a good reviewer. Have to give mit der SIX-AND-A-HALF again.

TANSTAAFL #'s 1,2,2½; 20¢; John Godwin and Gary Grady, 2426 Belvedere Drive, Wilmington, N.C. 28401.

An improving crudzine. TWO-AND-A-HALF.



"THOSE DAMN UNFEELING FANS WON'T APPRECIATE
THEM - LET'S KEEP THEM ALL OURSELVES!"

NOUS #3; 25¢; Jean and Ruth Berman, 5620 Edgewater Blvd. Minneapolis, Minn. 55417.

Well done fannishness and sword and sorceryness. A pleasant, unhurried zine. SIX.

KALLIKANZAROS #'s 2, 3; 35¢, 4/\$1.25; John Ayotte, 1121 Pauline Ave., Columbus, Ohio 43224.

Actually a literary effort with fiction and poetry the main portions. Worth attention. SEVEN.

HUGIN AND MUNIN #4;25¢; Richard Labonte, 971 Walkley Rd. Ottowa, Ontario, Canada.

Disappointing. Labonte can do better next issue, I hope. I can't see this as more than THREE-AND-A-HALF.

OSFiC-1967; trade; Peter R. Gill, 18 Glen Manor Drive, Toronto 13, Ontario, Canada.

Not very good, I'm afraid. No style and no good material. THREE-AND-A-HALF.

FOOLSCAP #'s 3, 4; 25¢; John D. Berry, Box 6801, Stanford, Calif. 94305.

A faaanish zine that sparkles because John has the personality and intelligence to make it go. Humor, too. SEVEN-AND-A-HALF.

THE NEW UNKNOWN #2; 25¢; Norman Masters, 720 Bald Eagle Lake Road, Ortonville, Mich. 48462.

Gasp. Groan. ONE-AND-A-HALF. Is this on the level, Norm?

ATTENTION ALL FANEDSL!! NEWS FLASH!!! CUTE CAROL PETERS (CUTE, BUXOM GIRL UPSTAIRS) WILL NO LONGER BE PUBLISHING HER ZINE, OS!!! PRESS OF NURSING SCHOOL WORK AND OTHER ACTIVITIES GIVEN AS REASON. SHE THANKS YOU ALL!!!

No more nude publishing parties. *sob*

STARLING #11; 25¢, 4/\$1.; Hank Luttrell, 2936 Barrett Sta. Road, Kirkwood, Mo. 63122.

A very good, well done zine. A plump SEVEN.

NIMROD #9; $35 \, \text{¢}$; A1 Snider, Box 426, West Covina, Ca. 91790. Same opinion as that of #10. A1 does a good job of fanzine reviewing, though. <u>FIVE</u>.

NO-EYED MONSIER #13; 30¢; Norman E. Masters, 720 Bald Eagle Eake Road, Ortonville, Mich. 48462.

He isn't kidding. Neither am I. FOUR.

ARGH! #1; trade; Chester Malon Jr., 4413 Blair Ave., St. Louis, Mo. 63107.

Well, it's a start, anyway. FOUR-AND-A-HALF.

STEFANTASY #62; trade; Bill Danner, R.D. 1, Kennerdell, Pa. A delight. EIGHT.

RADIOPHONE; trade; Steve Johnson, 1018 North 31 Street, Corvalis, Oregon 97330.

An interesting personalzine. SIX.

EXILE #2; trade; Seth Dogramajian, 32-66 80 St., Jackson Hts., New York, N.Y. 11370.

Aha! Good old-fashioned BAD repro. So bad reading the material is too much of a chore. Do I give a TWO? Yes, I give a two. A thin TWO. Good cover, though.

THE PROPER BOSKONIAN #1; 25¢; Cory J. Seidman, 20 Ware St. Cambridge, Mass. 12138.

Readable and has potential. FIVE-AND-A-HALF

SIRRUISH; 25¢, 4/\$1.; Leigh Couch, Route 2, Box 889, Arnold, Mo. 63010.

A fine, meaty fanzine. More than worth the money. Worth an EIGHT-AND-A-HALF.

SANDVORM #4; 20¢; Bob Vardeman, P.O. Box 11352, Albuquerque, N.M. 87112.

Even better than #3. Up to SEVEN.

HOOP#3; 5/\$1.; Jim Young, 1948 Ulysses St., N.E., Minne-apolis, Minn. 55418.

Up and coming. Better at this stage than the old PSY ever was, at #3, that is. Hmm...a SIX+

SF WEEKLY #214-225; 12/\$1.,25/\$2.; Andrew Porter, 24 East 82nd St., New York, N.Y. 10028.

Prompt, accurate s-f and fannews. A MUST HAVE FAN-ZINE. NINE.

FIRST DRAFT, a frequent personal-zine rides along with SF VÆEKLY. It is an interesting, always readable treat. SEVEN.

SPECULATION #s 15, 16, 17; 30¢, 3/\$1.; Peter R. Weston, 81 Trescott Road, Northfield, Birmingham 31, UK.

A fine sf review magazine. Another MUST GET. NINE.

RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY, Vol. III, No. 1; 50¢, \$1.50 per year. Leland Sapiro, Box 40, University Station, Regina, Canada.

Serious criticism, analysis and comment on sf in a "respectable" photo-offset format. NINE.

SCIENCE FICTION TIMES #s 450-453; 30¢; SF TIMES, INC., P.O. Box 216, Syracuse, NY 13209. Monthly.

A more ambitious and complete news—review zine than SF WEEKLY. More formal and complementary to SF WEEKLY and RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY. You should have this one, too. NINE.

GLAMDRING #s 4,5,6; ;5¢, 2/25¢, trade; Bruce Pelz, Box 100, 308 Westwood Plaza, Los Angeles, Cal. 90024.

For fan historians and completists; a complete list of everything published in the fan world. <u>NINE</u>.

AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #13; 40¢, 6/\$2.40; John Bangsund, 19 Gladstone Ave., Borthcote N.16, Melbourne, Australia.

Interesting adult comment. Top notch production.

Another one to get. NINE.

((A general comment on my ratings: These zines are judged on the basis of editorial intent and execution. As in GLAMDRING: Pelz's intent is to simply publish as complete as possible a listing of fan publications, for historical record: He does it accurately and legibly.

In ALPHA Ed Smith intends to edit and publish a fine genzine. He fails in all areas after 22 issues. Also, he must be judged in comparison to others. He rates a poor FOUR.))

OSFAN #s 32,33; 15¢, 12/\$1.50; Hank Luttrell, 49B Donnally Hall, Blair Group, Columbia, Mo. 65201.

News and reviews of sf and fan publishing. Neat and brief. <u>EIGHT</u>.

PARANOIA AND SCIENCE FICTION, a letter symposium by Alexei Panshin, James Blish and Joanna Russ; 50¢; an SFWA publication; Roger Zelazny, 4920 Westhills Road, Baltimore, Maryland 21229.

Interesting but overpriced. EIGHT.

HAVERINGS #s 30, 31; 6/\$1.; Ethel Lindsay, Courage House, 6 Langley Ave., Surbiton, Surrey, UK. Am. Agent: Redd Boggs, Box 1111, Berkeley, Calif. 94701.

A fanzine reviewzine. Highly competent. EIGHI.

SCOTTISHE #46; 4/\$1.; Ethel Lindsay; same addresses as above. An enjoyable semi-genzine. Mostly Ethyl and letters. <u>FIGHT</u>.

THE PULP ERA #68; 50¢, 5/32.25; Lynn Hickman, 413 Ottokee St., Wauseon, Ohio 43567.

Devoted to the old pulp magazines. SEVEN AND A HALF.

THE JOM BIBLIOPHILE #9; trade, comment; Len Moffatt, 9826 Paramount Blvd., Downey, Calif. 90240.

Devoted to John D. MacDonald and his writings. EIGHT.

OCYMET #2; 25¢; OCYMET, 9 Sheridan Ave., Kearny, N.J. 07032. This has a juvenile aura. THREE.

((And STILL there are fanzines piled high...))

STUFF & FANAC

BY JOHN D. BERRY

I have news of another addition to the list of old fanzines that have been revived recently: Richard Bergeron is chanting incantations and waving tanna leaves and bringing WARHOON back from the dead. There have been rumors about this floating around, but I wasn't sure exactly how much substance they had until I wrote Dick and asked him. The letter I have sitting next to my typewriter now gives the details of the revival. Wrhn 23 is mostly stenciled, the cover is printed, and the issue will be ready within two weeks, writes Dick as of Thursday, May 2.

This is the second time WARHOON has been revived. and the third surge of fannish publishing for editor Bergeron. Dick first became active in fandom around the middle of 1950, and the first issue of WARHOON was published in January 1952--the same month as QUANDRY 17, which places it firmly in the womb of Sixth Fandom, as Q reached 30 issues before it folded. I don't know anything about its first incarnation other than what Dick has told me, but it was evidently considered a fine fanzine, for when he revived it in 1960 it was gre eted with great enthusiasm. He had been virtually gafia for the preceding five years, except for a little illustrating, mainly in G.M. Carr's GEMZINE, which established him as an excellent fan artist. The impetus to resume publishing was to put a fanzine into the gala 50th mailing of SAPS, since he was on the waiting list at the time. I'll quote Terry Carr's review of the revival issue from his survey of the top fanzines of 1960 in the FANNISH III:

"#6, January, featured a gorgeous kromekote stock wraparound cover with a cartoon of Roscoe done by a nonfan friend and professionally printed. Inside the folder was a 20-page issue with absolutely no illustrations, professionally mimeographed. 13 of those pages were superb ramblings by Bergeron in a precise, carefully-written style which still retained many touches of humor--very reminiscent of the styles of such as Boggs, Warner and Speer. Most of the subjects were fannish (William Atheling Jr.'s writings, comments on sf movies and tv presentations, Seventh Fandom, etc.), but there were also remarks about the Cuban situation and the then-coming presidential election which foreshadowed the heavily-political caste the magazine was soon to take on. The last 7 pages were SAPS mailing comments, quite well done."

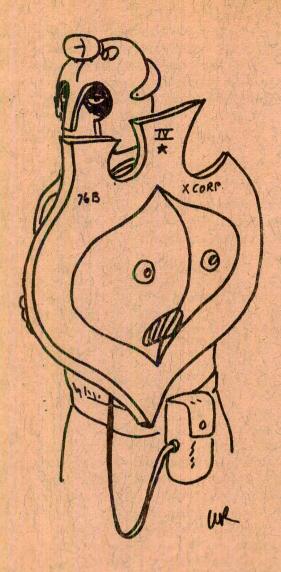
Dick put out three more issues that year, one in each SAPS mailing; at first he kept it slim, but with #9 he let it go and it hit 38 pages and developed into a thriving genzine. WARHOON won 10th place on the FANAC poll of the top fanzines of 1960, and Bergeron established himself as fine a writer and editor as he

was an artist. The contents of the zine seemed to balance themselves pretty well between fannish and political subjects, and the contents page featured such writers as Dick Eney, Russell Chauvenet. Greg Calkins, John Berry, and Walt Willis (whose renouned collumn, "The Harp That Once Or Twice," which had appeared in QUANDRY and OOPSLA!, began appearing in Wrhn then). During the first year, at least, the fanzine featured no illustrations, because Bergeron said that drawing came easily to him, whereas writing was more of a challenge to fill his fanzine with.

The last issue of WARHOON to be seen by human eye was #22, which snuck sporadically onto the scene a couple of years ago, to the surprise of everyone.

Now WARHOON 23 is ready, heralding a new reincarnation for this fine old fanzine. By the time you are reading this, the issue will probably be in the mails. According to Dick's letter, the new issue is 40 pages long, and I have a copy of the cover with a Rotslerish cartoon on purple paper and a gold seal. (A gold seal also appeared on the cover of the first issue of the earlier revival.) Dick has been keeping fairly quiet about the details of the issue until he had it almost ready, for fear that gafia or other catastrophe would strike in the middle of his plans. I'm happy that he says my comments on revived fanzines in PSY #23 helped spark him to actually go ahead; this column has accomplished a Good Deed already (does this mean I have to take the Boy Scout oath?). Perhaps the met important thing in Wrhn 23 will be, of all things, the revival of Willis' "The Harp That Once Or Twice." Evidently Walt decided to begin contributing actively again in a traditional place; Dick says there is five pages of Willisania in this issue, and I'm sure everyone reading it will be glad that Willis has returned. There is also Walter Breen making a comeback as a fanzine writer with an 8page article on psychedelic sf and the themes that Phil K. Dick weaves in and out of his stories; Bob Lowndes also resumes his Wrhn column, with an anaysis of Ballard and Delany, especially the latter; and, as Dick says, "William Atheling writes about James Blish (of all people) which I love after SaM's violent attack on him for writing about himself." Bergeron's editorial includes remarks about the Hugo trophy design and "Secrets of a Fan Artist," and there are FAPA mailing comments and even a lettercolumn. He didn't say anything about artwork, but I hope he will put in his own stuff, and I would guess the schedule will follow the quarterly FAPA mailings.

WARHOON is certainly a happy sight on the fannish horizon, especially if it harbingers a revival of Walt Willis's fan writing. I have a feeling that somewhere there is a great big machine, with a whole bunch of little men in worn propellor beanies flitting around it, which cranks out new issues of fanzines that died years ago according to some schedule known only to Ghu. First ODO, then PSYCHOIIC, more recently SHAGGY, and now WARHOON. Well, if Ied White can find the stencils for VOID 29, I know Greg Benford would like to put it out....



IT'S TIME-BINDING TIME AGAIN: The last instalment of this column appeared in 1963 in CRY OF THE NAMELESS. I was rather proud of the column, but a variety of circumstances nipped it while it was still budding. An editor did some cutting to fit the column to space. My personal life underwent considerable upheaval that cut back all my fanac. And, shortly thereafter, CRY folded. The last-named item was not, I think, caused by either of the first two.

In its first incarnation, the Bludgeon did not really find its true identity. This time around I hope it will.

Because I have this thing about fannish traditions and time—binding (and because PSV brings them out in me), I might mention that an imfluence on the direction of this column will be the late Vernon McCain's "Padded Cell" column in earlier PSYs. I don't know how direct the influence will be, but I'd like to dedicate the higher moments in this column (if there are any) to Vernon, because — ten years after his death — I still miss him.

In fact, I'd like to talk a little about Vernon.

THE

I never met him. He once described himself as of average height or less and overweight. This did not fit my mental picture of him. In my mind I saw Vernon as a tall, middle-aged man with a lively mind and a smoking pipe held in his hand for gesturing punctuations to his speech. He was the kind of fan I wanted to model myself upon in those days: literate, critical, fair, willing to muckrake for a good cause, able to be serious without being sercon, fannish in orientation. He was also a jazz fan and even more a fan of Duke Ellington than I was.

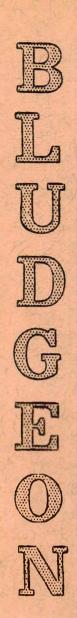
I never met him, so I never really had the opportunity to lose my mental picture of him. He once said he grew up in a town where the water was naturally full of fluorides (he was rebutting someone in FAPA who seemed certain water fluoridation was a Dirty Commie Plot), and that while his teeth were abnormally healthy, they were stained brown. I never saw that either.

I talked with him only once. He called while I was out and left a message with my mother. I called back. He was working in the northwest for Western Union in a capacity which eluded me, and he left the number of an operator in a small town in Washington State. He wanted to know if I had facilities to play 78's. I did. A few days later, in the mail, came a 78 rpm copy of an exceedingly rare Duke Ellington record: "Merry Christmas, 1946" on the Steiner-Davis private label — apparently an off-the-air FM radio recording of "Frankie and Johnny" by Ellington. Vernon had accidentally stumbled on two copies in his never-ending search for old records. It was characteristic of him that he bought both

I was running a sort of super mimeo service at that time, running off fanzines for half the fans in the DC area, and several outside the area. The fanzine I was proudest to run off was Vernon's FAPAzine, BIRDSMITH. In fact, I'd first gotten into correspondence with him when he advertised for someone for the task; Shelby Vick had gone gafia.

and thought to send one to me.

Each quarter, a box of stencils would arrive in the mail. The stencils were that ghastly variety that held their pliofilms (still attached) with little red gummed—tapes that were mounted on the back of the stencil head—



ing and grabbed the films through punched holes. The films were horribly gummed by them, and stuck to everything, and the stencils (which I saved after running) stuck to each other. Messy. Most of the stencils were typed on teletype machines, all caps, although Vernon occasionally used what must have been (judging by the results) an old pica portable. As soon as the stencils arrived, I sat down to read them on my light—scope. I read them again as I ran each off, and usually a third time after assembling half the copies.

I was a fledgling jazz fan in those days, my collection sparse and spotty. Vernon must have been ten years older than I was, and I sometimes wonder at his patience in writing so often and so voluminously to me, answering all my questions in painstaking detail. He turned me on to DOWN BEAT and METRONOME, and gave me discographies and Lord knows what—all else. His letters were often ten pages long, and mine usually equalled them in length. He wrote to me without condescension, and his letters were fascinating.

I wish I could recall how I heard of his death. Someone wrote me a letter. I don't remember. It was in 1958, in the spring. He'd had an appendectomy, and died of the complications of peronitus. It was sudden, and without (for me) any warning. The irony was strong: he'd just gotten engaged, and would've been married within days if he'd lived.

I had five pages written of a reply to his latest letter.

I never finished it.

IN MEMORIUM: I didn't start out to write that. But this column is writing itself, and it isn't at all what I intended.

Vernon McCain was the first friend I had to die. It was a shock. The shock was tempered by the fact that I'd never met him. But 1958 was a bad year for friends and acquaintances. A lot of pretty good people died that year. It was the Year of the Jackpot. And, as far as I was concerned, the capstone was Kent Moomaw's suicide. I knew Kent. I was one of his best friends.

It was a lousy year.

It was also the year that I met (at the Solacon) John Champion. John and I took to each other, the way people do when they discover instantly they're friends. It seems like every con has at least one meeting like that. In 1962, John was killed in a California highway accident.

fans travel a lot. They expose themselves to highway hazards perhaps more than many mundanes. The highway death statistics make chilling reading, and, Ralph Nader to the contrary notwithstanding, most of those accidents are caused by people, not cars. It's as a minister I once knew remarked: "You have to have faith to live in this world. Every time you take your car out on the road, you must have faith that the driver approaching you will not swerve his car into your lane. And he lives by the faith that you too will not threaten his life."

I guess it's surprising more fans haven't been caught up by those deathroll statistics.

When Harlan Ellison phoned me, Saturday night, January 27th, to tell me he'd just heard of Ron Ellik's death, I was stunned. Neither of us said much. I recalled that Ron had been at my New Year's Eve party only a few weeks earlier. Ierry Carr and Jim Caughran had been there, too. For a few hours it was Berkeley Revisited.

I never knew Ron really well. But I had known Ron since 1953, when we each published the first issues of our fanzines. I think I always envied Ron a little for his sharpness of wit, and his obvious ability to successfully organize his life to suit himself and his ambitions. Ron always struck me as someone in Control. I've lived a pretty meandering life, and perhaps it's only a case of the grass being greener. At the party I was asking him about his writing ambitions. He and Steve Tolliver had collaborated on a Man From Uncle book.

"Am I going to have to worry about competition from you, too, Ron?" I asked him, kiddingly.

"Not for now. I just don't have any more ideas," he replied.

I quess not.

I'm not going to write a eulogy to Ron Ellik. People who cry in public over a person's death bother me, and maybe they bother you, too. I'll just say, I knew Ron, and he'll be missed. Others can fill in all the little ironies.

CONVENTION BIDS: Perhaps you ought to take a break.

Read the letter section. Let the foregoing recede to the back of your mind. It's not really
appropriate to follow with this topic without a break!

I'm pulling this column back on it's proper track again,

and it requires making a mental gearshift.

Convention bidding is a rotten business. I don't think you tend to find this out for sure until you're mixed up in it. It is easily the worst part of putting on a con. After you win your bid it's mostly coasting.

A few years ago, we had it worked out better. In Pitts-burgh, in 1960, only one bid was presented: Seattle's. Seattle won, no contest. In Seattle, a year later, Chicago won the same way. In Chicago, Washington DC was the only bidder. In Washington, the Oakland Pacificon bid stood alone. And in Oakland, the only serious bid was from London.

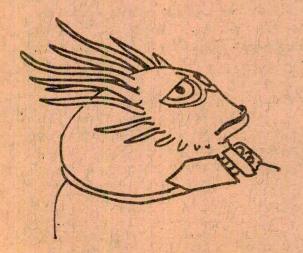
And there the happy train stopped.

The warning had been sounded in Jay Kay Klein's DIS—CON CONVENTION ANNUAL. Ostensibly a photo-volume, this tooklet had an article in it by Bob Madle in which Madle strongly encouraged competitive bidding. Cons just were—n't any fun anymore, Madle said. He seemed to regard the Rotation Plan as the villain. Let's scuttle the rotation plan and get back to those fun old smokey rooms, Bob said. You could almost see him rubbing his hands together at the very thought of it.

Bob wasn't alone. Bob is an old-time, old-guard fan. He's a member of First-Fandom. He has a lot of friends who feel just as he does. They're the types who should be in the Rotary or the Lion's Club, fighting over who'll be president next year. They love to wrangle. They enjoy being petty king-makers.

Among Bob's confederates were Klein himself (you didn't have to work very hard to figure his purpose in commissioning the article; anyway, Jay Kay has never been reticent about his beliefs) and Dave Kyle. Klein and Kyle were the major individuals behind the out-of-rotation Syracuse bid against Cleveland. They just wanted to pep up the bidding, they said.

Sure. So Ben Jason had to go to London to present his bid. I have no idea how much winning that bid cost Ben and his fellow committee-men, but they spent a lot on



liquor, and the fare alone to London wasn't cheap. Dave would've gone anyway; he can still hitchhike Air Force planes, and he is much wealthier than Ben.

Since then, there's been spirited bidding for each con. And a lot of money has gone down the drain while the acrimony continues to mount.

