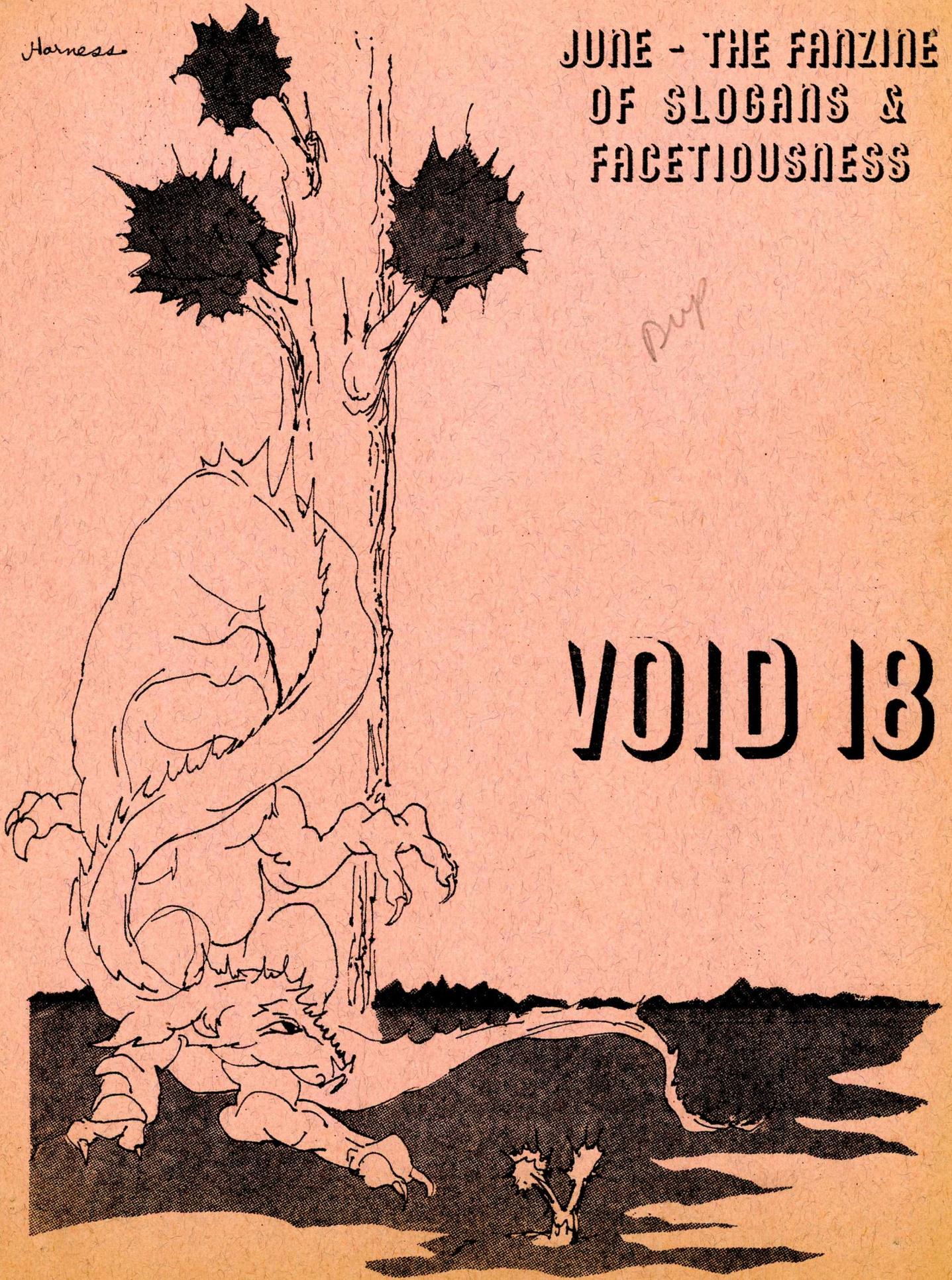


Harness

**JUNE - THE FANZINE
OF SLOGANS &
FACETIOUSNESS**



Dup

VOID 18

HAPPY BENFORD CHATTER



SCIENCE FICTION is a term involving two words, but I fear one of them is vastly underplayed in fandom. In fact, it always has been...science, I mean. Perhaps I notice it more than the usual fan, because I'm connected with science and encounter it every day. But fans have always stressed the fiction aspect of science fiction, and except for a few notable exceptions, prodom has done likewise.

