

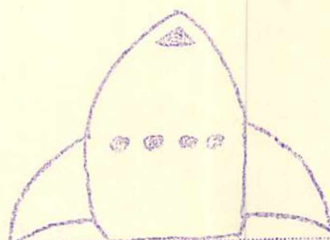
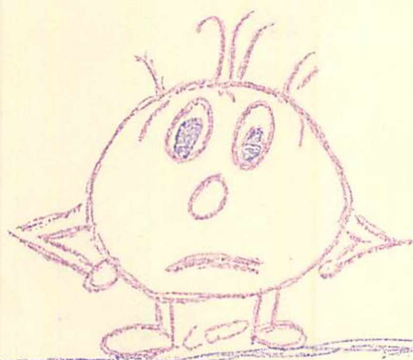
11/19/52

10¢

SCINTILLA

EXTRA

Science Fiction



 Report from  Inner Fanctum  (yed)

Inner fanctum is a largish small room. It contains little besides some relics from the Elizabethinian age that we use for furniture and ROBOT PRESS. Robot Press consists of first, a postcard-size mimio called the Little Type Monster. Now, it is all because of LTM that Planetoid, our little bapzine. Next, is Goocy, the baby hecto. Now Goocy isn't the best of hectos, but he is very loyal and will work for ~~an~~ no one but Herman. Now, Herman is our pet werewolf. He does all of the typing and most of the duplicating. If he didn't have such a short tale he would be a little better typer. Now, the main press of Robot Press at this time is a portable ditto mac~~h~~ hine. It has not been here long enough to expose its personality so it will be lightly skipped over here. The very dilapidated typer that Herman uses has no great distinction except that is on the staff of Robot Press.

The chief cook and bottle washer of the whole deal is Willis. No, not the mad Irishman, but the Martian Bouncer. Willis is okay as a boss, but tends to be a little too bossy sometimes.

I nearly forgot to mention Flik. Flik is a purple mongoose turned brown. You see, all the mongeese on Uranius are purple, but when Flik came to Earth, the damp, hot atmosphere turned his beautiful purple coat a dull brown. Flik does ~~not~~ nothing ~~an~~ but watch and complain about not having enough asparin for his eyewash.

And then there is the pride and joy of Inner Fanctum. It is a genuine, original, antique, cherry pitter. Not every press has a genuine, original, antique cherry pitter. In fact, I am told that very few presses have a genuine, original, antique cherry pitter. The cherry pitter does nothing but pit the finest pittless cherries.

There are two more prospects for Robot Press. I expect to get a half-size mimio about the first of December and a new (but second hand) typer. These will, consequently, practically take over Robot Press.

And me. To all of this, I am practically an innocent bystander. I watch the cogs turn in fascination. What will happen when this machine meets Proxyboo, Ltd.? Will it be the battle of the small against the large? Will they make an alliance and rule all fandom? What will happen when Robot Press and Proxyboo, Ltd. meet?

- - - - -

Well, I just got Feindetta. It is a neat little size from down Savannah way. Charlie Welles puts it out. Charles lives at 405 E. 62 Street, Savannah. Lessee now, it sells for about a dime or a couple for (scuse me, I mean three) two bits. His editorial is a little confused and overdone, but still enjoyable.

3

3

REPORT FROM INNER FANCTUM (2)

fta is all ditto. This time it is all purple, but now it promises color. He has a very nice multicolored cover. It is not and not too wonderful of a theme, but regardless, is still neat.

Another mag, OOPSLA, came in. Gregg does a nice job on his mag. It had a terrific con report. There was a pretty good report from Beale, too. This is a mimio mag with about twenty four or five pages.

The other latest mag is the MACABRE INDEX. It was probably a lot of work, but since I am not a big collector, it was useless to me.

I am trying to find a suitable name for my half-size mimio that I am planning to get. It is a Speed-O-Print Junior Liberator. Anyone that cares enough to write me about Scilly should care enough to get in on a free sub for about five ish of Scilly. This is what I am offering for first prize. They're are five second prizes consisting of one ish added to your sub or just the next ish.

We regret the raise of price in this issue, but it was unavoidable. We were told that the last ish rated a dime rating, and since we (all one of us) are buying a new mimio and a new (or nearly new) typer, we have to stop some of the loss. Don't worry, this still won't put us in the black. I don't especially want to be in the black. Scilly is a fannish hobby and my hobbies don't pay.

We can still use more articles and good fan fiction. I especially like humorous poetry, so start the noodle to percolatin. I would especially like articles on how to run a fanzine, too. And, I nearly forgot, I need a full size, troublesome Ford. I have heard that no fanzine is complete until they have had a couple of Sexes.