We spent maybe a thousand bucks, maybe twice that (depending on whether you figure in our travel expenses to as many regionals as we could get to) winning the bid for the NyCon3. We had to fight not only our announced competitors (Baltimore, Boston, Syracuse) but ballot-stuffing, and a Tricon committee which favored one of our competitors. I have always attributed our win to Clean Living and Good Luck. And maybe Jack Gaughan's NYCON COMICS.

We will ignore the controversy surrounding the bidding at the NyCon, and say only that a lot of people got pretty worked up about it, and that a lot of feelings were hurt which needn't have been.

And now another fight is shaping up.

I will make no bones about my sympathies. I kept my mouth shut until the NyCon3 was over, but I am supporting St. Louis, for most of the usual reasons. I am not doing this because I want to manipulate the bid, but simply because I have been appalled by the way Columbus has been conducting its bid. I had all this out in private correspondence with Larry Smith, but the kid has so deluded himself about what he is doing that I don't think more than one word in three has sunk in.

A month or two ago, I had a phone call from a midwestern fan, who asked to remain nameless. A member of the Columbus committee, he told me, had gotten soused at a party, and had delivered himself of some pretty strange stuff. He thought I ought to know, since this Columbus fan (call him Fan X for convenience; he is not larry Smith) was spouting off about me.

Ted White, the story went, is the real villain of this year's convention bidding. Ted White is a trouble—maker, and out to do Columbus dirt. Columbus, Fan X stated, was going to Get Ted White. Win or lose, Columbus was going to do that. Ted White was going to be Finished, he was going to be Dead In Fandom. They'd see to that.

"How?" he was asked.

Well, he said, this is just hypothetical, see, but we could maybe plant some faked-up photographs with a few credit bureaus, or bribe somebody in one of them. This has been done before, Fan X said.

Fan X was in his cups, sure. But when he was asked about his statements the next day, presumably sober, he reitterated that it could be done, although he was of course speaking only hypothetically.

Fan X also stated that he was the real Power Behind the Throne in the Columbus bid, Larry Smith being only a figure-head.

A little curious as to how Smith would take this news, I wrote to Smith and told him.

Back came two letters. One was from Smith. Smith chose to believe his friends to those he knew less well. He regarded Fan X as a capable man and an asset to his bid.

Fan X also wrote. His letter blubbered on a good bit, but reitterated that his credit-bribing idea was "purely hypothetical."

But he didn't deny it.

That's pretty weird, isn't it?

Ray Fisher asked me, "Are all convention bids like this?" I wanted to tell him I didn't think so. Not all convention bids are run by adolescents whose experience in fandom dates all the way back into 1966. But then I stopped short, remembering a fan named Dave Vanderwerf, whose incredible bidding speech for Boston caused Boston to lose on the first ballot at the Iricon. Vanderwerf simply stood up there and smeared me, with flat lies which he bloody well knew were lies. So did nearly everyone else as it turned out.

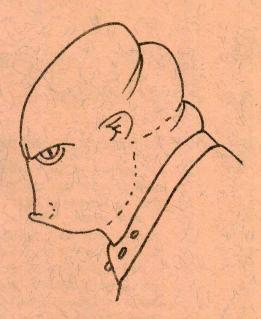
Then there was Fan Y, who thinks He's the Secret Master of Fandom. One Sunday afternoon last spring, in the company of half a dozen witnesses, including Jack Gaughan, he assured me, "Ted, I'm backing Columbus. Columbus is going to get the bid. And Roger Zelazny is going to be the quest of honor."

"Why don't you bid for your own city, and be open about it, if you want Roger to be GoH so badly?" I asked.

"Ied, Roger will be GoH in 1969, no matter what," he said, bleerily. It was barely one o'clock. He was well lit and bragging. "If Columbus bombs out, it'll be St. Louis. Or maybe some other city. But Roger will be GoH, because I will be supporting the winner, and I will make sure of that."

Fan Y knows who he is, and must be aware that he has been a painful embarrasment to Roger Zelazny throughout this entire affair. Fan Y is also chicken, and has since denied these statements when he was confronted with them. But he made them, and he knows it. So do we.

You sit around, and you listen to these alcoholic dimwits plotting their grandiose big-frog-little-pond plans for just so long, and then you get disgusted. You get tired of hearing them blither, and you get a little frightened of the notion of a worldcon in their hands. The old king-makers may love back-room ruses, but they are at least responsible individuals, and can be trusted with a Con... I think. This new breed is so irresponsible that it's



scarey.

What was wrong with the idea of preselecting one bidding site and letting it run unopposed? The bidder spends relatively little out-of-pocket money on the bid, and has almost full resources to bring to bear on the con itself. It worked for Seattle, Chicago, DC... Why not simply return to a way which proved itself much freer of friction? For instance, Columbus fandom, if it is intelligent, would be best-advised to drop out, saving both them and St. Louis much bidding money, and to start planning for four or five years hence, when accumulated experience and wisdom among the actual bidding committees might be assumed more mature, and when their generosity in stepping aside now might reasonably win them an uncontested bid.

And the east coast should begin making plans for a bidding site for 1971 (if not 1970), ironing out who will step forward for that year and who for the next time around. Hell, here's a whole new area for the back-room fanpoliticians to play around in, wheeling and dealing to their heart's content.

Or is a return to a way of less strife impossible to ask?

+=+=+

NEXT ISSUE:

A cover by Richard Bergeron
"New World Coming"——a column by Norman
Spinrad.

"Jonah"—faan fiction by Larry Stark
Artwork by Vaughn Bode and the regulars
PLUS, I expect, the columns of Ted White
and John D. Berry.

AND all the departments.

DELUSIONS

ELLD OF

HAS SUCCESS SPOILED ROCK CAMPBELL?

People have been complaining for literally decades that John W. Campbell has lost his touch as an editor, that ANALOG is going steadily downhill. These criticisms can look a bit foolish when you make out a list of the top stories published by Campbell each year; but the publication of ANALOG 5 (Doubleday, \$4.95) made up of Campbell's own choice from his magazine's 1965 offerings, suggests that there may really be a slump to worry about.

If there's a single outstanding flaw in the nine stories presented here, it's in the confusion of simple caricature with real science fictional extrapolation, of data about technological hardware and procedure with legitimate science.

John Brunner's Coincidence Day, for instance. It has an intriguing idea: it's set in a future zoo whose residents, coming from many different planets, are used to a wide variety of sleep cycles, so on any given day perhaps only 50% of them will be awake. A day during which 80% or more of them will be up and about is called a Coincidence Day, and this story is about the ultimate Coincidence Day, when all of them will be awake. But this interesting gimmick turns out to have little to do with the story: Brunner gets sidetracked into a broad farce about a paper-thin caricature of the crusading do-gooder, who says things like, "Are you one of the dastards who tear these miserable creatures from the busom of their parent worlds and make them a spectacle for idle heartless thrill-seekers?"

Another example: <u>Countercommandment</u> by Patrick Meadows, in which the computors which control the United States and "Sinosoviet" missile systems both refuse to respond to the pushing of the buttons for World War III

—because each computor has been fed, as storage data, all the documents which each side holds to be most sacred, so instead of sending off their missiles they quote, "All men are entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" and "Thou shalt not kill" and so forth. Only one cut above this one is Gordon Dickson's Computors Don't Arque, featuring a computor system which mistakenly bills a man for a book he didn't order from his book club, then sues him through automated courts which make a further mistake on his card, with the result that he's ultimately executed for the murder of one Robert Louis Stevenson. Caricatures of computors, it seems to me, are even less funny than caricatures of people.

As for the preoccupation with technological hardware and procedure, there's Joe Poyer's Mission "Red Clash", a standard adventure story of a U.S. highaltitude reconnaissance pilot trying to escape from the Russians after he's uncovered a very important secret of theirs. This is well told, except when it churns to a halt to present totally irrelevant data like this:

"The hull was stepped aft of midpoint for cruising between fifty and sixty knots. High pressure ram pumps forced air into the steps, creating air bubbles that merged at high speeds, reducing the friction coefficent by some forty per cent. Above sixty-five knots, a large bow hydroplane and two smaller modified hydrofoils aft, were extended, and the ship roared out of and above the waves at nearly ninety knots. She was fitted primarily for long range and roving ASW work at the moment, but was more than capable of replacing an entire fleet of conventional ships...."

And so forth and so on; I emphasize this quote because the ship described has no important role in the story. Nor is the quote uncharacteristic of this book: at one point in the Meadows story already mentioned, I accidentally turned over two leaves instead of one, and didn't realize I'd missed anything until I was looking through the story again and discovered I'd bypassed two pages of gratuitous narration on the chain of command and procedure for Pushing the Button.

All of this is not to say that the anthology is worthless. There is, for one thing, a lovely James H. Schmitz story of alien life-forms in <u>Balanced</u>
<u>Ecology</u>; for another, Mack Reynolds' tongue-in-cheek tale of an aged and occasionally doting Sherlock Holmes

BOOK REVIEWS

in <u>The Adventure of the Extraterrestrial</u>; and Jonathon Blake MacKenzie's <u>Overproof</u> does have a provocative situation in a world where some genial tentacled beings keep completely humanoid, but completely unintelligent, creatures as food animals.

But the selection still won't match the top stories Campbell published in 1941, 1949, or even 1961. Whether or not it means ANALOG is slipping, 1965 doesn't seem to have been a vintage year for that magazine.

--- Terry Carr

NEW WORLDS, Number 178 and 179. Monthly.
11 Goodge Street, London, W.1, England. 75¢ - \$7.00 year.
Edited by Mike Moorcock.

It was recently reported in S.f. WEEKLY #223 that NEW WORLDS had ceased publication due to a problem with a distributor who felt some four-letter words in the third installment of the serial, BUG JACK BARRON, might create legal problems.

But Norman Spinrad, the author of BUG JACK BARRON, wrote me recently (April 7) with the news that NEW WORLDS will continue publishing. The Arts Council of Great Britain has reaffirmed its support (and subsidy) and the "bad press" received by the distributor made it change its mind about not handling NEW WORLDS unless it could see galleys for the next issue first.

Had NEW WORLDS not continued it would have been a blow to science fiction, because NEW WORLDS is where it's at now for experimental writing in this field. Nothing like it is being published in this country.

I'd like to thank Fritz Leiber at this point for the loan of these two issues of the magazine for reading and review.

The major interest for me was BUG JACK BARRON. First, the style—how to describe it? It's hip and electronic and free and razorsharp and tiring. Along about the end of the second installment I was wearying of too—long, too—repetitive interior monologs. Each character thinks and thinks and thinks... But the thoughts are real and honest.

But that is a minor flaw. It might not be a flaw at all when considered in the light of a reading of the whole book. This review is therefore tentative and highly preliminary.

The main point I want to put across is that BUG JACK BARRON is mainstream quality writing on a level with LIMBO by Wolfe and AN AMERICAN DREAM by Mailer.

The book, when it is finally published in this country by Avon (who just purchased pocketbook rights and agreed to print it uncut) will hit "normal" science fiction like a bombshell. After BUG JACK BARRON and DANGEROUS VISIONS there'll be no going back to the "safe" subject matter and the "fit for children" writing dictated now by the magazines and many pocketbook publishers.

I have an idea there will be a polarization of science

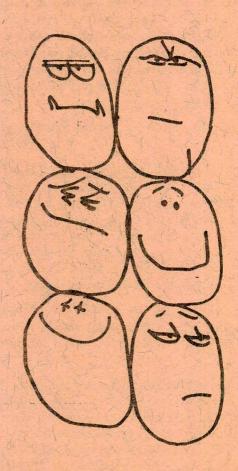
fiction into two sales areas—adult and juvenile. The publishers will have to label their wares "Adult Science Fiction" and let the juvenile stuff fight to survive as best it can for the under 13 year old buyers. The sf magazines may be squeezed out of existence—afraid to be really adult and yet "unfit" for the kids—in a sales no-man's-land.

Back to BUG JACK BARRON. There is sex—honest sex—in the book, but it isn't obscene or pornographic. It's adult: it is treated on an adult level by adult characters. I am talking about attitudes and treatment. Characters talk realistically, they think realistically, and behave realistically. Motivation is honest, gut—true and presented without a veil of "niceness".

Norman Spinrad wrote BUG JACK BARRON for literate, college educated adults...and literate, intellectually hungry readers of any age.

I can't resist quoting a sample. From the first chapter:

"Aw—" Don began to say—and the moment stood



still for Sara, knowing what he was going to say, the three words, the exact cynical intonation, having been flayed by those words dozens of times a week for years, wincing, dying a little each time she heard those three last syllables, knowing that Don Sime would now never ball her, not with a billion screaming Chinese holding her down, not ever. Sooner would she make it with a gila monster or Benedict Howards than give herself to a man who said those three words on a Wednesday night between 8 and 9 p.m., and by the little death induce the grand mal deja vu, images of his face on the television screen carefully touselled over his face on the long-ago blue-flowered pillow carelessly neat his beard blue and stubbly...

Don Sime, unheeding, and, she saw, an unheeding, rotten swine by his thoughtless reflex reaction, nevertheless said the three magic words, the outsider's inside expression, that shrivelled to death for an instant the insides of Sara.

"Aw," said Don Sime, "bug Jack Barron."

The story—line developed in these first two install—ments involves Jack Barron, ex—radical, now a highly successful tv personality who runs a live interview show of immense influence on the public...Sara, his divorced wife who is still hung on him...Benedict Howards, head of the foundation for Human Immortality, who needs Barron's influence to help ram an important foundation bill through Congress.

Heretofore the Foundation had been freezing people when they died (for a fat price) and storing their bodies pending research which would find the cure for their terminal disease. But Howards' scientists have found the key to <u>real</u> immortality. Howards has just come through that operation. He is now immortal and is potentially the most powerful man on earth....

I'm looking forward to reading more of this book.

When I began Auto Ancestral Fracture by Brian Aldiss and C.C. Shackleton in NEW WORLDS #178, I knew immediately I was reading experimental writing, but I didn't realize how experimental until I came upon printer's errors that I soon realized were not errors; they had been written that way and were, to boot, word games and puns! And the deeper I sank into the story the more monstrous, unnerving and astonishing the puns and word ploys became.

The story is one of a series about a post—war world recovering from almost universal bombing by psycho—chemicals. The effects have been culturally and psychologically shattering.

In NEW WORLDS #179, Aldiss and Shackleton have another story in this series, titled Ine Serpent of Kundalini which tells of Charteris, a man whose mind has been distorted by a permanent psychedelic hallucination: he is actually on a motor trip north from London and "sees" discarded selves draped on fences, roads, railings...as alternate paths into the future are explored and found wanting. He dallies in a house for too long, becomes nervous, realizes a sense of urgency, rushes out...and sees himself driving away in his car. He is now a discarded self, a blind alley, and dies.

In The Serpent of Kundalini the style is straight, com-

prehensible, uncluttered, clear and concerned with telling a story; it is unobtrusive.

In <u>Auto Ancestral Fracture</u>, in which Charteris is the central character again, the style is very difficult and is the real focus of the writing, not the story. The authors in this effort <u>write psychedelically</u>; where in their other story they wrote <u>about</u> a situation in the standard of manner, in this story they write in the situation—they so submerge themselves in the psycho-chemical altered world they have created that it is a chore to read them. The story does not offer enough by itself to sustain interest and justify the extra concentration required to encompass the difficult prose. The story is secondary; the style, dazzling and swampy (and in its way marvelous) is primary.

To illustrate:

Beat groups flowered and ceded. Some of the girls rinsed udderclothes and hung them on lines between bumpers while others highjinxed the boys or got autoerotic in the dicky seat. A level thousand drivniks locusted in the stony patch, mostly British, and the word spread inspired to the spired city.

There the life pendulum ticked upside down and the time was rape for legendermain: for the hard heads and the business hearts found that their rhythms now worked only to a less punctilious clock and speculation had another tone. War had turned the metrognome off chime in general pixilation.

And:

Waves of reality came and went, breaking over him, drenching him. He was aware he was going yet at moments the streets appeared a transparent rues and he imagined that this was just another mock—up of the quest he had follyed all his life...

And:

And Marta said, "You're chattering your passion into threads Angel cause isn't there enough I mean he can the carnal both twomescence and I don't mound no moral membrane in a threesome and we sort of sisterly!"

So she seemed to flip like a seafouling mam embarked on culling Marta for a frigid and bustless chick while egging her on with premaritimely oaths to reveal what a poutry little shrubby hen-penned canal awaited bushwanking or the semenship of motiongoing loiner under her counterplain and how those specious sulcal locks were just the antartickled coups of man's ambit or if more trapical then merely multi-locked the vaginithmus of panamama!

As you see, a difficult but splendid style. But not a style that is at all commercial; like, you'll never see it in AMAZING.

I've got to mention, briefly, a couple short stories

in these issues that stick in my mind. <u>In Seclusion</u> by Harvey Jacobs is a sardonic, sophisticated fantasy that cops out at the end—a multi-bug-eyed, slithering, hill-sized sea monster with a beautiful movie star in one of it's pseudopods, in love with her, just faunching to absorb her, drops her and lets her go because he's henpecked by a wife monster on the other side of the world. It's hard to explain. You'd really have to read it. But the story sticks in my mind. I <u>liked</u> that monster!

The Square Root of Brain by Fritz Leiber is a small incident of a story which is made memorable by incredible quotes from the Universal American Encyclopedia which I don't believe really exists, but have an uneasy feeling in my entrails that it does....

Brian Aldiss presents the last part of his novel, AN AGE, in NEW WORLDS #178. It is described in a blurb as being about "the relationship between men and time. Edward Bush begins the hunt for his destiny back in time, in the Devonian Era; but it is two hundred million years later—in the Jurassic, at the sign of the Amniote Eqq—that he is galvanized into the course of action which finally lands him in the Carlsfield Institute for Advanced Mental Disturbances." And, "A godlike vision or an infantile fantasy: whichever Bush underwent, the reader must decide for himself."

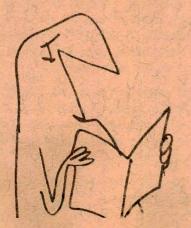
We are given a synopsis of the first parts of the book. The final part reads like a section from a novel of the 1860s. We are given a professor who propounds an elaborate time-reversal theory as it applies to life: when we die we are really being born because time actually is flowing backwards, the opposite of our very faulty perception of it.

The action largely stops while this theory is argued out and his listeners convinced.

The 1860 comparison is probably unfair, for the balance of the book is written in a modern pace and style, and from the synopsis the early chapters sound intriguing.

But I wouldn't buy this book from this sample. I wasn't convinced by the professor that time flows sdrawkcab.

-Richard E. Geis



COMPUTOR WAR By Mack Reynolds —Ace Double Book H-34, 60¢.

In COMPUTOR WAR Mack Reynolds is speaking of current events to us under cover of a short, unsatisfactory science fiction novel with an idiot hero whose only function is to cry "Whaaa?" and provide the plot with a poor excuse for scene changes and a love affair.

What is Reynolds saying? Observe:

McGivern was an Old Hand and bore no awe for Number One-they had been through too much together. He looked full into the face of the other and said, "You are acquainted with my opinions, Your Leadership. I assume you merely wish me to fill them in for these, our Coaids. We have reached the crisis that I warned about a full ten years ago. The age of the computor is upon us. Ultimate automation. Our productive capacity alone is sufficient to supply the whole planet with manufactured goods. Our own land is glutted with them and industry is slowing, sometimes shutting down. As our commodities become increasingly cheaper, tarriff walls are erected abroad to support the more expensive products of homeland industries. A full sixteen minor countries have all but completely forbidden imports from Alphaland.

"If the present socioeconomic system of Alphaland is to continue, we must have both foreign markets and sources of raw materials. If this war is successful, and world government achieved, our only policy can be one of reducing the economies of Betastan and all the neutral lands to pastoral societies. In the future, they can supply agricultural and mineral needs; we must supply all industrial production."

The old man finished significantly. "Otherwise, we shall have an industrial collapse within three months, plus or minus 3.2 days."

And:

"It was true in Iwain's time, and much more so to-day. Given the well disciplined press, given well channeled Iri-D shows and news broadcasts, given a people that have been raised since earliest childhood in the chauvinistic belief that their country is always right, and even if it isn't they should support it—given these, and you can have your war, Jim. Of course if it lasted too long, then there would be reaction. But so long as the man in the street isn't too badly put out, you can have your war, Number One."

We are shown that Alphaland is Capitalist-Imperialist fighting the subversive philosophy of the 'Karlists' who apparently are socialists.

The book ends with the underground Karlists in good position to stage a successful revolution in Alphaland.

E.C. Tubb is a fine journeyman writer of science fiction. DEATH IS A DREAM is a damned good book; a solid, entertaining, thought-provoking, well-written, believable after-the-atomic-war story.

Brad Stevens was dying of cancer. He chose to take

the long cold sleep of suspended animation—and woke up apparently cured in a world recovering from the devastation of atomic war. The society he finds is ruthless: the mass of people believe in reincarnation and live as past selves with total conviction; scavengers search the still radioactive slag—heaps of cities for gold, jewels, valuable metals; men and women mortgage their bodies for money and when they cannot pay the debt are cut up for spare parts which are "banked" by their creditors against the needs of old age and the artificial immortality made, possible by endless organ transplants.

E.C. Tubb has made this future plausible and exciting to know. But it's a future that you probably wouldn't want to visit, much less live in.

I recommend the book. DEATH IS A DREAM alone is worth the 60α .

-- Richard E. Geis

CHOCKY By John Wyndham-Ballantime Book U6119, 75¢.

I can't escape the feeling that this book is a Juvenile, or at best science-fiction-for-parents-who-don't-read-scienc-fiction. The hard-core and even soft-core occasional of reader will know immediately that "Chocky" is an alien entity sitting in the mind of Matthew, the boy, and will read on, expecting the plot to develop.

But it doesn't develop. That's all there is. The story is told from the viewpoint of Matthew's father, who is level—headed and altogether a fine dad. There is a lot of progressive stewing by the parents about the odd behavior of their son, there are domestic scenes, minor crises, and in the end no harm is done anyone.

The book is pleasant to read, innocuous, engaging because Wyndham is a skilled writer, but...I felt cheated.

——Richard E. Geis

LORDS OF THE STARSHIP By Mark S. Geston—Ace Book G-673, 50¢.