I'd like to attribute this solely to the nature of communication in fandom--writing--but it's not wholly that. Certainly the medium of expression naturally tends to make

fans concern themselves more with literary subjects; somehow, though, that doesn't offer a full explanation. People are usually attracted to fandom through science fiction, and in turn only stumble upon stf after a few years of active reading in other fields. It's only natural for them to follow this interest while in fandom.

Still, I find it rather surprsing that so few fans are scientifically inclined. In general, they don't idly pick up a pocketbook edition of Hoyle's FRONTIERS OF ASTRONOMY while rummaging around at the newsstand, or seek out the science shelves at the library. Given a party at which both an author and a scientist were present, fans would probably flock to the former.

Every once in a while someone will state that one of the aims of stf is to bring about a better understanding of the advancement of mankind (or something) and the Significance of The Exploration of Space, and all that--and yet fans remain curiously unmoved to take part in any activity which would support a general interest in this. Of course, that isn't a good reason for going into scientific pursuits at great length--or rather, it's part of a much larger reason for doing so.

As far as I know there aren't more than a handful of fans in scientific or techical study. John Champion is a chemistry major, I believe, at Cal-Tech, Ellik and Caughran are taking math and engineering, respectively, Magnus worked for an engineering company; plus Young and Toskey, who are both getting PhDs in astronomy and math, respectively. And Jim and I, who will be taking Engineering Physics. That's mighty damn few.

Actually, though, there are many reasons why fans shouldn't be interested in science. For one thing, in order to get some enjoyment out of it, a few basic courses are necessary, and stf-types (or the ones I know) usually skip these courses in high school or college, if possible. Science isn't an easy subject, either, and it requires a genuine interest developed over the years before one can derive a great deal of pleasure from it. Novels, articles and fanzines are much easier to read than textbooks. Commenting on fmz isn't quite as difficult as plowing through some of the more abstract branches of math--and you can always just talk off the top of your head (which is the way this column is written, by the way) for a few pages if you need to fill some space in a fanzine, but writing for an amateur science periodical isn't quite the same thing. There's little light reading in science, and unless you're directly connected with it, Planck's Elementary Quantum Mechanics doesn't assume the status of fireside reading.

Now that I look back over this, I hope I haven't given the impression that I look down on non-science fans. I don't. But I'd like to know what causes the fiction-orientation of fandom, and what some others think of it.

And Bob Coulson, why do you run those relativity articles?

I'M AN OLD FAN and tired...or at least, that's what most of you will think when I say I want to sell my fanzine collection. It has always seemed to me the selling of my priceless HYPHENS, GRUES and PSYCHOTICS would be the last twitch of life in my fannish body, but now that I find myself auctioning them off, as it were, I feel no pangs of guilt. Jim and I will attend Oklahoma University this fall, and as college rooms are rather small, I find that I must dispose of my fmz (and prozines too, but I wonder if any of you read That Stuff any more). On hand are almost all HYPHENS, FANACs, a

goodly number of PSYCHOTIC, ABSTRACT, INNUENDO, GRIE, RET, TRIODE...and many more. I simply can't list the fanzines I've collected in five years of buying, trading and subbing. If you want any of them, I'll sell the best items for the original price plus a dime or so and postage. The rest go for the cost of mailing. I'll also make like TCarr (Vote For Him For TAFF) and sell lots of 25, with some really fine stuff thrown in, for a dollar each. I hate to throw fanzines away, so you might as well take advantage of this.