DON'T BE FACETIOUS

LEA

WHY
DON'T
YOU
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Fiedletta
104 2 for 25¢
Chas. Welles
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Savannah, Ga
A second
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Do's and Don'ts for Fanzine Editors & Publishers

~~111~~

by Barclay Johnson

I don't know much more about fan publishing than the next fellow, but as editor of FooView, Fandom's Trailing Monthly, I think I have gained considerable experience to warrant putting a few of my experiences down on paper in the form of tips for the prospective fanzine editor-publisher.

The first thing to consider when planning a fanzine is a name. I think, since it is, in a way, an advertisement of your publication, and the only way that many people will hear of it. If you are a young fan, as I am, or a not too active one, you may be tempted to give your fanzine such a title as "Fanview", "Science Fiction Amateur", "The S Fer", or some other title of that type. This is all right, since fanzines have "clicked" with such a title. ~~For example, Fanvariety.~~ (As an example, Fanvariety.) However, a cute clever or even nonsensical title might bring more people into your flock of readers. I could have just as well named my fanzine "Mess", "Millerite", "The Voice of Jehoshaphat" or any other of thousands of titles of this type. I chose FooView because for many old fans it identifies an old fan joke (warring philosophies of Foo and Jhu), and for new ones it suggests a kind of whimsy which is popular in many circles.

The second problem one faces is a method of duplication. All I have to say is this: get an A. B. LICK MIMIOGRAPH. They are the original makers of mimeo equipment, and your best bet might be to get a ~~an~~ second-hand one from an authorized dealer. This is what I use, and it cost just \$25. It is very important to get a mimeograph which has a gadget which keeps the paper from slipping through the machine when the roller is not in the right position. Be sure to get this ~~xy~~ item. It will save you dollars, and many backbreaking hours. (Yes, ladies...)

Next, there is the problem of material. This, in the long run, can make the difference between a good fanzine and a bad one. In my case, I wrote almost all the material in the first issue of FooView myself. This may work, but be sure that you are sure your work is like what you want to be in future issues. This will help prospective authors to know what is expected of them.

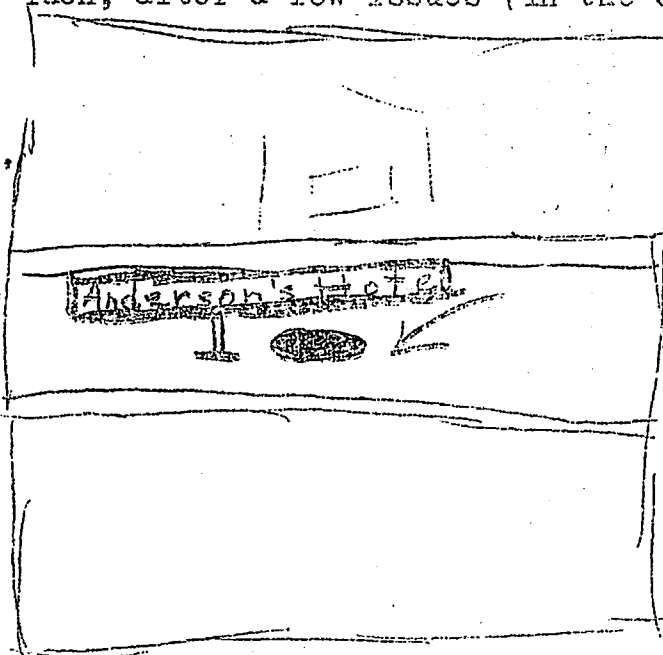
The fourth problem, and one which is often overlooked, to the dismay of the editor and publisher is the problem of circulation. That is, how the fanzine is to be distributed and to who it is to be distributed. Here is the way I did it: I sent out 150 (not the usual 20 or 40) copies of FooView ~~to~~. About twenty five people asked for the next issue which I sent to them along with a ~~number~~ number of other people. About twenty five sent for the third issue, and so on. I didn't send out as many second ~~x~~ issues as firsts, actually the percentage of returned copies increased considerably over the two issues. Consult your post office about postage regulations. They are too complex to set down here. Well, that about covers it. The rest it is fun to learn for oneself. But here is just one very important point. Editing and publishing a fanzine takes an AWFUL amount of time, and money! Take an estimate of how much your zine might cost, how much time it might take: triple it. That's about how much it will take in

Silly Wanderings

by CHARLES WELLES

Cosmag & SF Digest has folded. It wasn't very surprising, really, but its folding led me to do some thinking. It seems fanzines are divided into several classes. First, are the fanzines, which, like C/SFD, start off like any other fanzine at first. They usually start off mimeoed or hektoed, and are published by a rank neofan, who, in many cases, hasn't even seen another fanzine when he starts it. But this class is rather unusual--and rare. Usually by a combination of luck and circumstances they become well-known rather rapidly. Then, after a few issues (in the case of C/SFD

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The type that is started by rank neofans, and the type started by older fan with more experience. Examples of the former are SLANT and ORB; of the latter, EXX SFML. The former usually gets so big so quick that they are dropped like hot grease by their eds, or either the eds slow up mighty fast. Of course, if they are slow appearing from the beginning, like SLANT and unlike ORB, then they will last longer. However, I predict that SLANT will fold within two years for the same reasons. In the SFML type, the eds know that they shouldn't try too much, and don't. These are liable to last a long time.