The back cover reads: The ship was to be seven miles long, a third of a mile in diameter and have a wing-spread of three and a half miles. It would take two and a half centuries to construct. It's announced purpose: to carry humanity away from its ruined world, from the world that had become a perpetual purgatory.

To build this vast ship would require the undivided activity of an entire nation and would mean carrying out a ruthless program of war and conquest, of annihilation and reconstruction, and of education and rediscovery.

But was this starship really what it was claimed to be? Or was there a greater secret behind its incredible cost—a secret so strange that no man dared reveal it?

It isn't that no man dared reveal the secret, so much as that when any man got close to uncovering it, he was 1

killed.

There are faults in the book—the impression given in the opening chapters that the world described is Earth: the "English" atmosphere (Sir Henry Limpkin...hansom cabs ...greatcoat...castle...iron—shod wheels hitting a pothole...the regimental banner of the 42nd Imperial Hussars) that misleads the reader.

But for all the nit-picks the book is not fatally flawed, not even by its major fault. This is that Geston appears to have bitten off too much story for a small 45,000 word chew, because he has had to compress scenes to sentences and potential chapters to paragraphs.

If he had expanded the book to its natural size he could have created an immensely powerful epic. Especially the awesome fate of the starship and the climactic, alien-orchestrated suicidal battle of man against man could have become perhaps the most memorable narrative of destruction in science fiction.

As it is, the story is fascinating, the ending is gripping, but except for brief moments the individual is lost in the vast 250 year history of the ship's construction.

This is Geston's first book. As an indication of his potential it is highly encouraging. I'm looking forward to his next one.

-- Richard E. Geis

SURVIVAL MARGIN By Charles Eric Maine—Gold Medal R1918, 60¢. This is a world-wide disaster book. This time it's a deadly air-borne mutated virus that starts in China and spreads across the world. There are two types of the virus: BA and AB, mirror opposites; one brings death, the other immunity. Thus half the world's population is doomed to die.

But curiously Maine keeps the virus in the background after the first two pages of the book. It is talked about, worried about, reported, but never of real personal importance to the central characters, Pauline Brant, a virus researcher, and her foreign correspondent husband, Clive Brant.

The virus epidemic is used by Maine to create world-wide chaos in which to stage a socialist revolution in England and European countries when the ruling class goes underground to escape the virus. It is this revolt in England, with battles, capture, hand-to-hand fighting, an escape, which concerns the author most.

Yet the central characters do not effectively come alive. There is nothing unique or "real" about them... except in the last few pages when Clive Brant is condemned to a firing squad by the rebels. He is gut-wrenchingly human as he faces death.

SURVIVAL MARGIN seems a run-of-the-mill effort by Maine. Not a very good book. ——Richard E. Geis

SECTION EIGHT



"Are you <u>sure</u> it's possible to see your reflection in a bowl of hot tomato soup with chocolate cake melted in it?"

F. M. Busby 2852 14th Ave. West Seattle, Wash. 98119

Your system of forwarding unprinted segments of LOCs to appropriate recipients seems to have inapprobriate consequences—when you then print return-comments on unprinted

material. Like (in Bjo's letter in PSY 23, for instance, though it could have happened to anybody, given the system) there are two items that leave me hung-up, since they refer to stuff I wrote that was not printed. Obviously there's no point in the detailed "but what I said was..." routine, since that would take more words than I care to copy or you would care to print. But in future I think it would be a nice idea to give comments on unprinted parts of LOCs the same treatment—that is, just forward them without printing. Much more tidy, fair, etc.

((Sorry about that, Bu≥. And, of course, you're right.))

Like Rick Carter saying I am "so down on STAR TREK that... (I) just name-call". I don't blame anyone fighting ACNeilson for getting a little paranoid, but his evaluation is all wrong there: I am not down on STAR TREK; what I am down on is lousy writing that violates the characterizations on the show. If I did not value those characterizations (we never voluntarily miss the show), why would I give a damn? I did write a little salty for the eyes of anyone suffering from rating-hives, probably. But in the 24 lines (of the LOC) devoted to ST, the only Name-Calling I find is: "...I took Harlan's denunciations of Gene L. Coon as Mister Mediocrity with the grain of salt ... but...". Coon's own ST episode stunk; yes.

Bjo's conjecture that I jumped to conclusions about the BayCon win refered to my noting that Berkeley stole the '68 con the same way Iruman stole the '48 election from Iom Dewey. Since this was written Dec. 18, '67 after I'd seen lots of stuff from Berkeley and Los Angeles and New York and elsewhere, it was hardly a quick leap or a matter of "taking Donaho's word". (Bjo, it is always possible that my conclusions have holes in them, any time. And I do have an opinionated writing style, a lot of the time. And I even Disagree with you on something, now and then. So who's perfect? So what's to bug? The Microcosm, not to mention the real world, is surely big enough for more than one set of opinions: right?)

Lots of great stuff in PSY 23, Dick. Oops; one other thing. I've never had a script or story or outline rejected by STAR TREK. I do have an item for their rejection editor but have not been able to get anyone to tell me the pipeline by which I could get this item before that person's estimable eyeballs for appraisal. Generalities, yes, but no specifics. So I guess the Rejection desk and I will just have to get along without each other.

Rick Norwood Aberdeen-Inverness 505 640 Linden Riverside, Calif. 92507 It really gets me when I hear a fan say, "STAR TREK stinks, a really lousy program...of course I've only watched it two or three times." or "I knew I was-n't going to like STAR TREK and

sure enough, I don't." I can see a group of fans watching the show, each trying to outdo the others in making clever remarks, in pointing out where they cut corners to save money or where the script makes concessions to the mass audience.

It is easy to get a kick out of nitpicking. STARTREK is far from perfect. But it is not only the best S-F show so far, it is the best we are likely to see on television, because if STAR TREK fails, the networks are not likely to try adult S-F again in the forseeable future. The downon-STAR-TREK fans might at least try enjoying the show. Save the criticism for after the program and practice a

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little of that old willing suspension of disbelief. STAR TREK only sketches in the background, leaving a lot to the viewer's imagination. Try filling in the gaps, providing your own internal explanation for the occasional lapses. This becomes a sort of a game, a game which Ted White has been known to play with comic book continuity. And yet when it comes to STAR TREK, Ted not only refuses to play, he insists that it is a stupid game for anyone.

As an example of this game, take your comment in PSY 22, "That a Captain, first Officer and Chief Medical Officer of a star ship would go off to do a midshipman's work is simply incredible." I've left out a few words, but that is the gist of this common criticism.

But, obviously the Enterprise is not organized along the lines of a modern naval vessel. There is no chain of command, very little military formality, and a good deal of personal contact between Kirk and the crew. How does he maintain his authority in a ship isolated from civilization and facing unknown dangers?

He does it, we have seen, by inspiring personal loyalty in the crew. You get the impression that everyone on the Enterprise would give his life for his Captain. Why? Because the Captain never asks a crewman to do anything that he would not do himself. In the present day, the military is impersonal, but in the past there have been cases of Generals who led their troops into battle. Kirk must take the most dangerous assignments himself, and his officers follow his example. Kirk is a star ship Captain because he is best equipped, physically and mentally, to handle himself in a wide variety of circumstances. Who else could beam down to an unknown planet? The soldiers, landing parties and security officers would lack the technical training. They simply obey orders. The scientific personnel, the technicians, repairmen and other buttonpushers, would not be physically equipped to take care of themselves in a strange environment. Finally, the Captain has broad discretion in dealing with unprecedented situations. He is personally responsible for his decisions. He must have first hand information. The crew of the Enterprise handles the routine business of running the ship while the Captain personally handles the dangerous jobs that require his unique talents.

((A good try, Rick, but you strain my quite elastic suspension of disbelief too far, I'm afraid. Firstly, the Enterprise is organized like a modern navel vessel, with obvious formality on the bridge and elsewhere except in private or special circumstances. Kirk's "personal contact" with the crew is almost totally limited to his fellow officers. The Captain taking all the dangerous jobs might go in a small scout ship operation, but in a star ship with hundreds in the crew? I should think in a normal year Star fleet Command would have to replace dozens of star ship Captains...unless they have the lead in a ty series.

It is simply impossible, I suppose, to expect a tv series to have anything but a tenuous relationship to reality. Westerns, Detectives, situation comedies...all are simply fantastic. Complaining of their lack of plausibili—

ty is itself unrealistic...as is trying to justify and excuse the tv "reality" which is inexcuseable. Iv-land is a special never-never land where obvious stupidities, inconsistencies, implausibilities and BAD WRITING is the norm.

Sf fans stew about STAR IREK, pro and con, because we are concerned with science fiction. But in the area of tv sf we are idealistic fools. In a very real way LOSI IN SPACE is a superior program to STAR IREK. There is little pretense of seriousness and "reality" in LOSI IN SPACE.

We're both wrong, Rick: you for defending the indefensible, and me for complaining that shit isn't gold.

The only real and honest things on tv are the major sports shows and the news...and sometimes I wonder about the news.))

((Now let's go on to your comments on magazine and New Thing sf.))

Ied White makes a very good point when he says that a bad story should not hurt the sales of a magazine in which it appears. ANALOG regularly publishes bad stories and it has by far the largest circulation in the field, due, I believe, to the almost flawless production. ANALOG makes the other magazines, with their frequent typos, cheap paper and sloppy layouts, look amateurish.

Also, ANALOG is always selling itself. Campbell convinces his readers that he is giving them insights into the secret ways of scientists that no one else dares to print. For some reason, the scientists seem to lap it up, while the non-scientists read in wide-eyed wonder. The other magazines have no pretense of having anything to tell you about reality.

Each sf mag aims at a different type of readership.

ANALOG readers are usually interested in science. F&SF aims at the literary crowd. IF goes after the adventure lovers with a sort of gosh—wow attitude, which fandom seems to relish. I suspect that the circulation of a magazine jumps when it pulls in the readers who usually follow one of the other magazines, rather than when it attracts readers who do not read the magazines at all. This would suggest that all of the sf mags might profit by carrying ads for magazines of other companies, but I suspect that the technicalities of publishing would make this impractical.

I read DRAGON IN THE SEA three times, and enjoyed it each time, so I can hardly agree that it is unreadable. I would offer detailed comments, but the last time I read it was over five years ago. I think I would agree with Harlan that it is a gear—and—grommet story. That is a kind of story that interests me.

Alas, Harlan, as much as I admire your New Thing, I deplore your standards of criticism, which imply that the New Thing is the Only Thing.

You seem to want to cleave Science Fiction into Speculative Fiction and Technical Fiction, and make it blasphemy to mention Ray Bradbury and Roger Zelazny in the same breath with Hal Clement and Larry Niven. You ask that fiction be tied to reality. Putting aside pure fantasy, which is a different breed of cat, I agree that science fiction should face reality on all fronts. But the laws of physics are as real as the facts of sex and the future is shaped by physical as well as psychological reality. It is unreal to isolate men in a space station and not have human conflicts develop. It is equally unreal to have one man and one woman repopulate the entire world with their descendents. The first you observe to be impossible. The second is impossible only in the light of the laws of genetics. Personal experience is a good basis for a story, but technical knowledge can give the story structure and authority. Science fiction is at its best when technical problems and human problems interact, as they do in BEYOND THIS HORIZON, GLIDE PATH, MISSION OF GRAVITY and FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON. Brains and guts, Harlan, brains and guts.

Kay Anderson 234 Shangri-la NW Albuquerque, N.M. 87107 You, sir, have a clever, sharp, discerning mind. I can tell because most of your views agree with mine. I, too. have noticed that the best STAR TREK episodes take place on the

ship. My all—time favorite was "The Changeling" and it not only was confined to the ship, it had no guest stars, no girls in Theiss costumes of two yards of nylon net and a set of pasties (I like his costumes...it's mere jealousy speaking.), no lovely new sets, and was, I think, the best episode they ever presented. It was good sf, even the science seemed accurate as well as I could glean from my physicist husband's reaction...most of his reaction was to Uhura in a nightgown. But my God when they go off onto strange alien previously—undiscovered planets... Did you see the episode a couple of weeks after the flag—waving one? In the epilog of that one they did some god—waving. I'm not even going to talk about it.

Well, I was going to nominate Ied White for best fan writer last year, but I thought it might be a conflict or something, since he was wielding the con. Maybe this year. He certainly produces the best examples of the James Fenimore Cooper Syndrome that I've ever run across outside the pages of JFC, himself.

Perhaps it's just me, The Dirty Old Lady of the Nameless Albuquerque SF Group, but Ted's statement that "Harlan knows damn well I'm a friend, and that if I disagree with him it doesn't mean I 'hate' him. There's no law—Bjo to the contrary—that says friends must always agree on everything. Hell, even lovers don't." is one that demands a jar of mustard to spread on his foot.

You ask me if I am pretty...well, much has been said about my face, but I've continued to wear it anyway. I'll send you a photo one of these days. Glad you found room for me under you. I enjoyed it.

((Yes, but, Kay, we can't go on meeting like this. Lyn and Carol are getting suspicious.)) Alex Kirs

New York, N.Y.

PSYCHOTIC arrived and, gritting my teeth,
I heroically refrain from emitting an effulgent peal of nostalgia. "Peal" is used deliberately; where conditioned reflex
is concerned, Pavlov's dogs simply aren't
in it; old, tired (and retired) fen, con-

What on earth am I to say? I've had no fan contacts --- other than Dick Ellington-since around 1959 or so, and if too many of the names in your zine are familiar -drearily familiar, that is—the fanzines of my heyday are conspicuous by their absence. Am I to be enthused over the sight of hitherto impeccable trufen squabbling like veriest tyros over-of all silly things-con sites? Shall I clap my hands that Bjo Wells has evolved into a latter-day Gertrude whatzername? That Donaho has acquired a prose style overbearing enough to complement his size? Ought I to delight at the spectacle of Ellison-like a mad dog returning to its vomit-cavorting pompously amid what (considering his very real status) he should long ago have put behind him? Or of Harry Warner Jr. displaying his editorial ineptitude by means of an article which, in the style of blocks falling in slow motion down stairs, moves inevitably from sparkling

fronted with a fanzine, ring like gongs.

Oh God—I was going to say: How horrible it is after ten years to return and find the old planets faithfully in their dusty courses...or something to that effect; but re-reading the above brings nothing to point except that I am, after all, the same old Kirs, dusty and faithful.

surmise to anticlimactic denouement?

White's-if I must, and somehow I feel I must. comment on the zine—article was very interesting, easily the most interesting bit in the book. But he seems to miss an important point, or to have a certain contempt for both readers and writers; is the "involvement" he talks about really preferable—it is certain ly antithetical—to good writing? Must a magazine to survive descend to the area of "personalization" and furnish the readers opportunity (much as, in an exactly parallel relationship, in the fields of leathercraft and woodworking, do kits enabling one to stamp in gold one's initials, or "do-it-yourself") to make their small mark? And is a writer's best work somehow attendant upon the response of his readers, especially if the readers are solicited into such response? Under the criteria of good criticism, letter column comments have exactly the relationship to magazine editing and story writing that initial-stamping and assembly of do-it-yourself kits have to leathercraft and carpentry; no amount of such stamping, no amount of such assembly, prepares the worker to from scratch conceive and create a finished wallet or cabinet. Should it, then, equip him to command the respect or to dictate the direction of the efforts, of the people who do create wallets and cabinets?

been writing too many other people's term papers.

I have for White an idea he might consider and perhaps apply to magazine editing. It is, simply, that all movements, all persuasions, all leagues, campaigns, revolutions, organizations and philosophies today exist not on or out of or because of or in furtherence of their precepts, but of their exact opposites:

Item: the "sexual revolution" is wholly a child of the mass media, catering to the masturbatory desires of their audience;

Item: the racial crisis, "black power" et al, but specifically "black power", arises out of the black man's abject desire to be white;

Item: the "individual-oriented" "philosophical" movements such as the hippies, flower children, psychedelic drug advocates, guru boosters, mod- and unisexwearers, far from rebelling against conformity, are themselves enclaves of the most abject, bigoted, doctrinarian conformism;

Item: the total result of the anti-anti-pornography movement has been to exactly reverse the literary standards of pornography and non-pornography;

Item: the church itself helps promulgate the notion that God is dead.

I will leave it to White to apply the idea and develop any number of—surely—conflicting trains of thought. But, "it is a truism that all magazines go through recognizable stages, from birth, through childhood, adolescence, into adult maturity, and finally develop a hardening of their arteries and gradual senility ... " is untrue. Magazines develop, yes, and reach plateaus and are phased out, and new magazines out of societal necessity or cultural vacuum appear. Invariably there appear those so in tune with the times as to have been inevitable, and extant others imitate, or imitators are born. Does White remember how Road and Track burst upon the scene? Has he noticed that now all automotive (and motorcycle, and aviation) magazines perfectly resemble R&T? Does White realize that only in degree, and in slickness of finish, does Esquire differ from the Realist? (If you find this doubtful, consider this; Esquire today is infinitely closer in content to the Realist than to its initial issues.) Does White know that Argosy, Cavalier and True are foundering in the backwaters in the company of Field and Stream and Sports Afield, while Playboy and its dozens-or hundreds-of imitators clot the newsstands and empty the pockets of countless readers? While Look and-far closer kin to it than to Life—Sports Illustrated reign supreme?

The point is this: Times change, and changed, and interest pointed away from the pulps, so that <u>Fantastic</u> and <u>Amazing</u> and <u>Thrilling Wonder</u> and <u>Planet</u> and <u>Famous Fantastic Mysteries</u> and <u>Weird Tales</u>—and others—fell by the wayside. <u>F&SF</u> and <u>Astounding</u> remained, being in their genre almost unique; <u>Astounding</u> at least because it gave

the appearance of being "modern," F&SF because of sheer excellence. F&SF is no longer "sheer" or excellent; a comparison between a current and an old issue, granted all changes in public taste and styles, would point up that, within the social context, very little if any of any current issue of F&SF is first rank; much of any of the old issues was. And articles? And criticism? And poetry? Of poetry, at least, recent F&SF issues have printed drivel and doggerel; if the old F&SF wasn't exactly Partisan Review, the doggerel it printed was well done and interesting and often brilliant; I still retain in mind snatches of this or that F&SF poem of ten or more years past.

And Astounding/Analog? Elsewhere in the issue, Ellison traces with admirable clarity the—Ellison thinks reprehensible—evolution of the Campbellian ethos. Why do I find it so curious that, of the little reportage I have read lately on the state of s-f mags, Campbell seems the only person not crying Woe!...? Does White realize -and does Ellison?—that Campbell, in a fit of genius, or through having purchased a fit of Mad Ave genius, saw his only course of action clear, and with admirable thoroughness followed it? Has White, or Ellison, looked at the help-wanteds in any big newspaper lately? Have they paid any attention to the reiterated, adumbrated, ubiquitous appeal of Big Business for more and more and more and more ENGINEERS? Do they imagine it is by pure coincidence Campbell decided to make his magazine as much as possible resemble Scientific American?

Jesus H. Christ.

Campbell, given only the continuation of his present policies, has guaranteed himself a steady circulation growth for as long as technology remains (or is thought to be) necessary and/or desireable; from our point of view that is forever. F&SF, aside from what seem timid ventures into the literary equivalent of strobe psychedelia, is stagnant, has been stagnant for a long time. and, being stagnant, is likely to remain so, even to get worse. Almost certainly, unless considerably more courage and a great deal more money-got I know not how, nor from where-are ploughed into the hopeful harvest of (excuse the term; I hate it) "with-it" writers, F&SF will continue as it is, and will die. And, if White had said instead, "it is a truism that all editors go through recognizable stages ... " he would have been much nearer to right. Particularly in the area of reader "involvement"; magazines today fall into two general categories; "mass" books and "specialty" books ... and mass books are almost always the product of committee editorship, while within any specialist category the leading magazine will be the one most reflecting a definite editorial personality. I will not criticize the changing editorship -- I should have said, "the ubiquitously changing editorship"—of F&SF except to say that schiziophrenics do not often make comfortable friends; I will make the point that Analog's greatest threat to survival is Campbell himself; his senility is

demonstrable. Inevitably there will come a time when his last adamant conviction (and with it his last element of flexibility) goes by the board and, the fashions of engineering being as susceptible of change as any others, there will go Campbell ... and Analog.

And then? It might even be a good thing. Ellison is absolutely right about the genre of gadgetry; if I have -and I have—a sick lust for expensive, complicated wristwatches, and if with considerable delight I might take one apart and savor its every polished little coq, spring, plate, bearing, striker, escapement and gear, such time in the long run not have been spent as well as it might, say, even staring at my navel. And if, hopefullt, Whit's thesis on the trend toward book-magazines (or magazine-books) is true, and granting only that they refrain from accepting advertising, how nice life might become! Instead of plunking down forty or fifty or seventyfive cents or a dollar twenty, and receiving an inefficiently sized, fragile and difficult to handle effusion crammed full of gratuitous and malign assaults upon my person and insults to my intelligence, I might instead discreetly wave a credit card or two, and get in return a neat small package crammed to the brim with what, after all, I was looking for—and nothing else—and for the same price.

Now I think of it, the hell with magazines. Burn 'em. Burn 'em!

Oh well.

I seem to have written you an article...and a sercon one at that. This is what you get, you silly ass, for publishing a fanzine with high-minded provocative material in it...instead of filthy pictures.

((The trouble with filthy pictures—once you've seen a thousand or so, you've seen them all, and acute boredom sets in. I don't want PSY to be boring.))

Redd Boggs P.O. Box 1111 Berkeley, Cal. 94701

PSYCHOTIC's revival is the most significant event in the general fanzine field in a long, long time. Your material has been spotty, ranging from Arnie Katz' "Jim Harmon?"—which takes some sort

of prize for asininity and prejudice—to Harlan's columns, which contain some of the best writing seen in fanzines in many a year. But generally the quality is so good that it's hard to believe PSYCHOTIC suffered a hiatus longer than most fans' memory-spans, and that you began its present incarnation starting virtually from scratch.

Lee Hoffman basement 54 E. 7 St. New York, N.Y. 10003

I warned you that if you put out big fat issues of PSY I probably wouldn't get around to reading them. I guess I was wrong. I read all of #24. I even enjoyed it. In fact, I was inspired to sit down and write lengthy responses to

several items.