-greg benford

UFF- ISH THOTS

I SAID I last
WAS MOVING issue,
didn't
I? Seems like I am
saying it every is-
sue, and am prom-
ising a new address
for every next is-
sue. Well, who am
I to defy tradition?
We haven't moved
yet. It is a pecul-
iar thing: we've
made a number of
trips to NYC and on
our last one found

what we wanted, a loft at Broadway and Canal which was large, roomy, and in a building of lofts to be lived in by various artistic types who found Village rents preposterously high (which they are--we checked, although we hadn't any real desire to make the Village scene our scene). Thing is, the loft had been, like the rest of the building, unoccupied for thirty years. The owner was in the process of renovating the building and putting in all the apartment facilities like stove, refrigerator, bathroom plumbing, etc. I've talked to him twice since then on the phone, long distance from Baltimore, and he promises the place to be ready for occupancy "within thirty days or so" in a very indefinite voice. Now it's a nice place, the rent is good, the location is accessible to all subways, and in a business area where we won't have to worry about gangs of kids (in looking at one place a guy tried to proposition Sylvia from me...!) or going out at night or like that, and we want the goddam place. So we sit here in Baltimore, and we stew, and we wait.

Which is why my address as of this is still 2708 N. Charles,
at which all mail will reach me.

Some of you may be wondering about that. Some of you may have had your

mail to me returned to you a few weeks back, with a notation like "Forwarded to..." and "no such address" and "return to sender." This is all because of a horrible fiasco which I will now explain.

RICHARD GEIS was born in Portland, Oregon thirty-one years ago. He sums himself up as an introvert, voracious reader and participating member of the Beat Generation.

He has always wanted to be a writer and came close with publishing and editing a science fiction fan magazine for some time. FIGHT GAME, however, is his first sale.

Geis says he might have finished college, but one of the greatest thrills of his life was when the Columbia River overflowed in his sophomore year and washed the school and the whole town away. Since then, he's given up scholastics and headed for the typewriter.



On our last trip to New York, we planned to be gone a week or more. In the past, I'd had my mail brought in by my next door neighbor,

Just Imagine! MY STORY IN THIS MAGAZINE...

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GREG BENFORD	TED E. WHITE
10521 Allegheny Dr.	2708 N. Charles St.
Dallas 29, Texas	Baltimore 18, Md.

spoilsport. The story is hardly sadistic, although the background is given as a sadistic one, and the pornography is totally absent. The story has self-righteous moral overtones, which makes it an odd-duck in a book of amoral and immoral stories. It strikes me that next to some of the flagelistic publications, like EXOTIQUE and BIZARRE, which also occasionally publish "science fiction", this is tame stuff indeed. Where are those guts, Geis?

-ted e. white

LETTERS

GREGG CALKINS: I note with appreciation the regular appearance of VOID once more on the fannish scene. It is a good fanzine, even if it is not the same old VOID it once was, no matter how much you protest. And just to set myself straight on this, I do not happen to be one of those people who automatically set a higher premium on anything merely because it is from the past...I regard the new VOID as a much better mag than the old VOID was, for many reasons. In fact, it is enough better and enough different to rate a title of its own.

I noted the poll standings with appreciation. You'll note that you remarked that only HYPHEN retained its former position and percentage of votes, but kindly notice that OOPS hasn't changed so much either. True, it dropped from fourth to fifth place, but during the time involved I put out only one or possibly two issues, which isn't much to compete against FANAC and RETRIBUTION in sheer number. Also OOPS got a slightly larger number of votes in comparison with the first place fanzine of the second poll...159 to 302 in the second poll, 77 to 152 in the first. Not that I'm complaining or bragging or anything, mind you--I'm just pointing out that OOPS didn't move much either in the time between the two polls. (In relation to the #1 fmz, OOPS received 51% in VOID's 1957 poll and 53% in FANAC's. You're right, though it didn't stay in the same slot, but did retain the same relation percentage-wise. -gb)