Then is the type who start out appearing regularly, and stick to that schedule. They usually have their beginnings in a fan who had never seen a fanzine before, too. They are usually mimeoed, or, at first, hektoed. By sticking to their schedule, by staying consistent, and by the editor's slowly gaining experience, they become well-known and last a long time. The length of time they last seems to be inversely related to their frequency of schedule. They are such mags as Sship, QUANDRY, CONFUSION, COPBLA!, and others. Some, especially the oft-appearing ones like C and CF., sooner or later slow up, but don't fold for years. KWA LeE was a very good example of that, tho his development was slower than most, and he wasn't as consistent. An offshoot of this class is the kind start-

-ed by neofans who do not remain consistent, but are very inconsistent so that each issue or two is a mag unto itself. It's not always the fault of the editor that the mag is inconsistent, but sometimes the product of circumstances as well. Perhaps LeZ could be considered a member of this offshoot-class. Scilly is. My own Fiendetta promises to be. They z are pubbed by fans who can't make up their minds what schedule they want, what type of publication, ect. I predict they will settle down to one kind sooner or later and become more consistent if they don't fold first.

KIA

Finally, there are the kind that start off, looking promising, but soon fold because their eds aren't really publishers at heart. The majority of fanzines are this type. MAD, TIME STREAM, and others who have folded or are folding. I think also FANTASIAS (the Dave may have the stubbornness to stick with it, I don't think he is a fan-publisher at heart, but just a fan.) It is hard to predict which fanzines will last and which won't. I hope you fan pubbers will look at your fanzine and decide what kind it is. Who knows;; maybe you publish another LeZ..or Planetoid! (NOTE to Larry..I'm referring to Tucker's Planetoid, which was the prime example of utter crud..not your oneshot) ***
(((Two-shot, I will have you know..LEA)))

See ya nextish,

Chas.

BLOW THE MAN DOWN.....

This is sort of a second editorial. It turned out that I am going to have to wait a while before I get My Little Mimeo. I was planning on putting the next (this) ish of Scilly out on it, but I am going to have to wait until Christmas or so. (Just dusting ain't it? #This is sort of a thrown-together ish, k using just the material on hand, I am turning it out. Awful, ain't it? I forgot all about writing to ORBob for his column, and now it is too late. I am sure you will all miss him. We have a new column this ish, tho. It's 'Carr's Crypt'. Then we have a new contributor. This is Barclay Johnson. I am sure you will all like his work. #I am holding the best of everything back

, nearly all of the art, for the next ish. I (if I can manage the Mimeo) plan to make a grand slam out of it.

-LEA-

This here little dew-daw comes out intermittantly, real intermittantly. Iffen you want a copy or two, justen you sit down and send me a little epistle (my, that were a big one weren't it?) at ROBOT PRESS, 2716 Smoky Lane, Billings, Montana. I guess ya'd call me the editor. People call me that and a lot of other stuff. And I be called, among other things\$, Larry Anderson.

seeya

UNWANTED LULLABY by Orma McCormick from

TIP-TOP VARIETIES

X

A mother sang an ancient soothing cradlesong
With modulated tones, because her voice was strong;

"Rock-a-bye my baby,
Go to sleep, my son;
Rock-a-bye, do not cry,
If you try to close your eye,
Half the battle's won....."

But this was a baby like no other,
A child of a changling race,--
He shocked ~~w~~ and outraged his mother
Exclaiming with sorrowful face:

"Your vocabulary is deficient, Mother, dear,
Your rhythmic pattern lacks in sequence too, I fear;
This oscillating motion is vertiginous to me,
Aeonic growth has altered biologically
The elemental need for sonic lullabies,--
I'd much prefer you didn't rhapsodize."

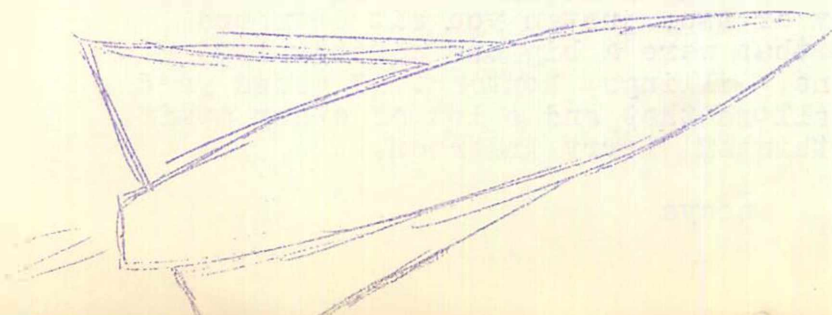
This mother had survived atomic wars,--
Had been among the first to land on Mars,--
Her patience had been tried too many times,
Her soul was scarred with oft-repeated crimes;
She raised her hand, and with one forceful sweep
She ~~knock~~ knocked her little genius sound asleep!