I started a long article on writing works with messages, in reaction to Norman Spinrad's talk on taboos. I gave it up because explaining what I mean was getting too involved and if I put it on paper a lot of people would just misunderstand my intentions and start arquing around the barn at me and stuff like that there, and to hell with it.

I started an article about why fandom now is not like fandom fifteen years ago, in response to John Berry's comments. Again, it got too damned involved, what with having to go into an in-depth analysis of present American culture.

I thought about writing something snide about you letting dirty old professional writers clutter up the pages of an amateur magazine, but decided the bitching wasn't worth the trouble, and people would either miss my point or start feuding with me. To hell with that.

I even thought about making some nasty statements about STAR TREK, but why bother, when other people are doing it so well?

So be advised that PSY #24 is full of entertaining and comment-provoking material, but I am too old, and cynical and lazy to get provoked enough to do anything about it.

Hoping you are the same...*

*Copyright Mr. Bloch

((You sure know how to tease a faned, Lee!))

Jack Gaughan P.O. Box 516 Rifton, N.Y. 12471

Damnittohell! My dander is up and I guess PSYCHOTIC is just that little noodge it needs to push it over the edge.

There's no one big thing that makes

me edgy.

It's a lot of little things. The weather is rotten. I'm trying to throw off an attack of flu. The friggin world is heading towards world war three or Korean war no. 2. President Johnson's face annoys me. Experts who sit in bars and say, "bomb 'em" give me apoplexy. I have a lot of work to do but (in the manner of commercial artists) no time...but the worst of it is that John D. Berry comes on in a letter to me like people who never got past Dick and Jane and who criticize the style of Samuel R.

John thinks my cover for PSYCHOTIC was ok but the caption really made it. You wrote the caption. Even you felt it needed something (don't ever talk to ME about paranoia in sf, Ted White!) otherwise you wouldn't have written the caption.

((Your drawing was one of several you sent me, and was not expected to be a cover, but I noted that horselike face and menacing sword...and the caption popped into my mind. I should have qualified the cover credit 25 by saying "Cover drawing by Gaughan, words by me".))

I know John is young. I know the drawing could not have been a cover all by itself. But I feel the hell like being bugged. The drawing was a doodle...no more...no less. But it was a studied damn doodle. Each line had its own integrity, each tone its existence justified by a line or to justify a line. It was an "in" artist drawing. It drew upon all the traditions and knowledge I have of line and wood engraving. It wasn't all that important but it was the work of a nit dedicated to his goddamn nit—witted craft.

I had the privilege of watching (if not hindering)
Delany write over a period of days. I can imagine how
he must feel when some squirt writes in to the editor to
criticize (even favorably) one of his writings...and
that one has missed the art and the really dedicated craft
that went into putting just ONE (count them ONE) word onto
paper. I claim no kinship to Delany in that my effort was
indeed a slight one...there was no significance, no seeking out of the dark (or darkened) corners of the mind but
by god, there was some craft involved.

And this damned flu doesn't help either.

I'm not angry at Berry. I just sent him some drawings. I'm angry at people criticizing things they are unqualified to criticize. And NO I don't think the world should be full of artists and writers and artsy craftsy people! But if I am going to appear in public and say, f'rinstance, "Algis Budrys is an obscure and unlettered fart!" I had tetter know what I'm talking about. I don't say that because I can't. Sometimes I think it. But I cannot say it in public because I'm not qualified to judge such a bright cat as A.J.

And I'm enjoying being out of sorts at the moment.

Ted (my old buddy, Ted) is using a finky device which he may be using instinctively (left over from the days when he WAS a loudmouth) rather than purposefully.

One cannot judge what James Blish knows about ANYTHING from ONE remark in a book. You can bet your boots Mr. Blish knows more about what sells magazines than is revealed in that one statement Ted quoted. Ted knows that too and that makes me angry. The quote seems to be the springboard of the whole ((PSY #23)) article (which it is not) and as a consequence the whole article seems to be rather a slap at Jim. Like I say, I'm grumpy and out of sorts but that's the way I read it now.

Ted and I have discussed this "marketing" proposition of sf before. By and large I agree with his article. But some things are missing. There is a very definite selling season for magazines...especially marginal magazines like all the sf publications. The Zelazny/Bok issue of F&SF came out during a slump season if I remember correctly. And the Bok cover wasn't one of his best...as a matter of fact it was very poorly reproduced (and flopped—reversed left to right—much to Hannes consternation...but even HE didn't think much of it) as has been most of Hannes's work. Even so it WAS a superior cover. It wasn't super—

ior Bok. But I think the selling season (buying season, if you will) had as much to do with its sales as its author line—up or the quality of the previous issue.

Marketing/packaging sf is a tricky proposition. The trickery begins with people. ONE people. The first thing one sees is the cover. Peculiarly, no magazine is sold like a paperback as far as cover policies go. In other words I cannot (without difficulty from the powers that be) paint for the mags the cover I can paint for the pb's. And the reverse is often true. Then there are personalities. I, me, the old pro from the commercial, ad, marketing background and with some familiarity with both marketing principles and sf (and my own hangups on the subject) will design a cover for Fred Pohl... HIS boss, Mr. Guinn, won't dig because "bug-eyed monstrosities are out" or "deep space scenes are out" or etc., etc., etc. But somewhere fred will realize that even if I have seized upon the tritest subject I MAY have seized also upon the visible aspect of the story. So the cover will go through and the publisher will be unhappy.....until it sells. If it doesn't sell...guess who's in trouble? But who knows WHY it didn't sell. I don't. No one knows. Not for sure. There are no GOOD methods of checking up on the sales of any magazine or paperback in the sf field. There are methods but no GOOD ones. I once did a cover which I thought was a put on. I had just begun freelancing and knew even less about painting than I do now. A magazine art-director called me up and said,

"Jack?"

"Yes?"

"This is Sam. I've got a job for you."

"Great! What is it and when do you need it?"

"Now, take it easy. There's no story to this but the editor has this idea."

"What's the idea? Wait till I get a pencil. Gee!
You'd think an artist would have a pencil. Don't go away,
Sam. There! All set!"

"O.K.? You got this giant baby."

"What?"

"Giant baby."

"How big, Sam?"

"About seventy-five feet tall and..."

"C'mon, Sam!"

"Look! The baby is about seventy—five feet tall and is playing with REAL cars like they were toys."

"Sam, I need the work but that isn't one hell of a science fiction idea."

"Jack, I lay out the art on the issue. I know nothing about the science fiction aspect of this stuff. Besides it's the editor's idea."

"O.K., Sam. A seventy-five foot baby playing with real cars. When do you need it?"

"Wait. That's not all."

"What could be more than a seventy-five foot baby who plays with...?"

"It's invisible."

"Heh. Heh. That's pretty good, Sam. Did you have one of those LONG lunches today?"

"I'm stone cold, Jack. Now, do you want to do this or don't you?"

"Fer Krissesake, Sam! How the hell do I do a seventyfive foot tall baby and make him invisible?"

"That's your problem!"

"Okay, Sam. There are any number of conventional ways of doing this...a white outline. A silhouette. A change of color with background showing through." I needed the work, baby, and when I need the work I'll tackle ANYTHING!
"You got the picture?"

"Sure, Sam. A seventy-five foot tall invisible baby playing with real cars. Great cover!"

"Yeh! Well, this is going to be for the Christmas issue so make it look Christmasy!"

"Aw, c'mon, Sam!"

"That's right!"

"Sam, you've got to be kidding ... "

"Nope!"

So I did the cover. A great big baby sitting by the side of the road playing with real cars. There were pine trees about with reflected lights in them so it would look Christmasy. Naturally some stupid thing came up and they ran it in APRIL rather than on Christmas... After I had dragged those pine trees in all the way from....

Well, the point of this is that editorial opinion of what sells is (as Ied says) not so hot all the time. (Sometimes it's right on the button! Big baby and all!) That cover sold, I was told, less issues of that magazine than any other cover in the magazine's history. (And it was supposed to be MY fault!) Yet I took it around to other editors along with a bunch of my other samples and they were gassed over this thing. The IDEA. Not the picture.

This is against my principles. I think that a cover is like a little travel poster. It should say, "C'mon down and see this...SCIENCE FICTION! MONSTERS! GIRLS! EXCITE—MENT!...what have you!" I don't think an illustrated IDEA is a good cover. It can be but more often than not it is—n't. A cover should say, "Eat me, I'm a science fiction magazine!" I fail to see the point in presenting an im—pulse (Ted's words...with which I agree within limits) buyer with a puzzle. It would be like putting a puzzle on a billboard. Who's got time to puzzle it out while they're whizzing by?

So...my beef with Ted is that he left out the seasonal element and unfairly swiped at Jim Blish. I know that Blish's statement was indeed Blish's statement but Ted knows Jim better than to think that that one statement covered Jim's knowledge of magazine sales.

About DANGEROUS VISIONS ...

Yeh, sure! None of the visions was dangerous! It is a damned good book. I was embarrassed by the Ellison intros. This is my problem as I'm sure Harlan wasn't embarrassed. And I'm sure they did not hurt the sales of the book.

For years I have been bugged by the idea of a real alien. A REAL ALIEN! It cannot be done any more than you

can envision a totally new and different color. You can dream it up in circumspect words and spell it out...

a n*e*w c*o*l*o*r n*e*v*e*r s*e*e*n b*y m*a*n. but you cannot realize it. I hit Lester del Rey with this problem. "Do me a real alien," I said.

"A dolphin," he said.

It wasn't enough to satisfy me but he was right.

The difficulty with DANGEROUS VISIONS is that Harlan primed everybody to expect more than was humanly possible. It cannot be done unless it were to be written in Swedenborgian devil—talk. In which case no one would really know. No, DV was a good job but oversold by Harlan. Enjoy what you have in DV rather than bemoan the lack of realization of some impossible vision. Keep the vision! But don't condemn Harlan for not realizing it. You can't realize it either. Probably the closest ANYBODY ever came to it was Budrys' ROGUE MOON in which the FEELING of alienness was there but never defined or resolved. (Jim Blish made me re—read this book and it's fresh in my mind as a result thereof.)

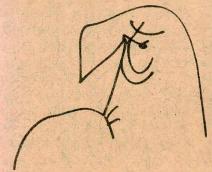
Harlan's working on THE FLYING NUN is perhaps chuckly but I'm a man of some principles and I did advertising drawings for TIME TUNNEL. I was brought up to accept any job (just to accept it first when there was a need) and then to consider it a challenge in its own limitations. So Harlan wrote a FLYING NUN episode. Good! More power and episodes to him. (Did you know that JWC in a tv interview praised TIME TUNNEL as a medium of educating the young people about such things as Krakatoa and ancient Greece, etc.?)

STAR TREK: show biz is show biz and for the masses sf is not, and I think most of us would resent the intrusion into our private domain if it were. It should be of no news to anybody that sf is VERY insular.

This has been a purposely grouchy letter. I'm grouchy. And I'm riding it. I assume my friends will take it for what it's worth and the others will themselves grouch...if they would do me the honor.

And then there was this time that Greg Benford introduced himself as Bill Donaho and I genuflected. OH, grouch!

"The next morning. I don't feel so sour (except I think I've broken the little finger on my left hand) but I'm letting this stand. Thanks for the good reproduction. Sometimes I think that's why I do fan work—to get good repro.



Alva Rogers 5967 Greenridge Rd. Castro Valley, Cal. 94546

One of the highlights of the SFWA daytime workshop that preceded the Nebula banquet in Berkeley a few weeks ago was Norman Spinrad's talk on writing for TV. Although his

talk dealt primarily on writing TV SF and its pitfalls threatening serious sf writers, his underlying thesis was similar to his "Totem and Taboo" article, that the writer who has something to say and the ability to say it is frustrated in his efforts by those in control of the medium through which he is trying to express himself. Norman is an angry and dedicated young man with whom I don't entirely agree, although I do agree with him in his attack on censorship. Oh, yes. Following his talk Norman had the title of The Thinking Man's Harlan Ellison bestowed upon him by, I believe it was, Poul Anderson. What Norman did to the powers that be (or were) at STAR TREK (particularly Gene L. Coon) was just too brutal.

Norman's perspective of DANGEROUS VISIONS (or DANGEROUS ILLUSIONS, as Tony Boucher kept insisting on calling it during the Nebula ceremonies, perhaps not undeliberately) made a good case for the book from the perspective of Harlan's Visualization of the Cosmic All. I'll concede its undoubted permanence as a significant collection; but I don't buy Norman's enthusiastic claim for it as the "single best collection of science fiction stories ever compiled." It seems to me that both Harlan and Norman suffer from a case of tunnel vision when it comes to viewing the scene. As Ted White points out, there are other types of science fiction equally as good as the avant garde of Harlan apparently opts for, or the socially meaningful sf Norman feels compelled to write. Both types of science fiction have much to offer in enriching the field, but so does the hard core "science" fiction of Larry Niven and Poul Anderson, the adventures of Harry Harrison, the best of Randall Garrett, Gordy Dickson, Jim Blish and others.

I agree entirely with Norman about Harlan's introductions to the stories in the book. One of the most attractive things about Harlan is his generosity toward other writers, a generosity untainted by condescension. I found his introductions fascinating.

John Berry writes a good column, but his yearning for a return of the faanish high of sixth and seventh fandom, or the days of FANAC and INN, sounds awfully much like us old crocks in First Fandom mourning the wanished days of the Iremaine ASTOUNDING, Hornig's WONDER, the WEIRD TALES of Lovecraft and Howard, and Campbell's "Golden Age" of ASF.

The faanish fanzines of the early and mid-fifties were fun to read, but so were such older fanzines as Laney's ACOLYTE, Warher's SPACEWAYS, Ashley's NOVA, Phil Bronson's FANTASITE, Ackerman's VOM, etc. The PSY of today may be the new Focal Point of Fandom, but it is a much meatier mag than most strictly faanish fanzines, as witness #24 with two very serious articles by Spinrad, Evers' anything but frivolous essay on grass, the editor's thoughtful book reviews, and a letter column with a literary exchange between John Brunner and John Hayden Howard, not to mention a long letter

from Phil Farmer. I'll take the present day PSY over ninety percent of the faanish fanzines published in the decade of the fifties.

James E. Trupin
New American Library, Inc.
1301 Avenue of the Americas
New York, N.Y. 10019

My intention in writing to you is to announce that NAL-Signet is planning to expand its science fiction list. In

addition to paperback reprints, we will publish a number of paperback originals and would welcome any book length manuscript submissions from both unpublished and established writers. All submissions will be given every consideration. I can assure that none will fall victim to editorial torpor.

P.A.M. Terry 4/13 Wyong Rd. Mosman, N.S.W. Australia. 2088. Your "review of Ann (sic) McCaffrey's RESTOREE" in PSYCHOTIC #22, has just been brought to my attention. Your heading, HARLAN..OH (SOB) HARLAN has, in my opinion, one word badly mis-

placed. Tis the word you have in brackets, - (SOB). The three letters composing the word, should be placed, with or without brackets, or punctuation, immediately following your own name; for only a S.O.B. would have the effronter;, and the colossal conceit, (or is it water on the brain? as I see you exist in Venice) to claim to "review" any book, after reading but 63 pages!! Sure, I'll pass over your remarks about Harlan Ellison, except to point out that Harlan Ellison, himself, reccommended RESTOREE for a Nebula Award, and that, I think, speaks, very eloquently, for his opinion of the novel! Twas not, as you suggest, intentionally or otherwise, a tribute to Ellison, that the principal male character in the novel was named "Harlan", as the name was chosen some considerable time before the authoress knew that such a person as Harlan Ellison existed. Sure now, to attempt to place yourself in the category of authors, by your use of the names of Bloch, Tucker, Burbee, and some others, in, of all things, a "sex" novel, is a dismal failure, as could be expected, from the rest of your inane babbling. But, you write, this name business is a minor quibble. Well, if so, why go into the song and dance act over it? So,--"the main drawback of the book, is that it has a female protagonist, and is written , first person, --- by a woman." Well! Well! Well! (Three holes in the ground, and the deepest, is where you and your rag, should be interred, and, I hope you notice that I have been courteous enough, so far, as to insert the sadly missing punctuation marks, in the quotation from your effusion). You prate of your "male objection to being a girl as I read the book". You make a confounded liar of yourself, for a start, for you!ve already admitted that you did not read the book, for you "quit reading" at page 63. Who the heck wants you to be a qirl, in any case? (Maybe you'd prefer not to answer That one) You find it difficult to identify with a heroine. Dear me, what a catastrophe! Who wants you

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to identify with a heroine, you nit-picking excrescence, that's masquerading already, as something you are definitely not. To proceed, (if you've got the guts to read any further, which I am inclined to doubt) you write, "Ann Mc-Caffrey not only is a writer who happens to be female, (happens to be? My, my, such marvelous intuition!!), she is a writer who writes like a woman. (your underlining, that last) By the horns, hair, hide, hoofs, head, and tail of Moraghben himself, what the blue blazes did you expect her to write like? An idiot of an editor, who produces a 'zine so aptly named, that the name, PSYCHOTIC needs but a slight alteration, to apply to himself, "Psychoneurotic", or perhaps you would expect her to write like a blankychimpanzee, or something of that nature? Such a sweeping denunciation, too, -"I reject the dependency, the softness, the female style." Man, (if indeed you are a man) were you ever born, or did you just hatch out somewhere, (probably in a gutter)? Sure, we've got some prize asses of "reviewers" in this country, but, for sheer egregious, insulting, denigrating, ill-informed effrontery, you collect the first prize. For a novel that I, and many of my fellow Australians, men, and women too, have read, and enjoyed so much, that, at least 12 of us have nominated it as our choice for the "Hugo" Award, to be treated in such an asinine, idiotic, puerile manner, only makes me regret the fact that, as I have never attended a school of education in my 84 years of existence, I lack the ability to express adequately, my feelings, and my utter contempt for you, both as a "reviewer" (Ghu defend us) and as a representative of the male sex. Go back to your "dubious" sex novels. You'd maybe fit in better there. You've had the appalling "hide", to print your atrocious rubbish in PSYCHO-TIC #22. Right. Now let's see if you've the guts to print a plain old Irish Australian's reply. The novel is a masterpiece, of delineation, and portrayal of characters, every one of them lifelike, and humanly natural, and, as one reads the novel, (not just skimming through 63 pages) every character comes to life, and lives. Sure, I don't profess to know anything about "identifying with the heroine," or "empathizing" or any of those fancy terms, which, in my view, are generally used to cover ignorance, or incompetance, but, as a reader of SF, for, now, more than 65 years, I think I might justly claim to have, at least, a rudimentary knowledge of that class of writing. Maybe, when I've a day I can spare, I may decide to really take your so-called "review" to pieces, in full detail, but, for now, I merely repeat, Let's see if you've the guts to print this reply to your balderdash!

((*GASP* You really know how to hurt a guy, Mr. Terry. But, seriously, I did goof in several respects in that review. I underestimated Anne's skill as a writer. That "female" writing was actually a highly effective use of the first person technique, and I commend her for it. And I'm sorry I misspelled her name.))

John Berry 31 Campbell Park Avenue Belmont, BELFAST BT4 3FL Northern Ireland

I have got to say that you are now producing the finest fanzine of the decade. ((Ahh... HEAR THAT, TERRY???)) In fact,

insofar as the material is concerned, PSYCHOTIC is a professional magazine. Many of the big names have been lying dormant for years, waiting for a fanzine to appear (or reappear) with sufficient integrity and elan to make it worth their busy whiles to write for their fan audiences. For example, Bob Tucker's A CHUCKLEHEAD HAS NO HONOR IN HIS OWN COUNTRY is a classic gem, the best thing to appear in a fanzine for as long as I can recall. A simple little article told with feeling and subtlety and embodying in its prose the simple reason why he is such a great writer...not a word wasted...a complete rapport with Tucker throughout. The point I am trying to make is that for a busy writer such as Tucker (and Ellison for that matter) to write such a wonderful little literary epic shows that he considers PSYCHOTIC a suitable vehicle for his best. I might add for his casebook that one's visage is also discernable when filling a watering can under the kitchen water-tap at four o-clock on a March afternoon, in fact, so involved did I become in this experiment this afternoon that I spent some considerable time admiring the aesthetic features thus revealed and actually reached up a hand to replace a curling forelock before I realized I had filled not only the watering can but the sink too, and a miniature Niagara falls showered over the front of my trousers.

I mentioned Harlan Ellison. I also find his material to be of considerable interest. I would love to read an article of his about the administrative side of his script-writing for films...about the characters involved, and the nutty ideas they must have...and about how much influence the sponsors have with TV scripts... about whether or not it really is a rat-race...whether talent is prostituted for the sake of not outraging the the potential viewers (I mean by this whether or not sponsors feel that characters portrayed on TV doing or saying something unconventional effect their sales). I mean, is the whole thing ethical?

((I can hear some fans thinking at this point, "God, does he have to print all this praise of himself and PSY?" No, I don't have to, but public praise is so much more satisfying than private praise, for contributors as well as myself. Tucker, Ellison and I earned it, and by ghod, we've a right to enjoy it. Besides, I don't print but a small portion of the pagens and hosannas I receive...))

Avram Davidson P.O. Box 657 Belize City, Br. Honduras

How nice of you to send me PSYCHOTIC 23. I enjoyed almost all of it, tho' concede my interest in how Chillicothe or Chitlin Switch did or did not git the GAR con for the year Ought Six was

unfraught with. I'd send you 25¢ for the previous issue or even 50¢ for two but I gave my last U.S. coins to a young lady returned this week to the U. States, wd you take BH currency, you fool?

"Venice", Venice, reflection and remembrance of the mouldering canals and quaint period bungalhouses, now doubtless all bulldozed into rubble-and-fill in the 20

name of progress and 17% on real estate investment...or maybe 117% wd be liker. Venice, Venice! My exwife once took a kitten to the beach there and the little creature's eyes went pop-wide, "Wow! The biggest blankblank catbox in the world!" he obviously instincted, and squat and piddled and scratched and...well, he was one weary kitty by the time he gave up. Venice! Thank you, sir.