However, let me say that I'm highly in favor of both you and FANAC taking polls in the future and I may even delve back in again myself later on this year. Maybe not, though. Depends on how yours and FANAC's turn out and how they are taken, in certain respects. (The more the merrier. Seriously, I think at least

continued on page 19

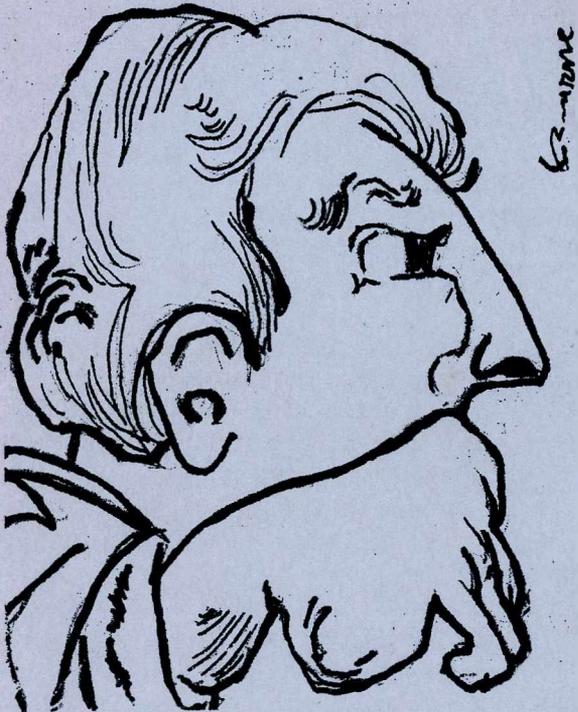
Richard Wingate. I'd left him my mailbox and apartment keys, and he'd done the rest. This time, however, I lost my mailbox key the day before we were to leave, and had no time to trace down another one. Besides this, Richard had moved down town. "Why," he said to me, "not have your mail forwarded here to me in your absence? The address is 210 Mulberry, Rear." So I did this very thing, all the time wondering what was already in that locked mailbox, handed in a pink card to the PO, and we were off for NYC. When I returned, I went over to Richard's for my mail. "A disasterous thing has happened," he said. "I made a mistake. This is not 210 Mulberry Rear. This stinking little half-block-long alley has a name. This is 210 West Pleasant St." He said it in a decidedly unpleasant manner. "210 W. Mulberry is a vacant lot. The address doesn't exist." I groaned. I also got another mailbox key from my landlord, and fixed things up with the Post Office.

And, you know, when I opened my mailbox, there wasn't a thing in it, anyway?

At any rate, about a week's worth of mail was returned to its senders. I don't know who all sent it, but you out there--you must know. Try me again with it, huh?

A PAGE BACK, there's an inset photo & biog on Richard E. Geis. Our Richard E. Geis. Yes, it was reprinted from the ADAM Bedside READER (\$1.00 a copy and not worth it), in which is printed Dick's first pro sale. Title, as you may have guessed, "The Fight Game." It seems in part inspired by that Kelly-Freas illo on the cover of an IF of a few years back--the one of a woman boxer with brass-knucks.

After reading Geis on the subject of sadistic-pornographic fiction, I was expecting a lulu--especially considering that ADAM often prints the closest thing to newsstand pornography. I was disappointed. Geis' hero is a naive, moralizing



As all you hotblooded young fans will know, there is a firm called Interflora which allows you to send flowers by telegram. You pay for a dozen red roses at the nearest branch (no, not of the tree, silly) enclosing a message to the effect that you are pining away from soulful passion, and you have barely finished working out if you've enough money left for a packet of fish and chips when a dozen red roses are delivered to your true love many miles away, barely crushed by their passage along those tiny wires. Now this is one of those obvious ideas like the gramophone, the wheel, and the ballpoint pen which I could have easily thought up first if I had happened to put my mind to it, and I thought I'd better stake my claim here and now to a further development of it before Gernsback beats me to it.