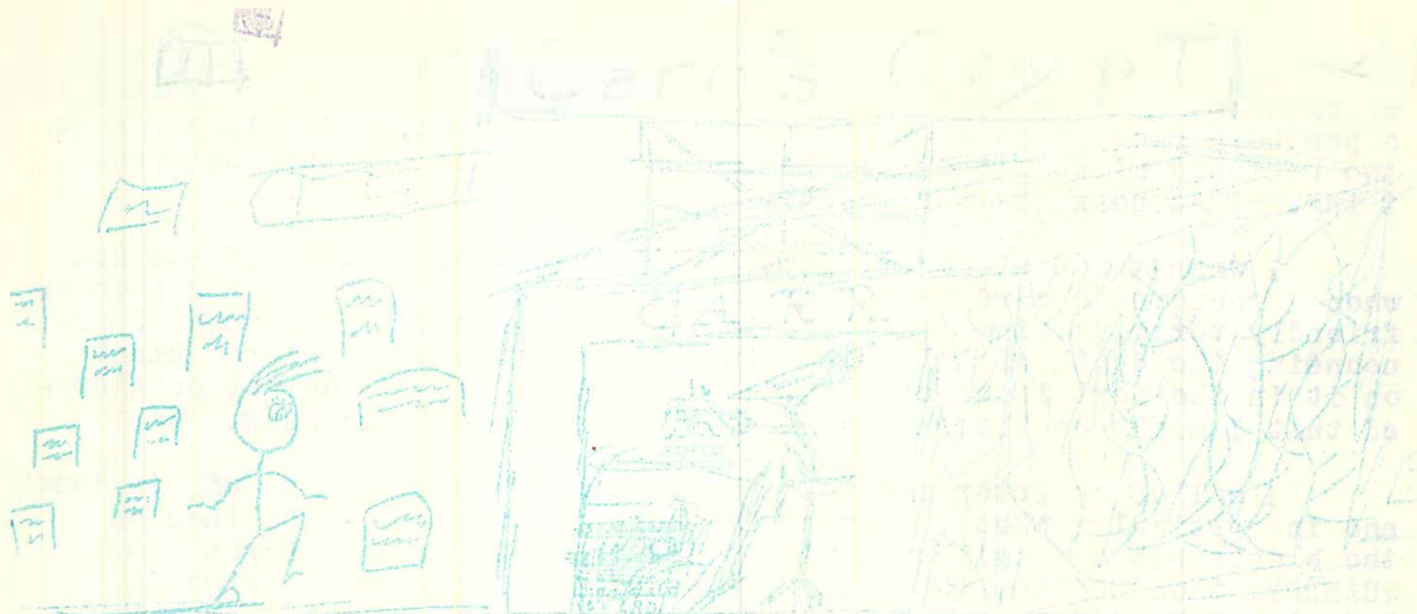


THE FICKLE FAN

One fan left his love for fantastics
To study a new kind of plastics,
Then he met Miss Irene,
And the polystyrene
Was dropped for romantic gymnastics.

----- Orma McCormick





by Terry Carr

As many of you, perhaps, know, Peter Graham and I are friends. I edit VULCAN (that's a sly plug!) and he's the associate ed; he edits SEETEE and I'm the ass. ed.; we're co-editors of a PAPAZINE, LOOKING BACKWARD; and we also collaborate on a lot of stuff. We do a lot of things together.

But not the Willis Death Hoax.

It started one day when Peter was visiting my house. Flashing out of a temporary silence came his thought:

"Terry! I was just thinking..." A short pause, then: "Why not pull a hoax...maybe...maybe...I've got it! Walter A. Willis is dead!..."

I eyed him for a moment, then said, "Don't be silly."

"But why not? What we could do with an idea like that..."

"Don't be stupid!" I said, a bit louder this time.

He grumbled something about me "always spoiling his fun", but lapsed into silence about the affair. No more was heard of it till about a week later, when, in the course of a telephone conversation that had turned to the subject of the mail, he said:

"Guess what you'll get tomorrow?"

That stopped me for a minute. Then I said "What?"

"You'll see," he said coyly.

I asked him what, but all he would tell me was that he had mailed me something that day, and that I would most likely get it in the mail the next day.

I did get it the next day. It was the card announcing the death of Walter A. Willis.

My first reaction was one of disgust. I phoned him and told him my opinion. He had just turned thirteen at the time, and had received a postcard mimeograph from his parents as a present. With it had come two postcard mimeo stencils. He had been dying to try them on something. That hoax was the result.