Your CONTENTS column are cleverly done. Gaughan and Rotsler, nice and good men as well as Artists, always good to see again: ROTSLER! If I never thanked you for those three of your own fanzines you gave me at the hotel Alex (I think twas) Westercon c. 6 yrs ago, call me cad and swine but I appreciated them and you.

-Now I must tell you about a secret canker which has been gnawing at me for almost a decade, depriving me of sleep, egoboo, satisfaction-no, better make that: sleep. satisfaction and egoboo-alliterates better-I have never, despitemultiple honors and aclaims, felt, ever, that I had Really Made it, kids, know why? because Ted White had never publicly attacked me in print! Oh, true, I had had my share of conventional success or status symbols: Awards which subsequently peeled and then fell apart, lengthy and laudatory complimentary paragraphs by editors who proceeded to cut my throat in the next contract, glamorous if slightly second-hand ladies who Used me and then-having achieved success in their own right and fame-kicked and/ or cast me asside like a mere broken blossom, crudzines galore, even radio interviews by tape-jockeys who failed audibly to remember my name: but all this was as flat beer: Ted White had never publicly attacked me in print.

Needless to speak of the sleepless nights, the tossings and turnings, the despairs which seized me to see this honor bestowed on both the higher and the nether figures of the field. There had even been times when it seemed to me that Ted's manner to me on meeting had lacked a certain substance of his usual chill warmth, and then how I anticipated, my mind even conjuring vision of what form the Studied Insult, the Deadly Barb, might take. As a writer Avram Davidson shows signs of regretting his resignation as co-delivery boy for the Valley Kosher Poultry Market in West LA, where his talents were certainly better employed, was one which occurred to me. Or, For a man who was indicted for 2nd degree mopery with intent to gawk, in Punxatawney, Pa., Avram Davidson...began another. Or, It is hardly the best-kept secret in the publishing world that during Avram's editorship of S&FS, its circulation...

But no. What is or was that Ied White had got against me, I don't know, but the nearest he ever came to according me the accolade of his inimitable venom was to couple my name with one of my ex-agents, whom he termed "fifth-rate". I tell you, I felt this neglect as a man feels the cold chill of hemlock creeping up around his heart.

You may, then, conceive, if only faintly, with what a fast-beating pulse I espied what I thought was at last the Full Ted White Treatment in his article WHY DOES IT SELL? in PSYCHOTIC 23 (page the 3rd, par 2), where he was con-

ducting an Anatomy, such as are performed on felons, of an issue of a Magazine with which I had at the time been editing: here it is, I whispered; you've made it at last. So what did he say? Allow me to quote:

But that next issue was one of the worst in years. It was an "All-Star" issue, remember? The cover names Asimov, Bester, Davidson, de Camp, Henderson, MacLeish, and Matheson—a rather tepid group of names, all in all. (italics, damn it, MINE)

All in all, this is the most tepid insult I have ever been publicly insulted by. Is this the most, the best you can do, Evial Ted White? Has professional success, marriage, maturity, the rest of it, broken your spirit? Tamed your once magnificently insane rages? Frankly, I feel that my status in the field has been attainted by the mildness of your manner, and I would sue you for \$200, except I don't think you can afford it. So there.

Otherwise and in general, dammit, I agree with him —er, the article, not the names.

As for Bloch on Plagiarism, you haven't heard the last of this, Bloch, isn't it for a fact that you did a piece on Jack The Ripper only about seven years after I did a piece on Jack The Ripper only about twenty years after you did a piece on Jack The Ripper? I'd sue you, too, only I can't afford \$200.

Now I should like to wax serious, perhaps even stodgy. I don't know who uses speed, LSD, or Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. I doubt if Com. Harry Ainslinger scans the fanzines. I expect that a Certain SF Writer, who—I know—collects doctors as much as he does drugs, most likely has a prescription for everything he has. Only (as Calvin W. "Biff" Demmon puts it) maybe not. And there are all kinds of kooks and krudds and snitchers in every field or group. And who needs to find his friendly local narco agent on his doorstep and in his medicine cabinet, even if nothing comes of it all in the end? I don't even know what anybody may have confessed to dabbling in, in his own words, in print. Everybody knows that he is not quite with it. He knows it, too. We love him anyway. Leave us use a little more discretion in this matter, hmmm?

Hello, Norman Spinrad! Hello, F.M. Busby! Speaking of bathrooms, how many of you have ever seen the Busby bathroom? It is about the size of the Reading Room of the British Museum, and has lots more to read in it, too. Hello, Eleanor F.M. Busby! Dim (or is it Din) Sawsnig to the both of you! Buz, surely twasn't I who rejected the Duplicator story on the grounds you state? My recollection is that I didn't so much as, well, reject it as suggest a rewrite... I still remember it fondly.

Is anyone within gaze of my words in contact with Djinn Faine Russell? Îf so, be so kind to pass on a hearty kiss and my love.

Am I the only man in Science Fiction or Fantasy who

does <u>not</u> know what in the Hell The New Wave is? I had a vague notion it referred to French moving pictures. This, however, brings up another question, Am I still in Science Fiction or Fantasy at all? I commence to feel like Tinker Bell(e?).

Well, well, tomorrow is Baron Bliss Day, a national holiday in British Honduras, and all my thralls have the day of with pay; we will all go and watch the sailboat Regatta. I feel a certain faint smugness in knowing that not one of your other readers has the foggiest as to WHO Baron Bliss was...few of you, in fact, even know where British Honduras is. Last week my mother sent me a helpful clipping all about Dutch Guiana... To paraphrase Philip K. Dick (I know for a fact that his last 33 books were all written while he was high on Dean Swift Snuff), "It's a wonderful thing, a mother's love." (Er, come to think of it, I think I've quoted and not paraphrased him. Sorry bout that, Phil.)

Anyway, Psychotic Geis, it was damned decent of you to send me your pleasant publication. Ta ever so.

((My pleasure, sir.))

Lyn Veryzer 773 Keith La. W. Islip, L.I. New York 11795 Lover! said she brazenly.... aha, PSY arrived at last.

Yes, that STAR TREK patriotism was nauseous. We had a terrific reaction at our club meeting. Also a terrific reac-

tion on another theme. Our vice pres. foolishly asked a UFO expert (how the Hell he got in our place, I'll never know), to expound upon the subject of "Saucers", whereupon our Professor J. Boardman engaged in verbal warfare and became absolutely Machiavellian, shooting sparks from ears, eyes, nose and throat.

Irue about the SF being stuck in the Juvenile Dept., etc. We're trying right now (with a brand new library) to get some good SF on the shelves. Out here if you yell long enough and loud enough you get somebody to listen and that is a minor victory. WHY, when you can pick up any filthy book from the adult shelves (and this goes for any seventh grader also—they have their adult cards then), can't you get SF books that have some meat in them on the ADULT shelves?

((Good luck with the library project. Oh, and Lyn-We can't go on meeting like this. Kay and Carol are getting suspicious.))

Greg Benford 874 Juanita Drive Walnut Creek, Cal. 94529

Norman Spinrad (The Thinking Man's Harlan Ellison) makes a very good case for his view of modern science fiction; I think his argument is better than the example he holds up (DAN-

GEROUS VISIONS). Norm's interests in stf—exploration of ideas that are taboo-breaking—necessarily mean 90% of the stf publishing community just can't stay with him. He belongs to a rather hard-nosed segment of the "speculative"

fiction" writers, those who are most interested in real, ideational content, and as such is most nearly like the main stream of stf. I personally feel he's in the best traditions of the field, and it may be that in another ten years we'll look back on his struggle (and that of a few others-but damned few) as a liberating force in the field, much as Philip Jose Farmer's fight with The Lovers. What is sadly lacking in American sf is a similar amount of honest thinking in the editorial establishment. We live in a time when publishing houses are making better profit margins than ever before, when stf is selling very well, when readers are showing themselves ready to dig the new lights that are appearing. But for the most part the editors show themselves unready to take risks with their customers; unready to irritate or startle or frighten those people who are going to pony up the 50¢ for a paperback.

I think most of our editors are kidding themselves. The mythical reader who hates to see "that stuff" (sex) in his literature, who doesn't want to be unpleasantly reminded of the world around him when he opens a novel—that guy is dead, for the most part. If he is alive he's probably snapping up those Doc Smith reprints that are flooding the stands. He's not buying from Berkeley or Ballantine or Doubleday unless he has some guarantee that he's getting what he wants, so he'll ignore your "controversial" book anyway.

It boils down to the fact that the field has enough diversity now to include that mythical reader, plus the the 20 year olds who don't mind thinking, plus the technology—oriented types who're into Larry Niven and that bag, plus the Farmer fans, plus...you name it. There's a lot of action in sf, and anyone who assumes their readers will be driven right out of the field by a four-letter word is just not living in the 1960's.

On the other hand, I think a better definition of what a dangerous vision is would've improved the book. Our society doesn't have just a few general taboossex, drugs, God, mother, country, etc.—but a whole collection of them, each applying to only a portion of the people. Suppose a writer came up with a story that showed in convincing detail that "social conscienceness" as espoused by most liberals and humanists is actually corrosive to human values? (Don't ask me how.) This is a taboo only in some circles, but those circles are just the ones that are most influential in the media, including sf. The trouble with DANGEROUS VISIONS is not that it violates taboos-hell, everyone with ordinary intelligence can do that—but that it goes after cows that are sacred to groups other than those to which sf writers and readers generally belong. Simply being in opposition to American middle-class ideas isn't sufficient qualification to be a dangerous vision, in my book.

The book is also a pretty fair argument that stories about those terrible taboos, God and sex, don't appear in the magazines because sf writers don't have that much to say about them. The pieces that dealt only with those

topics were generally the worst in DANGEROUS VISIONS.

True, probably Harlan was probably trying to communicate the men behind the work in those introductions of his, but I think he only managed to convey himself, and damned little of the writers got through. Joo bad, for it was a good idea, and would've helped personalize a field sadly lacking in just that quality.

I agree utterly with John Brunner's criticism of Howards's ESKIMO INVASION. Only a virtually stye-deaf reader could get through it without grinding his teeth. I'm amazed at your implication that some of Heinlein's Hugo-winning work is 'tlumsily written." Would you care to give an example? The man isn't Zelazny, but his grasp of the power of language is superior to Howard's by several miles. You're correct, of course: Howard's faults aren't fatal; they're just highly irritating. But surely "appalling prose" has been gotten through two sets of editors before this, as well. With the standards in sf, that happens pretty often. If Geis had maintained ESKIMO INVASION had good points despite the mangled style, I'd agree. But when he wants to give it a Hugo...come on. Howard's reply to Brunner is almost painful to read, for the man is clearly blind to many of the points John makes. I think John's letter was necessary, but I also hope we'll not see another such unequal contest between two good men. It is embarrassing.

((But the editorial leeriness toward adult sex in sf is valid for the magazines, considering the double standard that exists in publishing: books have always had more freedom than periodicals, just as stage productions have had more freedom than films. Too, how large a percentage of the magazine readership is juveniles? This is a factor now with the Supreme Court edging into an official double standard for application of the First Amendment: adults may read anything but juveniles may be "protected". The censors have been screaming about "protecting our children from filth" and now they will have laws setting up more strict and "clean" standards than are now currently in effect. The result could see magazine sf less sexual, soon, not more. So-read the sexless version of a novel in a magazine, then read it complete in paperback. It seems to me a paperback house could make a lot of money with an Adults Only sf line. Certainly some novels will have to have those Adults Only words on the covers.

To quibble a bit about THE ESKIMO INVASION; I said it should be nominated, not that it should win. And it did come in third, didn't it, in the <u>Nebula</u> voting, so quite a few of Howard's fellow professionals found it worthy.))

Jim Harmon 1920 Argyle Ave. Hollywood, Cal. 90028 I was flattered by Arnie Katz's onepager on one of my radio-TV appearances in New York (one of a hundred or so I've made coast to coast). It implies at least that SF fans remember my name,

at least for my "celebrated" feud with Harlan Ellison. I hadn't thought of it as a put-down of me until a couple of people pointed it out as such, including Robert Bloch in

your letter column.

((I didn't think of it as a put-down, and didn't print it with that effect in mind. Curious how reactions differ.))

My remark, I might say, was in the jocular mood of the show. I would not literally have left if the name of Harlan Ellison were mentioned again. As a matter of fact, some time late in the seemingly endless Long John Nebel show, Ellison was mentioned again and I said something favorable about him, as I recall.

It is no joke however that I do find Harlan Ellison a person entirely antitethical to myself. I don't wish him any ill, but I am at odds with Ellison's whole life style. Perhaps it is simply the attitude of a loser (me) regarding a winner (Ellison), some might insist. They may be right. At least, Ellison's style is the one that succeeds in gaining him money, women, fame, the high regard of science fiction fandom, a certain critical acclaim. What more is there to life?

((I would say Harlan's talent and skill have something to do with it, too. What you've got to believe, Jim, is that for all his money, women, fame, etc., Harlan isn't really happy. Inside, he's a lonely, tormented man. Yes. Keep the loser's faith, baby.))

The book of mine mentioned is THE GREAT RADIO HEROES, a history of dramatic radio, and at least 50% devoted to the science fiction and fantasy of radio, both juvenile and general. It has been extremely favorably reviewed and at some length by such diverse publications as NEWS-WEEK, SATURDAY REVIEW, N.Y. TIMES, L.A. TIMES, L.A. FREE PRESS, ST. LOUIS POST DISPATCH, etc. as well as being discussed (with and without me) on network and nationally syndicated radio and tv programs, as well as local shows. The book has been called "a great document of Americana", "a valuable work of history", "the best thing I've seen this year" and other toothy phrases. It is now a modest "best-seller". So the only put-down of the book or its author I've come across is close to home in the pages of an SF fanzine. Naturally. A prophet is without honor, etc., etc., except when he's Harlan Ellison.



Harlan Ellison 3484 Coy Drive Sherman Oaks, Calif.91403 This is a reply to several letters in PSY 24, most specifically to Rick Sneary and John Trimble—both of whom I like, I hasten to add, so the tone of this brief note will be understood to be in a mellow, win-

ning, reasonable timbre.

That I happen to like "the new thing" in speculative fiction is no secret. Somehow, almost against my will, I seem to have been placed in the position of a standard-bearer for it. I would have wished it otherwise, for purely selfish reasons. Frequently, what I choose to write bears no link with this "new wave". I would not wish my own work to be penalized by misinterpretation. But Dangerous Visions grew the way it grew, and so I am where I am at the moment, and it's not an entirely unpleasant place to be.

But for both Rick and John to take that extra jump of logic, on their own, with already-on-record vehemence on my part to the contrary, that I am tunnel vision'd and like only "new wave" writing is, I feel, terribly unfair. I am fully cognizant of the fact that almost eighty percent of what is being written in the genre today is still relatively (to use Rick's own words) "old science fiction". Much of it pleasures me, even as it did when I was first beginning to read science fiction in the early fifties. In past weeks I have read several Conan books, Niven's Neutron Star, two parts of Simak's Goblin Reservation, Heinlein's Starman Jones and Farmer In The Sky, Poul Anderson's We Claim These Stars and Jack Williamson's Seetee Shock and Seetee Ship. Every one of these "old science fiction" books pleasured me. That I have as yet not read Dune hardly means I don't like non-"new wave" writing. Yet this is the jump in logic made by both John and Rick.

So, for the record, let me state that it is a very big field—much bigger than most fans care to admit, for their own secular reasons, which I suggest they sometime examine—and there is room for Neil R. Jones just as there is room for Thomas Disch. The "old science fiction" needs no campaign; it is already established, ensconced, secure in the hearts of fans and the purchase orders of editors.

"The New Thing"is less easily appreciated by a reader-ship frequently rutted and geared to accepting what they already know. It is a human condition, one I take no alarm at viewing, but necessarily one that needs breaking down. So, what I choose to champion falls outside the realm of identification with "old science fiction". But I think it extremely unfair to assume that because I consider Philip Jose Farmer's "Riders Of The Purple Wage" an exemplary tour de force that I denigrate Jack Vance's Demon Prince series. After all, if both Rick and John would pause to consider for a moment, it was I who published Fritz Leiber's "Gonna Roll The Bones" and Algys Budrys Some Will Not Die and even edited a book of stories by Gerald Kersh—all three examples of "old science fiction" (or fantasy, if tags have not already become ludicrously outdated).

No, I am by no means blind to the existence of other kinds of writing in the field. I frequently do some of it

myself. But what John and Rick seem to like has so many spokesmen it needs no physical voice. It is what's bought, read and reviewed. "The New Thing" is still in its formative stages; much of it is not worthy, much of it is difficult, much of it is misdirected. It has yet to find its proper channels. At the moment many different kinds of writers are into it, and they are each going a separate way (thereby putting the lie to the feeling that this is one school—it is, in fact, many schools, each composed of one writer) and they deserve the time to develop their thing. They deserve not to be overlooked merely because they can't be identified with a certain style. They deserve a few standard—bearers, who will buy for them the time it takes the readers to acclimate themselves to something new and differently—hued.

To this end, I seem to have become their buffer. It is not always a pleasant chore: the personal vilification gets overpowering, occasionally. But as long as I can draw fire even as gentle as that coming from John and Rick, it means the other guys can work in peace. I consider that rather a noble chore. And selfishly, it means my own work will not go unnoticed.

But don't think that just because I'm currently digging Moorcock's NEW WORLDS that I've stopped reading Campbell's ANALOG. Though I was highly disappointed in the "old science fiction" story by Asimov in the current issue. And I did flip over Lafferty's "new wave" novel, Past Master. Why didn't John publish that one?

Mellowly, winningly, reasonably...

Rick Sneary 2962 Santa Ana South Gate, Cal. 90280 I think what J.D. Berry misses in current fanzines, (infact, current Fandom) is a "joie de vivre"... His reasoning, that the BNF are getting old, is quite true. Five years seems the limit of

peek actifaning, for most fans. While most are better writers, by growing older they have started taking things and the world more seriously - while at the same time the joy of fandom has lessened, as there becomes fewer new things to do.. The problem, from the mid-50's on, has been difaculty of gaining new fans of the same quality. While before it was mainly avide science fiction readers, who joined after finding out about fandom through the magazines, we now seem to have a greater number who join because they know some one who is already a Fan. Thus we get people who are fans of Fandom, and not necessaryly fans of STF. Also the fact that older fans were often not good mixers with their school or mundane world, coused them to pore themselfs whole heartedly into Fandom. .. And ofcourse as we get more Fringe-fans and Not-fans, the comradery of the Few is lost... This loss is I believe one reason so many old time fans are responding so warmly to your return to publishing. Where once we felt at odds with the mundane world, some new feal out of touch with the New Wave in Fandom.

((Back in the Old Days Harlan Ellison and Seventh Fandom were the New Wave...))

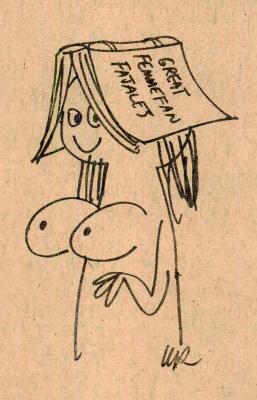
Carol Peters 5 Westminster Venice, Calif. 90291 I didn't get a chance to properly thank you for helping me get all that ink off me in the shower. After the police left.....

It's really too bad that all that sucking didn't get the ink off my nipple. Nice try, Dick. You can see why I don't like to wear my clothes while I use that awful postcard mimeo.

I'm glad you asked me to run off OS on your gestetner, but I can't really understand why you want to photograph me while I work. It's a shame I've had to quit publishing, isn't it?

Ummm, there's one question I want to ask you; just why did you move the Gestetner closer to your bed?

((*Blush* Carol, we can't go on meeting like this. Lyn and Kay are getting suspicious.))



Bill Conner 4905 Ridgewood Rd. E. Springfield, Ohio 45503 Ted White the convention fan bugs me at times, and I don't quite dig Ted as an author of fiction. But Ted White the fanzine article writer and locer, I like.

His "Why Does It Sell?" in PSY 23 really rang true with me. The cover sells newsstand mags — this is as true today as it ever was back in the heyday of the pulps. Recently I did a feature article on the paperback book boom for my employer. The Springfield Daily News. I interviewed the manager and the owner of the local book and magazine distributor and their experience confirmed everything Ied said about the importance of the cover of a mag.

Reader involvement — this is something the sf mags

haven't really had for a long time now and I think it's the one reason why the mags are going downhill. Ioday, many fans could care less what happens to the remaining sf mags. They know they can get more for their money in a paperback anthology if story quality is the thing they seek. There's a lot of competition for a person's leisure time these days, and that means there's a lot more rewarding, fun and interesting things to do than wading through some cruddy, third—rate stories in sf mags just out of a sense of sheer loyalty to the literature of the star-begotten.

I've been getting the feeling that by now some fans think that St. Louis just about has the world con bid won. But they shouldn't take the Columbus bid lightly. We're still fighting for the '69 worldcon and will be down to the wire. And remember, this is the year of the unexpected.

John Hayden Howard 755 North La. Cumbre Rd. Santa Barbara, Calif. 93105 Here.is a P.S. to my public reply to John Brunner.

It's only a coincidence, but THE MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION has pur-

chased a short story tentatively titled "Beyond Words". As if wounded by Mr. Brunner, its protagonist-narrator regresses from stylistically acceptable sentences to unspoken words and then to prehumanoid growls and finally heavy breathing in the silent desert.

Actually, I wrote "Beyond Words" in 1967 J.B., before J. Brunner's epistle, and I think the only readers it may enrage are, on one side, a few of the sternest defenders of our so-called Military-Industrial-Educational Establishment and, on the other side, a few completely humorless undergrads who can't imagine where their ultimate protest against any social order can lead.

((Congrats on the sale. I wonder if you're not misrepresenting the campus rebels. Is it anarchy they want or a <u>different</u> social order?))

((While we're reporting pro sales, Dean R. Koontz writes, "Sold second novel to Ace, one based on Marshall McLuhan's philosophies." Congratulations, Dean.))

((NOW we begin a multi-segmented critique of Norman Spinrad's article last issue, "Totem And Taboo." First off, unlimbering a howitzer, is...))