Let's peep in at your true love's boudoir, as she is clasping

INTERFANNA

walt
willis

~~Your~~ bunch of roses to her lilywhite breasts. After dowsing them in cold water (I say, that note of yours was pretty hot stuff, wasn't it?) the dear girl casts around for some way of conveying her appreciation. Now, much to the ineffectual regret of the unenterprising directors of Interflora, it is not the custom for girls to send flowers to their young men: such is the primitive state of the business that they let this eager client take her custom to Western Union, where she sends you an amorous telegram. Now I am sure you will agree this is frustrating to any self-respecting girl, and even more so to you. After all you sent actual organic matter: what return is it to get a bit of paper reading "Love and kisses", not even in her own handwriting and delivered by a pimply youth with adenoids? Obviously, what we want is some way she can send you actual love and kisses, just as you sent her actual vegetation.

All that is needed is for the firm to introduce a new service--Interfauna. Your true love pays in a certain sum at her end and within minutes a young lady from your local branch comes round and expresses her sentiments clearly and unmistakably, just as at present Western Union messengers sing birthday greetings. I leave to your feverish little imaginations the various ways in which this service could be expanded with the collaboration of your friendly neighborhood brothel: Richard Geis would probably jump at the chance to write the catalogue. There are of course other Thinkers in fandom working along these lines, Curtis Janke having already alluded in FAPA to the practice of TV repair shops who lend you a set while your own is unserviceable and having audibly speculated as to when this business-like example would be followed by maternity hospitals. But of course this is a science

fiction fanzine and such matters are really not suitable for discussion here. Let's turn to a more serious and constructive possibility.

What I'm leading to is a special department of Interfauna for fandom. We've already seen ordinary correspondence largely superseded by the greater intimacy of tape. Now the time has come to carry this a stage further, for even the spoken voice on tape is often inadequate. How often have you felt that the powers of mere language are inadequate to convey your feelings? Fanzines, like daffodils--and offhand I think this is the first time this exceedingly apt comparison has been made--can "oft convey thoughts that do lie too deep for tears", or any other such ineffectual display. Let's take an example.

You observe, for instance, putting together an ostentatiously tactful reference in a Ron Bennett con report and a suggestive HYPHEN baquote, that your wife was unfaithful to you at the Solacon with a fan from Vancouver. You live in Florida and weigh fifty pounds less. You may of course be satisfied with cutting the villain off your mailing list but, not knowing how your zine rated in the FANAC poll, I'd suggest that superficially this would indicate too low a rating for your wife. In most cases I think a fan, looking hard at his conscience and his last issue, should feel that something even more drastic was needed.

Enter Interfanna! A telephone call and a representative is hulking on the dastard's doorstep with a horsewhip, while another nips around the back to seduce his wife, or even pour treacle in his duplicator.* Or, to take another example, suppose you get a letter from Belle, Frank and George inviting you to join them on the board of the revived WSFS. Even before Dave Kyle can slap a writ on you, Interfanna agents trained by James White and Bob Silverberg knock simultaneously on the doors of everyone concerned and deliver psneers so witheringly devastating that New York fan politicians are not heard of again for years.

But of course not all the activities of Interfanna need be of such a baleful character. Suppose you get a very good fanzine in the mails, and you feel like conveying your appreciation really enthusiastically. All you need do is pay the appropriate Interfanna fee, and stage-trained representatives will do the rest: call on the lucky fanned, ask for copies of his zine and read it then and there before his very eyes, exclaiming with admiration, crying with emotion and rolling on the floor with laughter at every appropriate point. Why, this could take the place of cold written egoboo overnight!