I wasn't mad at first, just a bit disgusted. But I did get mad when I received a card from Charles Leo Riddle, with whom I had been on friendly terms, saying (and this is a direct quote): "The postcard announcing the death of Willis was in very poor taste--watch for blast on it in the next issue of PEON." Before that time I had not considered that I might be thought to be the perpetrator of the hoax.

I called up Peter and told him exactly what I thought of his idea, and in particular what I thought he could do with it. From then on the blasts hit our mailboxes with startling regularity. First was QUANDRY, then COPS^L, then PEON, COSMAG/SF DIGEST, Rosco Wright's FAPazine VIEWPOINTS, and the SOL WILLISH, in which practically every columnist blasted Graham. Fortunately for me, only one of these editors (Lee Hoffman) tied me in with it, aside from Lee Riddle, and she didn't mention my name (or that of Peter Graham) directly, since she wasn't sure I was connected with it.

There was an aftermath to the episode, too. Charles Welles, who had held about the same opinion as I had about the affair, told Graham that Lee Hoffman was to get married. Sort of a counter-hoax that should have been limited to a private letter between the two of them, as it started out to be. But Graham told me, and I couldn't resist breaking the news in my column in PEON. So, I wrote it up and sent it to Lee Riddle. The day after I sent it Graham got a letter from CW, saying that it had been just a counter-hoax, and to the Willis hoax, ~~and~~ So there I was, after just explaining to Riddle that I had had no part in the Willis hoax, and that I thought the whole idea of such hoaxes asinine, unwittingly starting another hoax. So I rushed an air-mail letter off to Lee ~~R~~ explaining to him about the Hoffman marriage hoax, and begging him to cut that part from the column, to change it, or something.

You can imagine Lee Riddle's state of mind when he received the letter. First the Willis Death Hoax, then me explaining quickly that I had nothing to do with it, then me starting another hoax myself, then denying the veracity of it, as if I had changed my mind about it at the last moment. And that column was to be printed in the same issue of PEON as the report that I had nothing to do with the Willis hoax. Confusing, wet?

You don't know the half of it. Due to the differences in mail schedules between air-mail and regular mail, the rebuttal of the Hoffman hoax reached him before the column containing it did. I imagine he was completely confused for a time. But finally everything was straightened out.

Peter Graham, I think, has learned his lesson. He's sorry about the whole thing, and realizes what a stupid thing it was. Willis, in CONFUSION, defended him and stated that he bore no grudge, and that he thought the postcard rather cute. The effects have died down somewhat, and fandom is beginning to forget the episode. In fact, Lee Hoffman, who was the first to get a blast at the hoax in print (as far as Graham and I know) has recently accepted a story by Graham and me.

(6)

(6)

The Indefensible Position

by

V. L. McGain

A brief word of explanation about the title of this column. The fan who writes this is a highly argumentative person whose chief fault, he is told, is that he is too critical. Not in the least fazed he continues to exercise his prerogatives to call the shots as he sees them in his own slightly half-witted manner. This may not win him any popularity polls but it should result in his arriving by the end of each column, in the position described by the title.

puff sed?

You luck, lucky neofen you! Yes, I'm referring to you, Horation, who've heard of the world Of Hull-A, but aren't sure what it is, and to you, Ignocius, as you read this, the first copy of any fanzine you've ever seen and even to you, Aloysius, who still think 'Amazing Stories' is peachy-keen.

Why are you lucky? Because you've got a treat in store.

But first perhaps I'd better give a brief history of Science Fiction (or as brief as a garrulous character like myself can be.)

I don't think most of the facts and/or views stated below will be disputed too strongly by any except a few steadfast diehards like Sam Moskowitz and Roger Lord.....

In 1922 the first successor fantasy magazine, 'Wonder Tales', was inaugurated. Three years later Hugo Gernsback started the very first Science Fiction magazine 'Amazing Stories'. In 1929, having left ASZ, he started the rival 'Wonder Stories'. A few months later came 'Astounding Stories'. With only slight variations these were the only Science Fiction magazines till the late 20's. Practically everything published by them in this period is so atrociously written and plotted as to be unreadable today. First important inauguration in the field came in 1934 when F. Orlin Tremayne succeeded to the editorial post of 'Astounding' and started his thought variants. This started a general improvement in the field and resulted in a handful of excellent stories but by-and-large the field still was devoted to space-pirates and the beautiful daughters of Mad Scientists.

Then, almost simultaneously, two things had ended. Popular writer John W. Campbell, Jr. came to the helm of 'Astounding' and the SF field started booming with a host of new publications.

Once Campbell's editorial hand became established a golden era of SF was ushered in. Campbell quickly introduced many new writers including almost all of the names which still dominate the field today. He started the fabulous 'Unknown', considered by many, including myself to be the finest SF or fantasy publication of all time. From 1940 to 1949 practically every issue of ~~ASZ~~ ASZ or 'Unknown' read like an anthology in itself.