L. Sprague de Camp 278 Hothorpe Lane Villanove, Pa. 19085

Re Norman Spinrad's TOTEM AND TA-BOO (PSYCHOTIC 24): May a scarred veteran of the literary trade offer a few words on the facts of life? Mr. Spinrad complains that

he is forbidden to write and publish exactly what he pleases, because publishers have "a taboo against any work that treats a basic existential and/or morally ambiguous issue with relevance to current realities in an uncompromising, up-front and realistic manner." (If that is a fair sample of Mr. Spinrad's prose, no wonder

he has troubles.)

If Mr. Spinrad thinks he cannot write and publish ad libitum, he is misinformed. Nobody will stop him from sitting down and writing whatever he likes. Nor will anybody stop him from publishing it — at his own expense. He can use fanmag format and mail it out to everybody in his address book. The Post Office used to be stuffy about obscene matter, but court decisions have made it so hard to prove obscenity that few overworked district attorneys are likely to bother the likes of Mr. Spinrad.

What Mr. Spinrad really minds is something else: that publishers refuse to risk thousands of dollars on a work that they think will offend the prejudices of so many readers that the public will refuse to buy the work, and the publisher will lose money. Fiction is primarily a form of entertainment — a fact that writers and publishers ignore at their peril. The fiction writer (unlike the textbook writer) does not have a captive audience whom he can compell to read his tales. If a story does not entertain them, they will not read it.

A story may fail to entertain for any of many reasons. Perhaps the writer is too wrapped up in some purpose other than entertainment, such as improving the world, or exposing some evil condition, or making a daring innovation in the literary art. These objectives are all harmless and even laudable — provided they are kept subordinate to entertainment. Or the writer may offend his readers' prejudices. All readers have prejudices. Since prejudices are emotional, it is useless to try to argue or bully the reader out of them.

The strongest literary prejudices used to be related to sexual and excretory matters. Now these tabus have largely disappeared; even LIFE quoted the word "shit" recently.

But readers' prejudices are not confined to such matters. For instance, since I personally have no strong emotional feelings about Jesus of Nazareth, I could find interesting a historical novel that presented Jesus in a very unfavorable light. But such a story would offend so many that it would have a hard time getting published, no matter how good it was otherwise.

Likewise, it would now be hard to publish a story that presented the American Negro in a very unfavorable light (as in THE CLANSMAN). I don't say that blackguarding the Negroid race is a good thing; I merely point out that a writer who tried to do so would face "literary censorship" unrelated to the other qualities of his work.

On the other hand, I do not personally find, say, homosexuality an entertaining subject of fiction. Interesting in a grimly clinical way, like other human aberrations and deformities, but not entertaining. I am glad to read a scientific article about the psychoanalytical treatment of homosexuals; but a story on the subject? Okay for those who find it fascinating; but I get more fun out of stories of other kinds, and nobody can make me read a tale I do not enjoy.

Nor are social and political changes likely to eliminate prejudices. They merely substitute new prejudices and tabus for old. A writer in a Communist land, who wrote about Lenin in a violently hostile vein, would be unable to publish, and something much worse would likely befall him as well.

As for anti-war novels, to a prejudice against which Mr. Spinrad ascribes failure to review THE MEN IN THE JUNGLE - bless you, son, where have you been all these years? Publishers' lists have been full of anti-war novels ever since Remarque wrote ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT in the 1920s Have you never read Zweig's trilogy beginning with THE CASE OF SERGEANT GRISCHA? A stream of such novels has appeared ever since the 1920s, with time out for the Hitlerian War. Some have been excellent, and some have been best-sellers.

On the other hand, in using the novel to present a case against war, some writers went to such unrealistic extremes as to produce caricatures. Thus in Mailer's IHE NAKED AND THE DEAD, all officers (save one, who get's killed) are jerks, bastards, Jew-haters, dopes or clowns. To anybody who knows military service, this is ridiculous. To speak of a tabu against "gory, violent and disgusting" anti-war novels, when the Communist-liner Dalton Trumbo published JOHNNY GOT HIS GUN, about a quadruple basket case, in the 1930s, is absurd.

((But Spinrad was writing about science fiction war novels, and of himself as a science fiction writer. You seem to have, perhaps unconsciously, evaded that issue.))

Regrettable as Mr. Spinrad may think it, publishers do have to allow for their readers' prejudices. He who does not, goes broke and is out of the business. In choosing which works to publish, editors must depend largely — as in all the arts — on educated guesswork, and naturally they often guess wrong.

As for "dedication...to the truth as he sees it," this, too, is an impossible objective. No one can write a completely truthful description of even a man sitting in a chair, because one would have to tell what every atom composing that man was doing every microsecond—and that would not account for all the subatomic particles. Selection of facts is therefore necessary, and with selection the opinions and bias of the writer enter in.

Nor can any piece of fiction be "the truth" by definition. A couple of centuries ago, some moralists objected to all fiction on the ground that it was a lot of lies—which in a sense it is. If it were "the truth," it would be history or biography. And, as I know from sad experience, one cannot even write history or biography without letting some misinformation, error, and other forms of "untruth" creep in. When Mr. Spinrad talks of writing "the truth," all he really means is setting forth his opinions on contemporary questions, thinly disquised as fiction. And using fiction primarily as a vehicle for one's opinions, however enlightened and in—

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telligent these opinions be, makes for poor entertainment.

So perhaps if Mr. Spinrad would worry less about telling "the truth" and more about entertaining his readers, he would have less to complain of.

Poul Anderson 3 Las Palomas Orinda, Calif. 94563 Norman Spinrad's essay "Totem and Taboo" raises some points which are so important that I would like to reply. Although I shall, by and large, express disagreement with him, this is just in order to carry

a little further the exploration of matters which should be explored further yet.

In essence, as I understand him, Norman complains of the relegation of science fiction to kiddie literature, not only by classification in libraries and bookstores, but also in fact by censorship, auctorial timidity, and the condemnation or ignoring of any works which attempt to be adult. There is something to all this, but I think the problem is less serious than Morman believes and, to the extent that it exists, is not quite the problem that Norman is writing about.

On the matter of being ignored: All science fiction is ignored by nearly all the lit'ry establishment, except occasionally when something like A CANTICLE FOR LEIBOWITZ appears without the damning label. Since the lit'ry establishment is even more inbred than science fiction, I don't feel this is any loss. Our books are listed in Virginia Kirkus, but that isn't a review journal, it's a lottery.

Various foreign periodicals will take good science fiction books seriously. And then we have our own magazines. The trouble here is, in the former case, the difficulty of calling books to the attention of reviewers who would be fair if they got the chance; in the latter case, the sheer lack of space.

By now we have seen a review in Analog — favorable, too — of THE MEN IN THE JUNGLE. It appeared about a year late. Norman apparently didn't realize that that's about par for the course; Schuyler Miller has too much to cover to keep up with publication dates. In the other magazines, what have we? Budrys in Galaxy is good, but hitherto Galaxy has been bi-monthly, and besides, Budrys' convoluted style leaves him space for only three or four books per issue. Judy Merril in F&SF has departed for some wonderland of her own where science fiction as we know it does not exist. That leaves us a few guest reviews now and then, here and there. I don't think anything can be done to improve the situation in the magazines.

We might get someone to publish a monthly devoted to nothing but responsible science fiction reviews. But the history of such attempts in the past leaves small grounds for optimism.

Returning to the big outside world, as Norman remarks, we can get notices in library journals and the like. He is also right in observing that the effect of such notices

is often lost because librarians tend to order science fiction books with young readers in mind. This is not always due to prejudice. The fact of the matter is that the overwhelming bulk of people who check out such volumes are youngsters.

The way to overcome that problem is to reach more adults, and the way to do that is to write better books. Let's face it, the average science fiction item is pretty dismal. The average is higher than it was a few years back, but we've still got a long way to go. Which brings us to Norman's strictures on the emptiness of much of what we do, its lack of relevance to real life.

In order to reply to this, I shall deliberately pick a few of the best works. After all, this is where science fiction begins to show its potentialities. You judge the love story by "Romeo and Juliet," not by True Confessions. Our field deserves the same.

Well, does anyone dispute that Theodore Sturgeon comes to grips with a lot of psychological reality? Or Roger Zelazny or Samuel Delany, to name a couple of the top newcomers?

As for "exterior" reality, politics and such, Hein-lein in several books has come so near the bone that a lot of readers screamed. Harry Harrison's MAKE ROOM! MAKE ROOM! is a deadly serious novel about a deadly serious matter. If I may include myself in such company — in intent if not necessarily in execution — IHE STAR FOX was to a considerable degree a parable of today; and so, to a lesser extent, are the Flandry stories. For that matter, in a short novel which Ace mistitled LET THE SPACEMAN BEWARE, I made one of my own attempts to examine the human psyche.

One could go on citing a number of works by a number or writers. Some have succeeded, some have failed. The point is, however, that honest attempts to tell the truth in science fiction terms have been made and are still being made — more so than Norman seems to think.

Perhaps he is simply missing their points. This can happen to any reader. For example, after we had read THE MEN IN THE JUNGLE, my wife, who thought on the whole it was a brilliant novel, guessed that the fellation scene was saying, "The American people are cocksuckers to their own military." Now Norman says it was a love scene.

Relax, my friend. Misunderstanding is the common fate of the writer. To give a case from the inside, I have yet to find anyone who understood what I was trying to do in "Eutopia" (in DANGEROUS VISIONS). Everybody thinks it leads up to nothing except a revelation that the hero is a pederast. Actually, this is incidental; it is supposed to be merely one more aspect of the basic theme, which is the unbridgeable gaps between different cultures. There was also some attempt at considering what is mutable and what is permanent in human nature, together with a suggestion — quite probably wrong, but surely worth thinking about — that the roots of totalitarianism lie in Christianity.

However, nobody appears to have seen any of this.

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Is everybody out of step but me? Or did I just not make myself clear enough? Maybe we both failed, Norman. In which case, the cure is to try again.

In striving for such clarity, though, one can easily get over-explicit. Frankly, I find that a flaw in IHE MEN IN THE JUNGLE. No reasonable person will deny that war, especially guerrilla war, is every bit as nasty and degrading as Norman pictured it. But he pictured it so repeatedly, at such length, that a degree of boredom and callousness set in. Of course, that's exactly what happens in real wars to real soldiers. Fiction, though, is about life; it cannot successfully be life.

And even a brief scene, intended to stand for the whole, can be overdone. Personal example again: Some years ago I published a straight detective novel, MURDER IN BLACK LETTER. It was all about violence, starting with one character who's been tortured to death and ending in a scene where the protagonist takes on several enemies bare-handed. Now like Norman, I don't think violence should be glamorized. I set out in this book to do the same as he set out to do in his — show such things in all their ugliness. The result was that several friendly readers (including one former member of the French Resistance, who'd seen enough death and maiming to case-harden anyone) told me I was being sadistic. In short, the effort was counter-productive.

In these days of publishing liberty, love and sex are likewise being overplayed. Dante was content to say, in the story of Paolo and Francesca, "The book slipped from our hands and we read no more that night." His readers, being reasonably well—acquainted with the facts of life, didn't need more information. Shakespeare often gets bawdy as hell, but it's nearly always by puns. (There's a magnificent double—entendre in the very last line of "The Merchant of Venice") When he deals seriously with sex, e.g. Juliet or Ophelia, he shows us the whole human being, not an autonomous crotch. To cite a more modern example, in a beautiful and tender scene in KRISTIN LAVRANSDATTER, Sigrid Undset found it sufficient to say that the girl's lover kissed her "above the knee."

I suspect that science fiction already has more liberty than it needs, and that the immediate necessity is self-discipline (which is not at all the same thing as self-censorship). I would hate to see Norman Spinrad go the way of Norman Mailer. Spinrad has so much more to say that is so much more meaningful, and is capable of saying it so much better.

We writers can in fact do anything we want. Where limitations still exist, they can be gotten around, as Kipling and Conrad got around much stricter limitations. It will take dedication, such as Norman Spinrad has, to realize the potentialities of the field. There do remain problems of economics, distribution, etc., but — as Norman himself stated at the recent SFWA conference — these are separate questions entirely, best handled by professional organizations.

I think readers can help, by their dollars, by their encouragement, by their communication through magazines

like this one or face to face, and especially by the kind of atmosphere they create. It may be a counsel of perfection, but I'd like to see the end of literary fashions, of New Waves, Where It's At, and the reaction against this hoopla. There is room for every kind of story, theme, and style. Let them all develop in their own ways, learning from each other as they do.

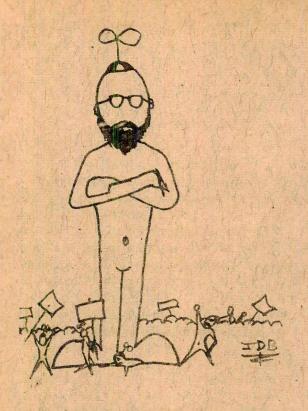
Ted White 339 49 St. Brooklyn, N.Y. 11220 I am getting awfully tired of Norman Spinrad's pseudo-Ellison self-promotional efforts. Harlan is Harlan, and Harlan is maybe one of the world's great natural salesmen. Harlan promotes him-

self because it is his nature to be promoting just about anything and everything that's close to him or interests him. He has, in the past, promoted me (my first sale to ROGUE), and he's generous in promoting his friends and those he admires. But what comes naturally for Harlan does not for Spinrad, and Spinrad's horn-blowing for himself in the last few months leaves a bad smell in my nostrils.

I've said nothing about it up to now; I've not commented on his abortive campaign to have fandom bug Doubleday into reconsidering <u>Bug Jack Barron</u>, and I've said nothing about his posturing in the pages of SF TIMES, etc. But an article in PSY is fair game, I should think, and I can't resist the target Norman makes of himself here.

If I were to try to boil my attitude towards this article down into one sentence, it would probably come out thusly: "Here is a lousy writer griping about censorship." Now, I haven't made it my practice to run around the field decrying various and sundry writers as "bad writers" for some time now, at least partly because not all my own books have been gems, and it would be damned easy for any one of my proposed targets to turn around and make remarks about pots calling kettles black. But Spinrad invites it. In fact, he says, of Men in the Jungle, "Let the people who have ignored it on the pretense that it was too lousey /sic/ a book to review prove that this is their real reason for not reviewing it by panning the hell out of it." That's leading with your chin, Norman.

But, okay: Over at Terry Carr's one night, I picked up a copy of Men in the Jungle, and started reading it. The opening line was unbelievably clumsy. So was the next. And the one after that. Astonished, I read on. "Is this book as bad as the opening page?" I asked. "Worse" was the reply. "Sid Coleman was over one night, and he just kept opening the book at random and breaking up." The book was passed around, each new reader unwilling to believe that we weren't just making it up or quoting out of context. (If I had a copy I'd quote it here, just so the rest of you could enjoy it as we did.) Now, that's a cruel thing to do to any writer, even in absentia, but you want to know my reaction? "Where does this quy Spinrad get off," I wondered to myself, "stirring people up about himself as an 'important' writer with such garbage?" I felt honestly jealous in that moment that Spinrad had taken one of the worst pieces of writing



I'd encountered in years, sold it to Doubleday, and was now griping about how it wasn't being received as it deserved to be received, like maybe winning a Nobel prize. While I, with at least six published books I'd stack up against Men in the Jungle any day of the week, have been cold—shouldered by Doubleday.

Now, that's a candid report of my reactions, and I wouldn't include it in anything approaching a formal review. But, ghoddammit, when you make your living doing nothing but writing sf books and somebody with lots of chutxpah and not much else visible comes along with a stinker of a book and screams like a stuck pig that it's not a best-seller, well...you begin to wonder which way is up.

Let's get back to Norman's article.

I haven't read "Neutral Ground," so I don't know in which way it purports to be "psychedelic," but I recall a bull session in 1963 in which Calvin Demmon and I agreed that psychedelic sf was around the next corner. Both of us had at that time been experimenting with the (then legal) peyote and morning glory seeds bit, and we began a collaboration which we never finished (aside from the one which we did finish, which ended up in grossly different form in my Android Avenger, itself mildly"psychedelic") because it was just too personal and uncommunicable when you came right down to it. In any case, the next year, 1964, Larry McCombs and I wrote a short story called "The Peacock King," which as far as I know is the only story so far that has reconciled drugs, mental disorder and hyperspace all within a few thousand words. It was the first story (and the only story) to mention tabernanthe iboga, the African root from which comes ibogine, and Tantric Yoga, the yoga of sex. It appeared in the November, 1965 issue of F&SF, one year exactly before Spinrad's 'pioneering' story. Big deal. We weren't setting

out to write The Psychedelic Story, but simply to incorporate some of our own insights into the psychedelic drugs in a valid sf story.

And this is where Spinrad and I really part company. Mc-Combs and I set out to tell a story which used drugs, but it wasn't a Drug Story. Spinrad seems obsessed with th notion that an Important Writer (or, to use his own self-description, "an artist") must deal with Important Topics. He seems to think that a) the notion of "war is hell" is new and important, and that b) this notion alone justifies a book. The use of drugs does not justify a short story, and the tired description of war as a "series of individual murders" does not justify a thoroughly badly written book.

Now admittedly I belong to a rather outdated group of writers in my thinking. I think it is more important to create a believable and engrossing book in which things happen to the characters that make the reader decide for himself, "Say, this business of wars is pretty lousy," than to scream it from every line in a book which addresses itself to no other questions. If you want my honest appraisal, I think that Men in the Jungle is a failure because it is impossible to read such a book with any feeling of reality seeping from within its pages. And just as an erotic scene in a book of convincing characterization is more moving (an more exciting) than one scene out of dozens in a work of cheap pornography, so I believe that the only way Spinrad could have honestly made his point (Vietnam and all) is if he'd subordinated it to an engrossing and well-written book which was larger than simply an anti-war tract.

Spinrad lies about himself, too. "...At the last Milford SF Writers Conference, 20 or so sf writers considered /Bug Jack Barron/ the most important sf novel in years."

Fact: the book was not yet written at that point, and no one at that conference saw more than the first two chapters— the same two chapters which had led to its initial sale to Doubleday before editor Ashmead saw the remainder and rejected it. Now, some writers may well have said, "Gee, this looks like it might turn out to be the most important sf novel in years," but I doubt many stated categorically that, on the basis of only two chapters, it was. And I know of several who considered it dreadful.

I'm not impressed to hear that the book deals with all of today's headlined items. I'll bet that already it is outdated — that Johnson's remarkable March 30th speech and Martin Luther King's April 4th assassination have already set in motion events which will make the book look silly in five years' time. And I'm willing to make that bet sightunseen. This is one of the most remarkably idiotic manifestations of the so-called New Wave: a sensationalistic approach to the headline items and fads of the present which dates such stories quickly and leaves them impotent when placed in direct comparison with even such best-sellers of today which also cheaply exploit the headlines. It seems to me that if Norman wants to write this kind of book, he'd be better advised to drop sf and write an 'underground' book like V or the like, where his talents might be better appreciated and better exploited.

Norman rails against 'the system' of sf book publishing, but that's because he hasn't the wit to get around it. In a

book openly published as a juvenile, by the trade arm of the United Presbyterian Church (Westminster), I managed to get in a number of comments on drugs and life in these times which I'll offer up for weighing against Men in the Jungle. And, unlike Norman, I'm enjoying brisk sales to the librarians (who love the book) and I know I'm being read by the kids. In my second book for the juvenile market, I say even more about present-day mores, sex, drugs, et al, and the book will be getting a big push from Crown when it's published this fall.

But unlike Norman I'm not running around flailing picket—signs. You'll find these commentaries within the bodies of books not specifically oriented towards making them. I'm telling other stories — mostly about human emotional and intellectual growth (or, Growing Up) —and my attitudes on a wide variety of things are assimilated within these larger stories. And I'm getting them across. It's a kind of judo, and part of it is not shrilling out your Message at the top of your voice.

Norman is still picking on Fred Pohl. Why? He thinks it's unfair of Fred to "slant" IF towards an adolescent audience, but the fact is that IF's audience is primarily adolescent. And Fred has to observe certain precautionary measures for IF because of this. Maybe most of his audience is already hip, but they're minors, and many of them under strict parental control. Why make it harder for them by producing a magazine they must hide? I learned the word "pornography" from AMAZING STORIES at the age of thirteen, four years after I'd seen my first pornography. But my father once threw a copy of that magazine in the trash and we had a stormy session before I retrieved it.

But if it will make him happier, Norman might like to know that F&SF has printed the word "shit" more than once.

Norman's <u>Ihe Solarians</u> was published by Paperback Library, which is a schlock paperback house. If Norman is unhappy with schlock methods of producing books, why'd he sell the book there? Again, it's a kind of judo. I've done a book for Paperback Library, which, as far as I know, will be coming out without changes (they haven't mentioned any to me, anyway). I did it because I needed the money and I figured I could do a book I'd enjoy while giving them what they wanted. I guess I did; I haven't heard any complaints.

I could go on, paragraph by paragraph, picking apart so much of what Norman says. His assumptions are so faulty. He betrays so little awareness of publishing realities or the means one uses to evade them. He wants complete and utter freedom without giving any evidence he knows how to use it. He can't even recognize a book for what it is: he says of Sturgeon's Some of Your Blood, it's "strictly a mainstream novel with no sf, fantasy or mystery elements," when actually its particular sub-genre (psychological deduction, fathered by Lindner's Fifty Minute Hour and including Kutner's psychologist-detective series) is fraught with both fantasy and mystery.

I guess what it boils down to is this: Here is a lousy writer griping about censorship. If Norman would just stop griping and start working towards being a bet—

ter writer (I'd settle for someone with a quarter of Sturgeon's sheer story-telling ability, for instance), he'd probably find the censorship problem abating, and his complaints (if they continued) would be entertained far more readily, at least in this quarter.

Johnny Berry's column is nice stuff, although it's been years since I've seen an editorial interjection in anything but the lettercol, Geis.

((I got carried away by my fannish enthusiasm!))
He's probably right that too many of us who still carry
the fannish standards are getting old and unfrivolous. It's
true that I'm seven years older now than I was when I was
publishing VOID, and I've crossed the Generation Gap, and I
just don't Have It any more... But that's why we've been
encouraging young fans like John. Somebody has to come
up from the ranks.