Some of you old conservative fans will be objecting that messages delivered by Interfanna like this would lose their subtle fannish flavour, that special fannish way of communicating ideas which has been built up through the years in a fine old tradition. Fear not, old fan. Fortunately it so happens that Irish Fandom working here in its secluded island fastness many years ago developed a completely efficient system for conveying the nuances of fannish writing in spoken conversation. It is a bit like Victor Borge's system of "audible punctuation", with the important difference that the actual spoken remarks need not be interrupted by rude-sounding noises, but are instead tastefully illustrated by graceful gestures, making fannish conversation not only a delight to the mind and ear but an example of the poetry of motion worthy to rank with the finest ballet.

Perhaps a few examples will illustrate what I mean. Speaking with your head leaning sideways on your shoulder clearly indicates that your remarks should be regarded as being in italics. Invaluable for quiet emphasis, or if you want to say a phrase in a foreign language and like most of us are not quite sure how to pronounce it. Further emphasis can be provided by underlining, i.e. holding the forearm horizontally below your chin. A combination of the two is so striking in appearance (especially if you happen to be wearing a cloak) as to completely obviate the need for shouting (capitals) except for remarks you hope will be overheard and put on the HYPHEN bacover. A combination of underlining while simultaneously holding the other forearm just under the nose indicates that you are delivering an interlineation, and it is of course a convention that a remark may be so interpolated at any point in a conversation without relevance to what has just been said. You can see, I

*Molasses in his mimeograph. -ww

think, how much added interest this gives to fannish conversation, taking it even further beyond the superficiality of mundane chatter. If a bright remark occurs to you, you need no longer wait until you can guide the conversation round until a suitable opening develops. Briskly making the interlineation sign you deliver it immediately into a sudden and attentive silence. The conversation then proceeds as before, except of course that at intervals thereafter other people may interject their own interlineations, perhaps inspired by yours; the meeting of minds is now on two or more levels, a brilliant and complex lattice of wit.

Brackets of course are cupped hands at the side of the mouth. For particularly juicy gossip about what happened behind the scenes at conventions, 'DNQ' is indicated by an upraised finger in front of the mouth. And exclamation point is a raised fist, a question mark the arm in the same position but the hand hanging limp. Quotation marks are denoted by putting your fists to your ears and raising the forefingers; for quasiquotes stick the thumbs out too.

But I think you see by now what I mean, and I'm sure you're quite bowled over with admiration for this wonderful innovation. Shucks. As I said, Irish Fandom thought it up years ago, but only as a possible convention turn--we meant to get someone to deliver a short and lively fannish oration with all the appropriate signs. We just never got around to it and if in the meantime anybody wants to popularize it we're willing to sell the rights for a purely nominal number of hundred dollar bills. We can't wait to see a few hundred fans in some big hotel lounge carrying on animated conversations in Interfanese. It would be a wonderful sight, maybe even better than the hotel manager's face.