There were enough good writers in Campbell's stable that he had (not the space for all their work so some good items overflowed to the lesser publications, but for the most part Campbell held the fort alone, there being an unbelievably wide gap between his magazines and all others in the field. This lasted until late 1944 when Sam Lerwyn, Jr. took over limited editorship of two of the field's poorer magazines 'Thrilling Wonder Stories' and 'Startling Stories'.

Merwyn, knowing a good thing when he saw it, jumped on the bandwagon. And by almost unbelievably prodigious bootstrapping lifting managed to advance his publications to a level within 10 or 15% of that of Campbell. This feat was a trifle easier than it would have been earlier since the war had killed off all the new publications which could have bid against him with a few exceptions. There were several fantasy magazines plus 'Planet Stories' & ~~Planet~~ and 'Amazing Stories'. Both of which were devoted to the maxim that "Science Fiction fan automatically equates with feeble-minded". Thus a Campbell-rejected story had to go to Merwyn or not sell.

But in 1949 this spare but meaty balance was disrupted starting with the revised 'Super Science Stories' a flood-tide of new SF publications arose which shows no sign of stopping yet, three years later. Many of these were quality publications, some competing openly with ASF and even managing to top it in quality; most of the rest followed the Merwyn line of well-written, well-plotted, but not quite so cerebral fiction. Even the old-timers such as 'Planet' made some improvements. The average quality of SF shot way up. With TV and comics draining off the moronic and adolescent readers, the publishers found it necessary to try their hands at mature fiction or go under.

The dreadfully corny space-opera, the unbelievably badly-written scientific treatises were no longer present to drag down the overall average. And people who knew the mechanics of good writing rushed to the new golden mecca of atomically improved SF.

But with this increase in quality (and here is where I'll run into disagreement, I know) went a diminution in the number of individually memorable stories which at times has threatened to result in the complete vanishment of the sort of tale which the fan likes to regard as a 'classic'.

It was a paradox worthy of paradox-loving J. V. Campbell hims lf. With 10 to 15 quality magazines, compared to only three before, coming out far more frequently than before also, the number of top-notch stories diminished in almost exact ratio to 1/5th or 1/6th what we had had previously.

Why? The jury isn't back in yet on the question. Perhaps over-production is responsible. Maybe it's because the poor-paying SF market used to be a labor of love for writers while now it is merely a profitable livelihood. Or is the inspiration tied up somehow with the late depression years, Campbell's vigorous editorship, and the then

brand-new adult SF? Any one of these or a dozen other answers, separately or in combination, could be it.

At any rate, while we have a great many very readable stories now, the number of memorable ones is at its lowest point since 1939.

This isn't nostalgic, I might add. I didn't become a regular SF reader until 1944. I recently lived in a house for a period with an almost complete SF and Fantasy magazine collection. I availed myself of the opportunity to go back and read many of the old magazines, including the Campbell era 'Unknown's'. While I'd previously read reprints of many of these, many more were new to me. And, reading new stories in current magazines simultaneously, I found the new simply couldn't compare with the old in genuine story quality, though the writing was just as good, better in some cases.

But no matter how future trends go, there remains a tremendous treasure trove from the SF fans viewpoint, of endlessly entertaining stories published during the 1939-1949 decade. And anyone who hasn't read any, or even most, of these stories has a treat in store when he first runs into them.

Which is why you nooften are lucky. Or even now readers who aren't fans.

As recently as 1949 when I entered fandom, every fan collected. I was considered a freak because I didn't. Every new fan automatically saved each new magazine and, when he could afford it, got as complete a selection of back issues as possible. This new fans automatically ran into these old stories eventually.

But this truism of fandom seems to have withered away unnoticed. Few of my correspondents now mention their collections. The newer fans don't go in heavily for collecting and the older ones have pruned their collections down to the choicer items, frequently merely a complete collection of 'Unknown'.

But a solution to the problem of these lost stories has been arrived at through the pages of the dedicated reprint magazines. Most fans, including myself, have disliked and criticized reprint magazines for a variety of reasons which I won't go into here.

Chief reprint magazines were (1) FAN, originally established to reprint the Munsey classics (so-called), later devoted to reprints of never-before-in-magazine fantasy, plus an occasional new story... these were chiefly dull British adventures in the old-fashioned yarns with only a slight fantasy gimmick, (2) 'Fantastic Novels', same policy as FAN only at different times since they traded policies at one time, (3) the prewar 'SF Quarterly' given to reprints of very very best stories chiefly of 1920-30 vintage, and usually by Ray Cummings.

THE INDEFENSIBLE POSITION (4)

(4) Don Wollheim's 'Avon Fantasy and SF Readers'. These two were devoted chiefly to Neanderthal SF and fantasy from such magazines as 'Amazing' and 'Weird Tales'. Wollheim's poor editorial taste has become legendary.