But early INNUENDOs were <u>not</u> neofannish. INN was launched in 1956 or 1957, and by then Terry Carr had been a fan for five or six or maybe even seven years. You want neofannish Terry Carr, you gotta go back a lot earlier than that.

General response to my piece, "Why Does It Sell?" was better than I'd expected; I guess fandom still does care about sf and its marketting problems. Roy Tacket asks why it doesn't sell more.

What we have here is ... a failure to fulfill the same needs or the same market as we once did. Back in the forties the sf magazines were part of a pulp phenomenon. They were never really like the other pulps, but they benefited from the relationship. Pulps had, as several people pointed out, a regular position on most newsstands. Pulps were widely read for relaxation. A certain percentage of impulse buyers picked up sf "pulps" when there were no other new pulps at hand, or they simply bought them as part of a random sampling of pulps. Pulp magazines were manufactured like comic books. That is, paper and printing were bought for the entire run of titles, and advertising was sold for the whole group as a single unit. Circulation was also quoted en bulk. Sf pulps were no more expensive to produce than any other kind - word rates, etc. were the same, printing costs the same slice of the whole pie. You could produce them in volume and your breakeven point was low, maybe even as low as 25% of print-order. (Magazine publishers are not interested in absolute sales, but in the percentage sold of those printed. Every publisher has his 'breakeven point' above which an issue will show a profit.) That meant you could print up, say, 200,000 copies of a title in order to sell 50,000 or 75,000 copies. (Actually, I imagine you'd sell even more, maybe even over 100,000.)

Today the sf magazine stands alone. It is not one of a group of ten, twenty or thirty other pulp titles. And costs have gone way up, and with them the breakeven point. Today a publisher can't survive on less than 35% sales, and most require at least 50%. Take a look at the circulation statements the magazines publish. Look at "line A": total copies printed. Compare it with "line C": total

copies sold. That tells the story. In most cases, if print orders were doubled, and the extra copies received adequate distribution and display, they'd probably boost sales a proportional amount. But it's a gamble, expensive, and doesn't really increase profits much if any.

(If you were printing 100,000 copies and selling 51,-000, just a thousand or so above breakeven - 50%, because you are a low-volume publisher — and you increased your print-order to 200,000 and sold 96,000 copies, you'd lose money because that's now below your breakeven point.)

So sf magazines are tied to smallness by this economic factor. Another factor is display. When the pulps existed as a whole and represented a real sales factor for newsstand owners, fiction magazines got good display. Now the sf magazines are orphans on the stands, and are shunted out to left field. Poor display equals poor sales.

A third factor is that television made the pulps as a whole obsolete. A lot of those who read pulps - sf along with the others - don't read that much any more. They represent a sizable proportion of the one-time potential market.

And the fourth factor, which has been much-discussed, is the role the paperbacks have played in assuming the forme er function of the pulps among those who do still read. And paperback sf sells better than magazine sf. One major paperback publisher took stock of its genre fiction a year ago and discovered its sf was outselling its gothics, mysteries, nurse novels, war stories, and westerns. (But in general mysteries and westerns still outsell sf.)

Does that answer your question, Roy?

The argument between Brunner and Howard is for me painful, because I think they're both right. Certainly the passage John Brunner quotes is amazingly clumsy (although not nearly as much so as Men in the Jungle) and I think the reason lies in Howard's disinterest in style. His letter betrays the same clumsiness, particularly the paragraph which begins, "The tragedy for men of action, whatever they do will force them..." a line which just does not scan gramatically. I think Howard is unaware of this aspect of writing, since his comments deal entirely with the content of the quoted passage rather than the phrasing. My sympathies lie with Howard, because I've fallen prey to the same faults at times myself. But perhaps after reflection he will take Brunner's criticisms to heart. I certainly hope he won!t allow himself to be discouraged by them, because he reveals the ability to think and use his imagination (I say this without having read his work in question), and we need that.

As for Earl Evers' "A Primer for Heads," I think it is, plainly and simply, a bad mistake to publish it.

A simple fact applies here: the use of marijuana and LSD (and most other presently popular drugs) is illegal. Under the circumstances, published admission of use is dangerous. Or, as we say in New York, "uncool." Evers states he uses pot every day. He says this in print in a fanzine with a wide and ultimately uncontrollable circulation. Evers lives, on and off, with a fan I happen to like and (at times) admire, Mike McInerney. If a copy of this fanzine falls into the hands of a malicious, spiteful, or just overzealous individual, Evers could be busted. And so could McInerney, and any of his friends (including me) present at the time. In fact, a whole FISTFA meeting could be busted, just for sharing the premises.

((But I'm not in the business of protecting people from themselves—it's too tiring and they never appreciate it. Earl sent me the article knowing what was in it. He knows the risks, certainly. I presume Mike does, too. And Earl's use of drugs, his continual use, is no secret in fandom, nor has it been, I'm sure, in New York fandom, particularly. I doubt if Earl goes to FISTFA meetings while "holding." But if he does, it is the personal responsibility of those he comes in contact with to find out and make their decision whether to stay or qo. He may become a social pariah in certain circles in New York, depending. But I'm sure he thought of that. too, before he sent the article to me for possible publication in PSY.))

I've done my share of experimenting with drugs, the psychedelics, the psychic-energizers, et al, but you will not find me admitting to the past or present use of any illegal drugs. Not in print. And maybe not in person. It is quite true, as Evers states, that a lot of fans have become heads in the last year. Apparently a lot of pot was consumed at the NyCon3. I'm glad I didn!t know at the time, because for the same reason I don't allow it at Fanoclast meetings (in my house) I'd have gotten rather uptight about it at the con. My objections in this case are based purely and simply on the matter of legal difficulties. They have nothing to do with my personal and (for the time being) private attitudes toward pot.

A great many of the new heads in fandom seem to be enjoying a delayed adolescence, and a number of them have been uncool about their new enthusiasm. (I sometimes wonder if half their joy isn't in doing something forbidden; they seem so gleeful in their clandestine maneuvers.) Quite irrespective of my attitudes towards either pot or its illegality, such people turn me off. Some of them were turning me off ten years ago, too...

But I exempt Earl from such criticism. Earl has an amazingly matter-of-fact approach to the scene, and if it weren't for possible richochets striking his associates, I couldn't care less about how openly he talks about drugs.

It appears to me that the effects of drugs are highly variable, and depend on the person, the environment, the dosage, the sequence (first time; tenth time...), etc. And each person seems (within broad limits) to get out of drug use something of what he puts into it. As for specific qualities, such as the aphrodisiacal powers of pot, in my experience it is a matter of suggestability and inclination. However, inasmuch as pot does decrease one's ability to concentrate on or hold a single line of thinking, it seems to delay orgasm or even forestall it. This is not always a Bad Thing.

"But when Earl says, "This can be a real groove -

you look up and suddenly the world is new and fresh in your eyes. I wish there were words to really capture the sensation, but if there were there would be no need for drugs," I feel sad for him. The words are there...in 1959, reporting in the Cult on my first peyote experience, I said it seemed to restore a sense of wonder about the world. But I also remarked that I didn't seem to gain much I didn't already have buried somewhere in me.

And that's been my subsequent experience as well. Some drugs block aspects of the mind, so that "background noise" diminishes. Others release inhibitions. Others bring back that sense of newness, of "wonder" (by blocking familiarity?). But few if any of them are capable of giving you something you don't, intrinsically, already have. And the best use of drugs is to learn how to do it without drugs. I might add that the finest "psychedelic" high I ever had was without drugs, in bed (but not then having sex) with my newly-beloved, my present wife. We shared it, and it was more beautiful than any experience of my life.

So I feel sad for Earl, forever up on drugs, knowing druglessness only as a "down" interval, never, apparently, digging life on his own. He's missing a lot.

Andy Porter 24 East 82nd St. New York, NY 10028 Norman Spinrad's article grabbed me, primarily because he has some major points which fail to completely follow the truth. It is very true that Ed Ferman rejected "neutral Ground" in its

first appearance at F&SF. However, exercising a common practice in magazine science fiction, Ed asked to see it again if it failed to find a home at some other magazine. It was resubmitted later in 1966, and Ed Fe rman laid aside his qualms about the story and bought it. At no time has ferman or F&SF had any taboo against "psychedelic stories." Any taboo F&SF does have is against poorly written stories. As far as marginal stories, this fairly common practice of resubmitting gains many a story a home at a magazine that had previously rejected it for one reason or another.

The comment that "my lament fell upon willfully deaf ears" rings of the old "everyone's wrong but me!" syndrome. There are areas which are glossed over in sf, but these are specific subject areas such as psychic phenomena and associated subjects. While psychic phenomena, ghosts, the supernatural, and flying saucers do fall within the very indefinite realms of science fiction and science fantasy, they are not given the treatment that hardcore sf or New Wave gets. Why? Because they are peripheral subjects—things, as opposed to advances and trends in style and form of the writing itself. As far as I cah see, these are the only forgotten or neglected areas of sf.

As regards <u>Buq Jack Barron</u>, Spinrad asserts that "American publishers have avoided it like the plague so far (though admittedly I have been trying only top houses)."

Most writers know that top houses don't do much sf. Doubleday, with its active program for publishing sf, contracted for it and then rejected it. They didn't like the final book, and wanted changes, which Spinrad didn't want to incorporate. So they had a parting of the ways. The

trouble with American hardcover publishers is that they avoid <u>all</u> sf like the plague. This is in part due to the economics of selling hardcover sf (most publishers don't have an SfBook Club to which to sell rights for an sf book), and partly to the reluctance to touch sf. Some do, and make money off the stuff. But I doubt seriously whether Scott Meredith (Spinrad's agent) submitted his novel to such firms as <u>Arcadia House</u>, <u>Avalon</u>, or any of a half a dozen other publishers which might have bought the book.

Paperback sales are a somewhat different story. I understand "the world's largest publisher of paperback sf" (I have no names) ((Ace)) wanted to buy the book. Ihey had reservations, and Avon bought it for \$3,000. Ihey were informed by Meredith that nothing was to be changed, and have bought it on that basis. I can only hope that they make back their investment, and that Bug Jack Barron proves to be worth all the hoopla that it's created.

Spinrad's assertion "I have defended the editor at Doubleday who rejected <u>Bug Jack Barron</u> from writers ... who thought he was crazy" smacks of the "let's defend Walter Breen from himself" attitude. "You know that editor is a stupid fool, but it's a free country, and he can be a stupid fool if he wants to be..."

Spinrad has gotten up on his soap box and refuses to come down. The assertion that all the publishing personnel look at sf as strictly juvenile fare in unwarranted and unfounded. I don't, and I know Larry Shaw doesn't, and I'm pretty damned sure that Terry Carr and Larry Ashmeaddand Betty Ballantine and a couple of dozen other people don't. None of the librarians I know (and I know several, including Robin White's mother) treat sf as strictly juvenile literature. Spinrad has a wild claim which he backs up with his own argument; not with facts. This stupid assertion has pushed all my buttons and I long to come back at him.

But I can't; Spinrad has given me nothing to come back at. There is no evidence, there are no statistics, interviews or chapter and verse cited to prove this statement.

In the paperback field, the package is important. The average on-display time for a new paperback ranges from ten days to two-and-a-half weeks. It is within this period of time that all copies must be sold. And it is within this time period that the sf paperback is competing with the infinitude of western, gothic, spy, and what-have-you paperbacks that are also exposed for a period of a week or so. Where do I get my figures? From Publisher's Weekly; that's where. They did an authoritative issue on paperback sales and distribution a month or so ago.

At <u>Fantasy & Science Fiction</u>, and here at Lancer, I read manuscripts. I look for good stories that will appeal to people. I do not look for manuscripts that appeal to children. If a good story has a message, has a point, or attempts to bring some purpose to light, I do

not object, as long as it does not conflict, interrupt, or interfere with the story. If it does, I will write with a suggestion or two to the writer. Or I will reject it. If the writer has what it takes to be published, he'll be back, someday, with a saleable manuscript.

This is what I try to do as an editor. As a fan, a reader of science fiction, I am looking for entertaining sf, for a novel which may teach me something, which may inform me while it entertains. I am looking for a well-plotted, well-written book. If I find one which isn't, which lacks something, or in which the philosophy gets in the way of the story, I will probably finish it. I will finish it because I want to see how it failed, where the book fell down.

I do not look for juvenile sf, nor would I buy it for Lancer or F&SF. When I look for sf as an editor, I hope that what I like others will like. And when I look for it on book shelves, as a reader, I appreciate the cover and the design, I appreciate the way a book is put together physically, and hopefully, I appreciate what the book says — as a story, and for what the author may be trying to say.

Al Andrews 1659 Lakewood Dr. Birmingham, Ala. 35216 Norman Spinrad...your THE MEN IN THE JUNGLE: you say it is a sf novel and you purposely put into it a lot of gore, death, sex, etc; on the "tell-it-like-it-is" line. And, because

of its contents it sunk into oblivion and the critics condemned it by silence. Okey, you are welcome to your need for the tell-it-like-it-is, sock it to 'em, gung-ho reality, and other such jinglistic jazz, but why try to force it on science fiction? When I buy a sf novel, I want a science fiction novel. If I wanted a book larded with blood, gore, violence, death, sexual perversions, and assorted filth and rot, I would buy a "war novel" that capitalizes on and deals in that kind of traffica... Iell science fiction as it is, rather than telling some other kind or type of story, under only a thin veneer of sf.

Since when did the God/religion theme become a taboo in sf? ((speaking of Norman's article on DANGEROUS VIS-IONS)) It has been used time and time again, by a multitude of sf authors. ((Al lists 25 examples from 1894 to 1961)) So, since the authors who used the God/religion theme in DANGEROUS VISIONS weren't heroically breaking any taboo, why did so many choose that theme? ... Well, take a look at those stories on that theme again. How many of them (in DV) would you say were "pro-God" or pro religion? In how many was the God-element good, beneficial, admirable? Om the otherhand, in how many was the God-element presented negatively, critically? If the case proves to be the latter category -No, I haven't read DV so I say "if"-could it be that the authors choosing the God/religion theme are, as many people are today, critical of God/religion, and so were following the modern trend of writing about God/religion negatively, critically, even carpingly? Sort of gigging God and raking religion, under the guise of science fiction.

Now, if some sf author wants to really be a Brave New Wave writer, buck the conformity of the modern-day negativism, pull out all the stops, and let himself go, let him have a go at this. A science fiction story in which the hero is dedicatedly pro-God and religion is strongly presented as an impelling force for good, and in which Godliness is the undisputed victor and winner. Oh, but we can't write that, now, can we! Why we would be breaking the taboo of The Group! Yes, Norman, some sf authors will break a taboo....provided that it is the in-thing to do; the current fashion to break a particular supposed taboo.

((You have a good point there, Al, and I wish I had the room left to print the rest of your five page letter, but alas... I am forwarding the entire letter to Norman, however, and you may get a reply in or out of PSY.))

Dick Ellington 1415 Allston Way Berkeley, Calif. 94702 Before I forget, my daughter, who is now ten, asked me last week if I minded if she ate a piece of stale chocolate cake for breakfast. I immediately brightened and told her certainly

she could and drink some milk to choke it down with. One thing led to another and I finally told her I knew a fan who used to put stale chocolate cake in tomato soup and eat it that way. She asked for confirmation: "A fan, huh?" "Yes." "I might have known. Yuch!"

Ihat wake I tended bar for was really quite fabulous. I poured many gallons of booze unto the multitudes and drank & of a bottle of Wild Turkey myself and when we left in the wee hours there was still about 6 gallons of booze undrunk in half gallon bottles, and many huge boxes of delicious fried chicken as yet uneaten. The parakeet had deteriorated somewhat so it was a Closed Casket affair.

Baird Searles
Of Unicorns and Universes
PACIFICA—WBAI—FM 99.5
30 East 39b St.
New York, N.Y.
10016

While not usually indulging in the standard mud-sling-ing of fandom, I do feel that Ied White's letter in the January issue brings up a point which needs rebuttal. He states that WBAI is "an-

noyed" for being "muzzled" about the NYCon. We are annoyed, but not for being muzzled. We had the information at our fingertips, and could have said as much as we wanted on the air re the con. We did not, out of politeness, since we understood this to be desireable; we had offered any cooperation, publicity or non-publicity, and also to broadcast the better speeches after the fact, which certainly wouldn't have activated Mr. White's xenophobia about strangers intruding in any way. No, our annoyance stems from the lack of politeness on the other side; the way in which we were asked, or told, not to give any publicity. Science fiction fandom is not noted for its tact and finesse, but this hit a new low, and I wonder how much it had to do with a comme-ci, comme-ca review I had

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just broadcast of Mr. White's latest opus.

I don't feel the mass media should be courted, but I don't believe they should be stepped on, either, particularly if science-fiction and fandom want the new non-insular image that it needs so badly.

Margaret Thompson Mentor, Ohio 44060

Is there any sort of room anyplace in 8786 Hendricks Rd. #25 where your various sad and lazy readers can beg of the non-collectors in your audience a copy of PSY #23? Sobbing fitfully, we implore someone

out there in the big-hearted world of fandom to sell us a used copy for, say, 50¢ or so. Eh? Anyone? Plus postage?

((I think I'll declare the availability of a l¢ a word ad rate for classifieds.))

Sir; The Canadian Secret Masters Guild announces its entry into the Grand Con Race. Torcon II in '72! Sincerely, CANADIAN SECRET MASTERS GUILD

Ed Cox 14524 Filmore St. Arleta, Calif. 91331

I'm behind Fred Patten and his L.A. in '72 committee. In fact, it'd be worth the time spent to investigate the feasibility of having the worldcon on the Queen Mary. Providing, of

MISTRESS TO THE GUILD

course, fans would go for such a radical departure.

George Fergus B-113 Armstrong Hall Mich. State: Univ. East Lansing, Mich. 48823

Harlan (of Hollywood, that is, not Harlan of Lothar) seems to have a knack for making negative predictions. In #23 he said that we would never see Piers Anthony in the pages of ANALOG, and then

Anthony turned-up with a Campbell-type engineering story in the Feb. '68 (I think) issue. In #22, Harlan compares wasting space discussing STAR TREK to "doing a learned treatise on the collected novels of Vargo Statten." So what turns up? A 50,000 word bio-and-bibliographic study of John Russell Fearn by Philip Harbottle. Does Harlan have some strange form of ESP?

Steve H. Lewis 2074 Pauline Blvd. Ann Arbor, Mich. 48103

I cut Jenkins Lloyd Jones' column from the Ann Arbor News last March 30th. Not knowing Mr. Jones was quite so nationally recognized ((or syndicated)) I thought you might be

interested in his comments on your pseudonymous writings and was going to send it along. But Andy Porter has blabbed the secrets of your sordid past for all to know. One can only hope the success of your new venture into fandom can enable you to give up such shameful pursuits. And when is the next book out?

((Yes, all I need is around a 1000 subscribers and

a government subsidy... The next book out is scheduled for June printing: THE ENDLESS ORGY; the further adventures of Roi Kunzer, the trained-from-birth human sex machine from the future who once again battles the evil forces of puritanism and anti-sexualism.))

Arnie Katz 98 Patten Blvd. 11040

Johnny Berry's column in PSY #24 contains something of a personal fannish New Hyde Park, NY milestone, though perhaps gravestone would be more accurate. In Johnny's list of those who've tried to inject

lightness and humor into fandom, I see Bailes and I are one with the gangs that produced FRAP and MINAC. It's a terrible thing, my friends, to be referred to in the past tense when you're only 21. If Johnny continues shoveling dirt into my fannish grave this way, I may have to disown him, or possibly force him to collate the next issue of the still very much alive (Post Office to the contrary) QUIP for Cindy and I.

One factor Johnny didn't consider in his discussion is that of challenge. That is, once you have done something successfully for a period of time, there is a tendency to stop pressing quite so hard, to sit back and enjoy the fruits of one's labors, and finally to seek a new challenge. Let's go back to the example of Terry Carr that Johnny used. Terry successfully produced a hoge. ornate fannish fanzine and folded it. He produced the newszine, and passed it on to other hands after he had run it smoothly for a couple of years. He then joined the staff of a frequent fannish fanzine, and when that fanzine hit a peak with issue #28, Terry and the rest all gave up. The challenge had been met. Terry retreated into FAPA and began building up LIGHTHOUSE into the zine it is today. That he is publishing it less frequently these days is probably a result of the fact that this challenge. too, has been successfully met. It is perhaps a sad fact that the sort of person who who can hit the heights with a witty, fannish fanzine is precisely the sort of person who will not be content to rest on his laurels for very

As a post script to Johnny's article, I'd say that those young (or at least enthusiastic) fans he's calling for are developing. The swing is definitely toward genzines and fan unity these days, as opposed to the swing towards apas and isolationism which has prevailed over the past five years, and this is the situation under which talent can be developed. Neos who associate only with other neos in some little apa (apa 45, for example) somehow don't develop sufficient writing skills to be important fans. Hell, we've already got one young fan publishing an "important" tanzine - Johnny Berry.

G.H. Scithers Box 9120 Chicago, Ill. 60690

John Brunner doesn't realize how poorly English is taught in America. I have had to dig out How Things Should Be Done a number of times to fill in the gaps in my education on punctuation and the like.

Best rule I know is, if you are in doubt on punctuation

or sentence structure, you have probably composed a sentence which is too long. Solution: chop it into small. digestible bits. In the matter of repeating the lead character's name, I am a bit with Mr. Howard. It is better to restate a name too often than too seldom; many readers do not have good memories for that kind of thing. In fact, in a fast-moving (i.e., fast reading) piece, it is, I think, highly desireable to keep reminding the reader of which character is which by an adjective or two. Read slowly, the recurrent "incomparable Deja Thoris" is pretty awful; read quickly, it reminds the reader quite unobtrusively who that oddly named character is.

Norman Spinrad may be making too much of a distinction between "taboo" subjects, which he discusses at length. and subjects that are just not done, which he does not mention. For a (deliberately far-fetched and horrid) example: a story taking as its premise that Hitler's racism was a Good Thing is not (in the strict sense) irreligious. subversive or sexy. But it's damn near unprintable in anything but a few racist mags. In the same way, stories which dwell on excrement, vomit, torture or cannibalism are, in general, not taboo, in Spinrad's sense, but they tend to be so umpleasant to read that there is no point in their being printed. All this is a generalization there are exceptions but I'm not going to let that interfere with the point that there are other reasons story subject matter may prevent enjoyment and — consequently - sale beside the classical taboos.