(5) The short-lived 'A. Merrit's Fantasy Magazine' which was just about what the title implied, filled out with typical 'Fantastic Novels' stories.

(6) 'Fantastic Story Magazine' which reprinted stories from the Kernsback 'Wonders'.

In addition, to save money, such magazines as 'Weird Tales', 'Future', 'Super Science Stories', and 'Startling Stories' have included at various times in their histories, an item or so per issue of 'classics' from early issues of their magazine.

As has been previously seen, practically every source mined for reprint material contained stories which weren't very good to start with, and certainly weren't eligible for a second time in print. There were a few exceptions, but not enough to nibble over.

Both Sam Merwyn and Sam Lines have publicly expressed distaste for the poor stuff they found it necessary to use in 'Fantastic Story Magazine'. Merwyn's solution was to keep cutting the number of reprints and gradually increase the number of ~~xx~~ new stories. From two each in the first few issues the number of new items has increased, with Lines continuing the trend, until recent issues contained nothing reprint except the lead novel.

FPL, the only other reprint magazine left, has obviously suffered financially through increased competition. Casting about for a solution to their dilemma both Mrs. Croedinger and Mr. Lines seem to have hit upon the same solution.

With the folding of Fantastic Novels it was announced that henceforth FPL would print 'some' stories which had previously appeared in magazines. At first this was confined to reprints of stories in sister magazines but before long FPL used, as a lead novel, "AMBITION" a fairish end-of-civilization story which was one of the most popular items in the Tremayne 'Astoundings'.

Seemingly Street and Smith was willing to co-operate since an issue or so later FPL used Heinlein's marvelously wacky short "Mind the Built & Crooked House". This was from the Campbell SF's end, as far as I know, the first time any magazine (not counting the one-shot 'Error Unknown Stories') had ever reprinted anything which could be considered a proper representative of SF's Golden age, though dozens of hard-cover anthologies had been completely made up of such stories, chiefly from SF and 'Unknown'.

~~SOL~~
 "been little dog" -- "lots of fun to read" -- "Many prominent fan authors"

I entirely agree, Dave does a good job on SOL.

Later, they used Heinlein's well-known "Gentlemen, Be Seated" from 'Blue Book' and the current FFM contains the unforgettable Sturgeon short novel from a 1944 SF, "Kildog" together with one of Ray Bradbury's very finest fantasies, "Homecoming" which appeared in another Street and Smith property, "Lademoiselle".

Meanwhile at FFM, Mines was making progress. With the ultra-conservative policies of standard publications and their huge backlog of SF, it's hard to see how Mines succeeded but evidently recognizing the low quality of most of the pre-44 material he had to draw on and the comparative richness of the Street and Smith material of the same era, he somehow managed to get permission to buy reprint rights to some old 'astounding' stories.

First was "Slan" perhaps the most famous non-female SF story ever written, used as a lead novel for FFM. Now, in the next issue a Western appears to be about to emerge. Listed as scheduled to appear are "The Mermaid" (a typical (and typically good) pre-war De Camp SF tale) and "The Strange Case of Jack Freysling", a wartime SF story by T. C. McClary. Both are well worthy of reprint. Evidently Mines is abandoning Merwyn's policy and has decided to make FFM a reprint magazine after all. With these kind of stories I'm all for it. They are far better than the new stories they are crowding out.

As for FFM, the move still appears tentative on their part. The bulk of their magazine remains as usual and the readers column is full of entreaties not to print SF. It is evident, however, that Mrs. Gnedinger realizes that she can't show a profit selling her magazine just to the people who write to letter columns. Just as 'Weird Tales' has ~~never~~ printed a small but steady percentage of SF for years despite 100% opposition to it in the letter column, obviously because only by attracting some non-weird fans can the magazine survive.

However, if Mrs. Gnedinger wishes to please both the fantasy fans and those who want to read good fiction, I wonder why she doesn't raid 'Unknown' rather than 'Astounding'. Unk printed some SF, but most of it was fantastic enough that no rabid anti-SFian could object. And she wouldn't go too far wrong if she started with volume 1, no. 1 and reprinted every story Unk ever ran, so low is the total number of poor stories which the magazine printed. Unk is virgin territory for reprint magazines. As far as I know only Sturgeon's "Green-Eyed Monster" has been reprinted in magazine form (in 'Suspense') and even the book anthologists have not raided it as avidly as SF, because of the postwar craze for SF.

At any rate, I hope both Mr. Mines and Mrs. Gnaedinger pursue and enlarge upon their present experiments. I particularly hope Mrs. Gnaedinger will acquire her lead novels from such sources. There are so many fine full-length novels from this period by people like Heinlein and De Camp and others, many of which have never been reprinted.