Jan M. Slavin Box 192 Old Chelsea Sta. New York, N.Y. 10011

Earl Evers gave me a copy of PSY 24. open natch to his article on grass and such. Of course, I read it. And being a fan I read the rest of the zine. And stole it from Earl to LoC.

I think I'll add my 2¢ worth about DV. I am in the process of reading it, intermittently with William Burrough's The Soft Machine. When my mind gets totally blown on one, I switch to the other. I think I like DV a lot better. In a strange way it reminds me of Bradbury's Illustrated Man; it is a collection of stories with common factors (in the case of DV to knock the reader off his ass) connected with a running dialogue to embellish and round out the stories, much like mortar for mosaic tile (in this case, a beautiful rap about everything by a shortly famous Harlan Ellison).

To encourage John Berry: I am a young fan (17) on her way UP. I try to be enthused about and active in fandom. But now that I've started to learn my way around, I've also started becoming cynical about the whole goddamn business. The fact that someone wants neos to spark up things a bit may jolt me out of this rut a bit. If you want a rennasiance, man, you're gonna get one.

Gary Deindorfer 105 So. Overlook Av. Trenton, N.J. 08618

I can appreciate the fact that Rick Sneary does not want to read cussed in personal correspondence the fact that fans seem to lead unduly sheltered lives, or at least many of them seem to, and if discussion of drugs in fandom would freak certain of these fans out it is only because we have gotten to the point where a favorable discussion of drugs in. say, READER'S DIGEST would no longer be any big thing.

I have read Earl's whole article through two or three times and I agree: It's the straight talk on drugs. But then there's a good reason for this: Earl is (1) not easily snowed about anything, and (2) he has had a hell of a lot of drug experience. This means he is not the sort of person taken in with for instance Timothy Leary's pious bullshit about acid; he'd rather take acid himself and and decide, just as I would.

I personally can't see much point to a science fiction writer attempting to write psychedelic science fiction without having at least some drug experience because these things are simply not communicable in words — Earl's article comes close to the limit of what you can tell; it remains for the experienced head to be able to read into his article all you can't tell. But if it heads off some of the grosser excesses then it will be of more potential worth than merely something to serve as discussion fodder for your readers.

((I'm carrying over till next issue your discussion of psychedelic sf and also your comments on Spinrad-Ellison-DANGEROUS VISIONS. This has got to be the last page of letters for this issue. Thanks for writing.))

LoC it to me, baby!

I ALSO GOT LETTERS FROM—— Ed Reed, who thinks that MEN IN THE JUNGLE is one of THE best books he's EVER read... Dean R. Koontz, who thinks LORDS OF THE STARSHIP was a masterpiece...Bill Conner (again) whose comments on B.J. Barron and related matters will be forwarded to Norman Spinrad...Bill Donaho, who discusses DV and whose words will journey to interested parties... Earl Evers, who said the response to his DV review really blew his mind.... Randy Bytwerk, who doesn't think there are any great sf writers alive today...Mike Glicksohn. who likes PSY but is appalled at the mud-slinging ... R. Schultz, who writes on both sides of his paper—this makes it verrry difficult to chop up for the egoboo bonus, R., so please don't do it again. The egoboo bonus, for the info of those who didn't catch the explanation previously, is pasted—up comments from all not-printed letters, and all not-completely printed letters, which go to those contributors to PSY who earnethem. So, even though your gem-like insights aren't published, folks, nevertheless the person who inspired them will read them, and curse you......

And there are MORE letters to mention...Bob Vardeman liked DUNE and identifies himself with Charlie Brown... D. Gary Grady does not think km. Shatner is a subtle actor. Stop contradicting me, D:....well, I'm low on space, so it's list-of-names time. Regretfully. I got fine letters from Tom Draheim....Jerry Kaufman...Henry Crenshaw...Roy about drugs in fanzines. However, Tackett...Ray Fisher...Mike Zaharakis...Paul Walker...H.K. Earl Evers and I have already dis- Bulmer...Bob Shaw...fred Patten...Ruth Berman...rich brown:

A PRIMER FOR

PART TWO

After grass, there's a sort of "drug gap"—LSD is a much, much stronger drug, and most of the intermediate drugs are hard to come by.

If you can get mescalin or psilocybin, I recommend you try them before taking an acid trip—if you have a bad trip on the milder psychedelics, it's probably not safe for you to take acid. The milder drug will also give you some idea of what to expect when you do try acid, and it's a lot less likely to do you any permanent harm if you have a bed trip. Two things you will find easier to get that also can form an intermediate step between grass and acid are DMT and morning glory seads.

DMI (and the closely related DEI, which is similar but longer lasting and somewhat milder) is not a mild, safe drug if taken straight. In fact, I don't recommend it at all, since I've heard that it can cause severe brain damage if overused, and the drug always has a "dirty" feel to me—like my body knew I was doing it a dis-service.

If you do take straight DMT, it's safest to smoke it, since most blackmarket DMT is quite impure. (The stuff is easy to make but hard to purify in a home lab.)

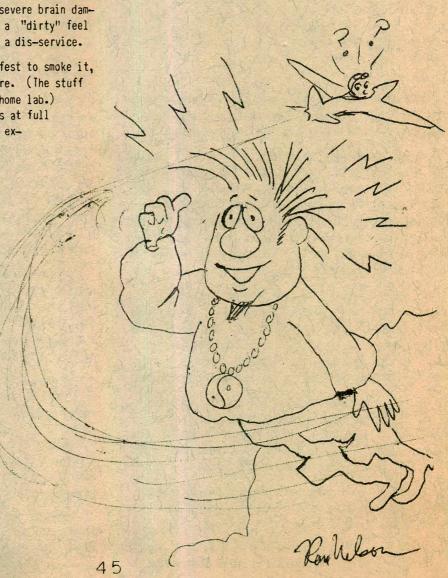
The high lasts only about ten minutes at full strength, but it is an extremely intense experience—I always get a terrific rush, with my whole body vibrating and my head seeming about to explode. My lungs seem to writhe inside my body, and my throat feels coated with brass. Enormous flashes of yellow and amber lights wash over my eyes and I see clouds of rapidly moving blue—white sparks.

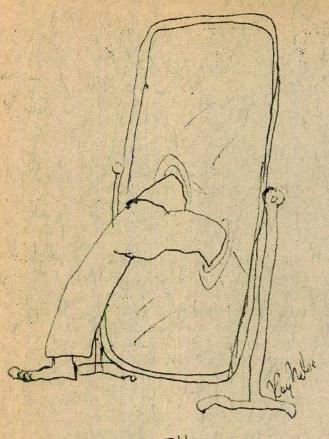
DMT isn't a close chemical relative of the other psychedelic drugs, and the high isn't similar to that of any other drug, except cocaine.

DMT won't help prepare you for an acid trip, and it will

BY EARL EVERS leave you feeling weak and exhausted for hours after you come down. It leaves a lot of people nauseated. True, DMT gives a very strong trip, and one that you can't get from any other drug, but I still don't like it.

So much for DMT and DET in the pure form. In dilute form mixed with pot or tobacco, DMT is a much groovier drug, one smooth step stronger than pot. (I don't know the proportions or techniques for adding DMT to other smokeables since I've always found the prepared mixture easy to score.)





EGO DEATH

It's still probably not a good idea to turn on to dilute DMT regularly, though I've never heard any rumors that it's dangerous to health used in these quantities.

DMT-pot impairs my co-ordination enough so I usually have trouble climbing stairs or crossing streets, so it's best to stay inside when using it. The high lasts anywhere from two to six hours and is very similar to a very intense hash high with the addition of speed effects. (You get this same effect for six to twelve hours after taking DMI straight, but you're likely to be feeling too burned out to enjoy it.)

By speed effects, I mean an apparent increase in physical energy and a floating sensation as if your body were immersed in water instead of air. You're not really any stronger or faster than usual, but you feel you are. The speed effects I get from DMI are much jerkier than the "spaced-out" feeling the amphetamines produce.

Every time I take a puff of DMI-pot, I experience a visual flash like someone turned on half a dozen extra lights for a few seconds. There are also selective color effects—browns, ambers, ochers, dark reds, warm blacks, off whites, and all the earthy colors become more intense.

I once did a painting while smoking DMT-pot and got some interesting effects with these colors. I have it on my wall, and it still appeals more to people on DMT than to people on the ground or on other drugs.

Grass salted with methadrine or other amphetamine

drugs is similar to DMT-pot except there are no selective color effects and the speed effects are much smoother and stronger. Since A is a cleaner drug than DMT in thatits supposed to take longer for frequent use to do organic damage, A-pot is probably safer than DMT-pot.

There doesn't seem to be any danger of addiction from A-pot either—the amounts involved are quite small, it's just that smoking gets the drug to your nervous system faster than absorbing it through your stomach. I doubt there's as much actual amphetamine in an ounce of A-pot than there is in a single pep or diet pill. I've only noticed one side effect from smoking A-pot—I can't sleep for four or five hours afterward. On straight pot, I can smoke up right before going to bed and have no trouble sleeping, the only effect being brighter colored dreams.

So far, I've been talking about highs rather than trips, except for DMT, which is in a class by itself. DMT is a very intense experience, but I wouldn't call it a mind-expanding drug because it doesn't exactly alter your emotional and sensory perceptions, but simply overpowers them with a flow of disjointed hallucinatory experiences.

Now I'm going to start on drugs that give you an actual trip; psychedelics that alter your view of your environment radically while you're high, and to a varying extent permanently. (No drug makes you high permanently as far as I know, but almost anyone who has ever taken a trip notices things he never noticed before, and a lot of that sticks in the memory.)

Psilocybin is the mildest of the true psychedelics—the high only lasts about four hours and there's very little of the sense of naked confrontation with reality that makes acid dangerous for a lot of people. Effects on coordination and vision are quite weak—if you have to, you can walk around and do almost anything you would normally do while on psilocybin. At the same time, the trip has a lot in common with an acid trip—the general feeling is quite similar—so psilocybin is the ideal drug to take if you're "working up" to acid.

Only one drawback—it's almost impossible to lay hands on the stuff. Before the anti-psychedelics laws were passed, legitimate drug companies manufactured it for experimental use and a fair amount found its way onto the black market, but if any is being made now, security on it is very tight.

Synthesizing psilocybin seems to be beyond the capabilities of black market chemists, and the only form currently available at all is extracted in Mexico from mushrooms. I've tried this mushroom psilocybin and it doesn't compare with the real thing as I remember it from several years ago. I don't really miss it myself because it doesn't do anything for you acid won't do, but I recommend it highly as a preparation for acid.

Like all the stronger psychedelics, psilocybin greatly intensifies the color sense. This is a qualitative rather than a quantitative difference over the effects of pot—colors aren't just vivid, they're nearly alive. As

far as I can convey it, the difference is an emotional one—on grass, you simply see more clearly, while on psilocybin and stronger psychedelics, you almost feel colors.

Bright colored objects keep changing slightly in hue as you stare at them. At night, any bright distant light has a halo around it. Ripples on the surface of a glass of water become bright, flowing rainbows. You tend to become fascinated by the visual textures of objects.

Shadows and dark, empty spaces take on the appearance of solid objects. Depth perception becomes greatly altered—distant objects appear much further away than they are but tend to leap toward you as your eyes focus on them.

However, I've never had actual hallucinations on psilocybin, except by pressing on my closed eyelids with my hands, and I can get hallucinations that way even on the ground. Neither have I had color disorientation to the point where a color becomes its compliment or bands of color flow across blank black or white surfaces. Color effects are not selective——I've never been more sensitive to one color more than to another on psilocybin.

The visual effects are by far the strongest part of a psilocybin trip. Touch. taste, hearing are sharpened more than with pot, but this is straight enhancement rather than distortion. Time distention is present, but not to the extent that I've ever completely lost track of time, or got hung up repeating some meaningless act over and over. Emotional effects are groovy but not particularly intense—I feel euphoric and common objects impress me with their beauty, but there's none of the "feeling the cosmic vibrations" and "standing at the center of the universe" sensation acid gives. I've never experienced terror or vertigo or loss of identity on psilocybin, and I've never felt I was losing control of myself. If you experience any of these bad reactions on psilocybin, I don't recommend that you try any of the stronger psychedelics.

Mescalin is usually expensive (up to ten dollars a cap) and hard to locate, but it's on the market occasion—ally. The trip lasts six to eight hours and is much more intense than a psilocybin trip. (Some people have had bad trips on mescalin, but I've never heard of anyone suffering lasting harmful effects.) The trip is enough different from an acid trip so I still turn on to it every once in a while as a change of pace. If mescalin is available, you may prefer it to morning glory seeds as a preparation for acid since it contains no nauseating impurities.

A note on peyote—it contains mescalin and produces a very similar trip, but it also contains a number of impurities which cause extreme nausea, and I don't recommend it even though it's fairly easy to get a lot of places. Either you're so busy fighting off the nausea you don't even notice most of the psychedelic effects, or you go ahead and let yourself get sick and end up trying to groove on a puke-filled toilet bowl. No thank you.

Mescalin has the most striking visual effects of any common psychedelic, including LSD. (Harmine, the active

principal in Yage — is stronger, producing selective-color effects in the blue and green ranges, but it's such a rare drug that a lot of heads believe it to be mythical. It exists, and I keep hearing rumors that underground chemists are working on producing it, but so far none has hit the market.) A number of people have experienced true hallucinations—real enough to fool the eyes and lasting more than a split second—on mescalin, but I never have.

Selective color effects favor reds and purples and vary widely in intensity from time to time. It's common to see very distinct patterns of color on blank surfaces, but I've never seen them form figures representational enough to be called hallucinations. These move and change color rather slowly instead of vibrating and changing at great speed the way acid color effects do. Neither do they intrude on my whole field of vision, superimposing themselves on every object in view, as is common with acid. However, mescalin makes visual perception of the colors of real objects much more vivid than acid does. In fact, you'll see colors around you appear about as "rich and strange" on mescalin as you can expect to ever see, no matter what drugs you try.

Contrasts between light and dark are also greatly increased, and visual contrasts take on great depth. For instance, the flowers on a floral-print curtain appear three-dimensional under mescalin, and a piece of burlap looks as rough as a file. Once I looked at a piece of sandpaper while tripping on mescaline and the grains of sand appeared to be crawling around, some of them seeming to jump right off the paper and disappear.

A couple of years ago I visited the National Art Museum in Washington while on mescalin and nearly blew my mind looking at Dali's "Last Supper". My impression was, "This is the realist thing I've ever seen in my life; it's some sort of Archtype from which reality is made."



One of my grooviest visual drug experiences happened on a mescalin trip during my days as a biology student. I had a prism rigged up to project a broken beam of light into a microscope, and about the second hour of my trip, I used this mike to look at a dense culture of protozoans.

Each of the teeming creatures was a blazing rainbow. The beating cilia were flashing multicolored sparks, and the disturbed water in the wake of each animolecule was a pattern of glinting, metalic-looking plates. The feelings of size, depth, reality, and alien-world strangeness this sight gave me are still vivid today. It was one of the most beautiful sights I've seen in my life.

Mescalin has stronger emotional effects than any of the drugs yet mentioned. I usually feel awe at the sheer enormity, complexity and beauty of the world around me. A greedy kitten gobbling cat-food impressed me as a ravening monster, and when a tomcat yawned, I was actually slightly frightened—the huge yellow fangs and the beckning maw of the mouth made me think, "Here is a creature born to devour flesh."

But emotional reactions on mescalin are usually in momentary flashes, not in a continuous chain of events building up to a climax. I've never experienced strong mystical or religious feelings on mescalin, and I've rarely gotten into the soul—searching, decision—making bag that's so common on acid, though other people tell me they have. I've never experienced acute, unreasonable fear or anger on mescalin, though again, others have. I always feel I can control the trip and that the drug isn't stronger than I am the way acid often is.

I'd rather take mescalin indoors than out since my eyes often become so sensitive bright sunlight causes clouds of opaque black spots which interfere with vision. Looking out through a window on a sunny afternoon, the air appears thick and rather yellowish and not at all inviting.

To sum it up, mescalin is mostly a visual drug for me, and one that makes small, close objects appear larger, brighter, and incredibly more impressive than usual. My other senses are effected more than on psilocybin, but in much the same way—taste, touch, smell, and hearing become more acute, but there is very little distortion of sensory reception.

Since morning glory seeds contain a drug that is chemically almost identical to LSD, the effects are very similar except that a seed trip is calmer and milder and less likely to cause a real freak—out. So I'll discuss the effects of seeds along with the effects of acid, but first I want to give some details on tripping on seeds. Morning glory seeds are the only psychedelic drug you can buy and keep openly, and they are no marginal "legal high"——the trip is somewhere between psilocybin and acid in strength. Bad trips on seeds are more common and more severe when they occur than bad trips on mescalin, but seeds still seem to be safer than acid. The only drawback is the presence of nauseating chemicals and these can be removed fairly easily.

The varieties of morning glory seeds best for tripping are <u>Heavenly Blue</u>, <u>Pearly Gates</u>, and <u>Flying Saucers</u>. Heads have tried other varieties, but with mixed results. Five or six packs are a dose, but it saves work to prepare enough seeds for several trips at once.

In some states, the seeds are treated to prevent heads from tripping on them. If the seeds you buy have such a coating of nausea-producing material, the package will say so. If such a coating is present, it can be removed by soaking the seeds in rubbing alcohol for half an hour before processing them.

To process the seeds, first wash them in warm, soapy water, rinse, and dry on a cloth. Then grind them up thoroughly with morter and pestle or whatever equivalent you have. (I use a big wooden bowl and the detached head of a ball peen hammer.) Mechanical grinders save time, but too much of the ground seeds remains stuck inside the machine.

When the seeds are pulverized, put them in warm water to soak over night. Don't boil them, or you'll dissolve out the very impurities you're trying to get rid of. After soaking, filter off all the solid material and throw it away. (Cloth will work as a filter in a pinch, but it doesn't remove all the solids. I always use the filter paper sold in grocery stores for filtering coffee.) This should leave you with a murky, reddish liquid with an incredibly foul taste.

If you can manage to drink this liquid without gagging, you can save yourself some work and use the liquid for tripping, but most people prefer to boil away the water and pack the resulting gunk into a gelatine capsule. (If you're only capping a few doses, it's easier just to dump the contents out of vitamin caps and use them. Otherwise you'll have to go to a drugstore and hassle over buying caps——it's legal to sell them, but most drugg—ists would rather not do it.)

Seeds processed as described make very few people sick. If you try it and do get sick, or if you know you have a very weak stomach, you can usually prevent the nausea with motion—sickness drugs.

It takes from a half an hour to an hour and a half for a seed trip to start as opposed to twenty to forty minutes for acid. A seed trip comes on gradually, while you can usually feel yourself going up on acid. Both acid and seed trips last anywhere from eight to twenty—four hours, averaging around twelve. The trip tapers off towards the end, usually after six or eight hours, and a lot of heads like to end their trip at this point and go to sleep. This is quite easy—you just take 100mg (two standard pills) of vitamin B3 (niacinamide). In any case you should take B3 after every acid or seed trip, since the drugs deplete your body's supplies of this vitamin.

SECOND SESSION



Where the editor continues to ramble on and on

"All right, Geis, what is your obsessed little mind going to talk about this time?"

"This new typewriter, for one thing."

"Yeah. I ran off the first page of Bob Bloch's article—review this week to see how it would look in print and it looks fine. Highly readable and yet a tremendous saving of space compared to elite and pica."

"True. What're you getting...about a 50% increase in wordage per page?"

"Yep. Sometimes more. I'm quite pleased."

"But you said last issue this typer would get eight lines per vertical inch. It doesn't."

"I was told it would. I was angry. The typer man was willing to install a different gear or whatever... but I tried it out this way and concluded that squeezing more lines in would be a Bad Thing. It would make for too crowded a look. So I kept it as is."

"This has seventeen spaces per horizontal inch, is: that right?"

"Umhmm. And that makes PSY this issue the equivalent of a 72 page zine, compared to the use of elite type."

"Another justification for your raise to 50¢, huh?"
"Sure is."

"Go on. What else?"

"I'll tell you one thing, getting more words on a page means using more ink in the Gestetner. I had to re-ink every 25-30 pages when I was running off that first stencil."

"How many copies you going to run off this issue?"
"Three hundred. My arm is tired already."

"Wake up, Geis! You're supposed to sleep at night."
"I was not sleeping! I was trying to remember something...oh, yes! Greg Benford asked me to specify some awkward writing in Heinlein's Hugo books. I forgot to respond in the letter section, so I will now."

"How? Heinlein is sacred."

"Well...I was thinking about the first time I tried to read STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND. It had just been published in paperback and I gagged at some of the dialog between a man and a woman...somewhere between page 50 and 100, I think. The scene struck me as so phoney and false to life that I closed the book and didn't read any further...and that was a loooong time ago."

"Wait till P.A.M. Terry reads that!"

GASP But I've resolved to give it another whirl, soon, and to forge ahead to the end. I'll never stop at page 63 again!"

"Now, Geis, there's something you've got to address yourself to, a flaw in PSY, no less."

"I know, I kbow..."

"Well?"

"So okay! Even I, with this new micro-elite, even I do not have room, or the will, to review EVERY fanzine that plunks into the mail box. There didn't used to be this many...in the Old Days."

"T.S."

"I didn't realize...and even the smallest capsule review and rating consumes too much space. Do you realize I covered or reviewed or somethinged over 47 fanzines?"

"I lost count."

"I just counted. I'm not going to do that again. It was a terrible grind."

"What ARE you going to do? You can't just IGNORE the fan press."

"No, I don't want to do that...but...I think I'll to a column about fanzines, not a review column, but a discussion of things that strike my interest in the fan press; individual items...trends...like that."

"Yeah...worth a try. Might be a good thing."
"Settled, then. Now close your eyes...."



"Damn you, Geis, that's a <u>censored</u> picture of Carol
Peters!"

Very True. ==

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