Of course, I'm not saying they should confine themselves to reprinting solely from ASF and Unk. Get the best stories wherever they are to be found, including 'Mademoiselle' and 'Blue Book', and others in such strange places in addition to mining the what gold may be found in old SF mags. For instance Mrs. Gnaedinger could use Heinlein's fine "Lost Legion" which originally appeared in FFM's sister magazine 'Super Science Stories'...or De Camp and Miller's "Genus Homo". It is true that this story, from 'Super Science Novels' appeared in book form a few years ago, but just as many fans now don't collect old magazines, they also don't buy expensive books, and would be happy to have it available cheaply. There are a number of good shorts in pre-war 'Super Science & 'Astonishing', chiefly by Asimov.

In a few more years the Merwyn stories will be old enough to reprint but I hope Mines continues to reprint from other sources. There is something stultifying about a reprint magazine which draws only from one source.


At any rate, you lucky, lucky, neofen have some treats in store. If you haven't already done so (and if it's still on the stands) rush out and buy FFM and read "Killdozer" and "Homecoming". And watch for the next FSM. In addition to the stories mentioned above they have listed Murray Leinster's "The Eternal Now" which sounds familiar though I can't quite place it and can't find it in my card file. The lead novel is Edmond Hamilton's "A Yank at Valhalla" from 'Startling' which will afford adequate contrast as to the horrible things Mines must print if he sticks to his own source of supply.

Times like these I wish I hadn't read these stories before and could have the pleasant surprise of reading them over again for the first time, myself.




-----V. L. McCain

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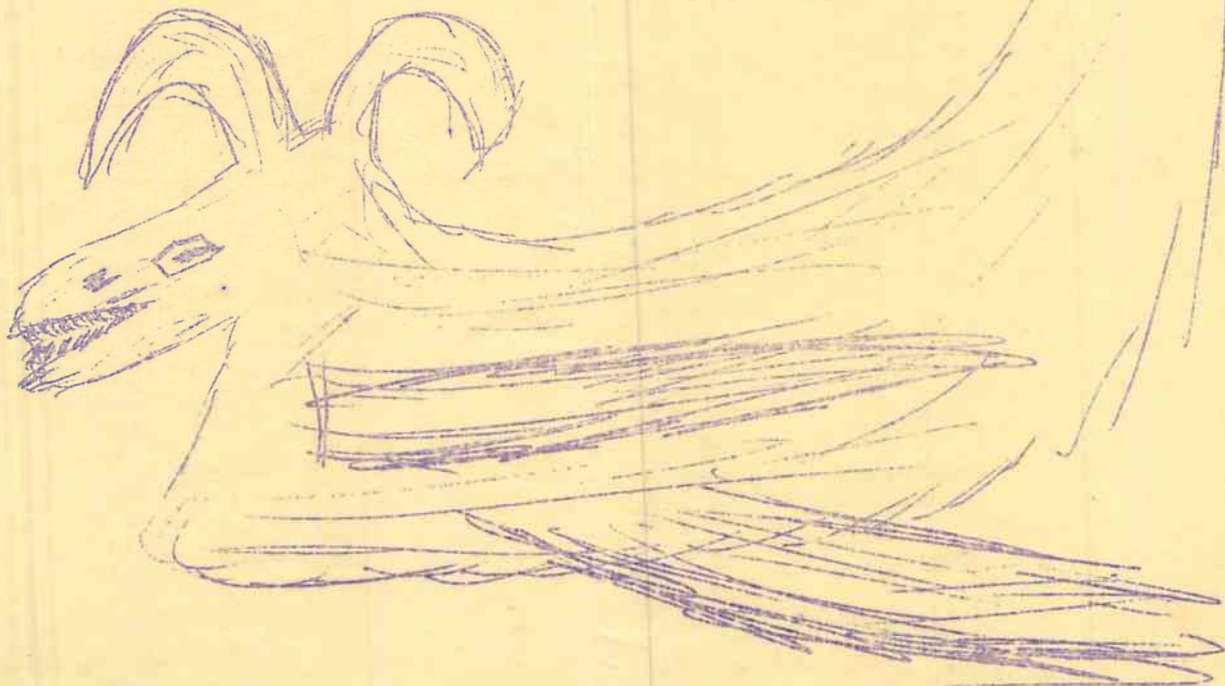
CONDON, OLIVER & BUCKNER

The Great Galactic Mogul was consulted;
Inquiry of the earthlings had resulted
In learning they had brought out an invention
That far surpassed their powers of propulsion
For speed, and could quite outdistance any starship,
And quite outrun the best galactic warship;
Should these strange beings join the council tables?
And be allowed to use the stellar cables?

The great one sighed, "It is essential we agree,
If we refuse, they could blockade our galaxy;

But Terrans, though they are intelligent, I fear
Are nondescript, and any breed that may appear
Unfinished, such as these, may cause severe travails,
They have no fins or horns, and NO prehensile tails!"

-----Oma McCormick



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