--Walt Willis X

SPECIFIC CONTROL THROUGH DUAL ACTION

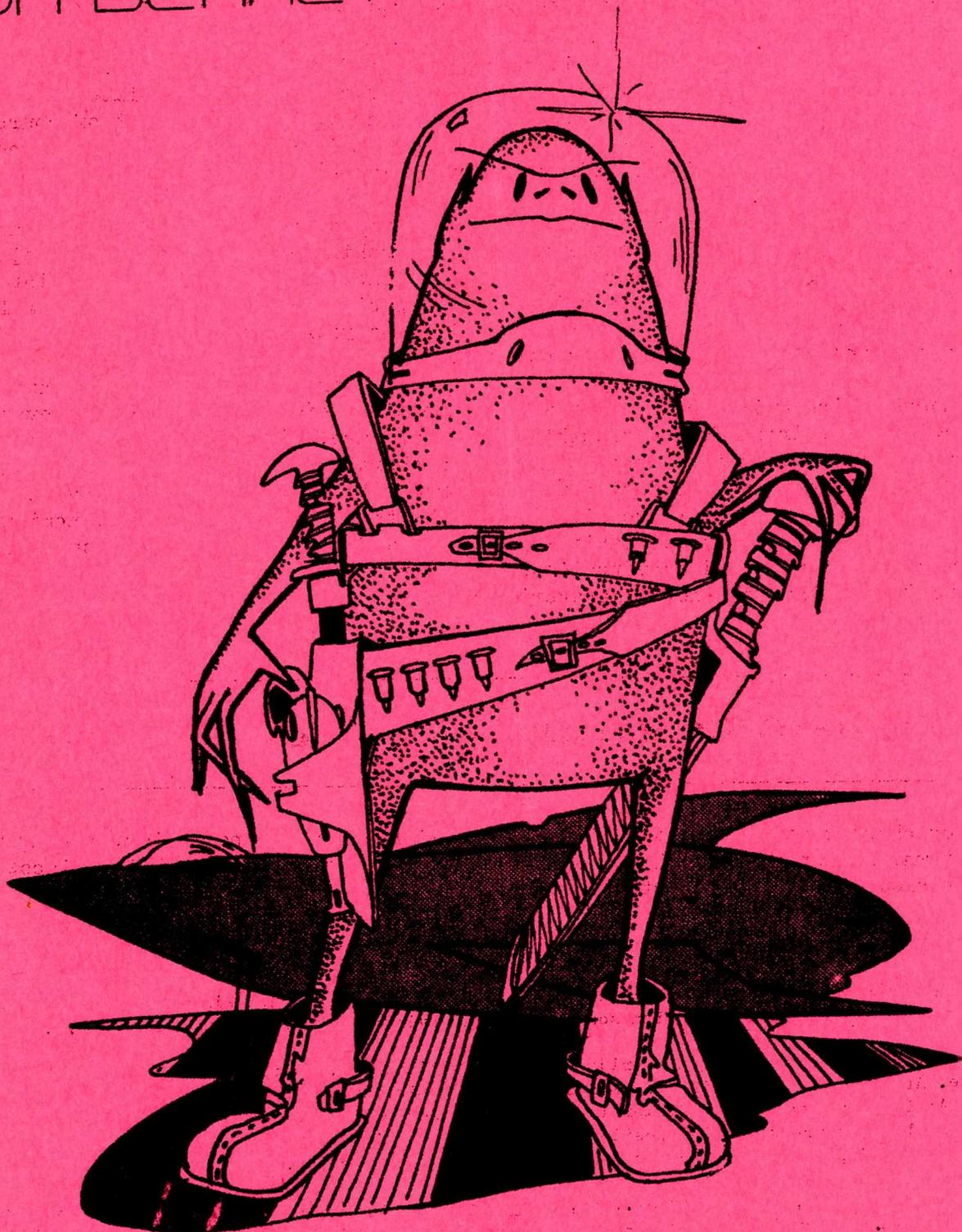
"The cover shows what I first took to be a man with a cracked posterior, raping an amoeba, but which upon a second look turns out to be a rather inhuman being disposed of by a mysterious ray of some sort." --Ted Pauls in DM#4 reviewing THE SICK ELEPHANT

CAPSULE FANZINE REVIEWS: Due to my use of THE WAILING WALL for reviewing a prozine this time, herewith some short fmz reviews to catch up on the latest...

DISJECTA MEMBRA #4, Ted Pauls, 1448 Meridene Drive, Baltimore 12, Md.; 12 pp.; free for comment on each issue. After a fine third issue, DM has backslid a bit, due to Pauls' lack of material and lack of paper. At least a part of the former is my fault; I neglected to furnish my usual column of fmz reviews. The letters are still interesting, and although Ted's typewritten lettering is contrived and sometimes confusing, the appearance is generally neat and attractive. Recommended

INNUENDO #9, Terry Carr, 70 Liberty St., #5, San Francisco 10, California; 64 pp.; available only for comment or trade. Operating on a semi-annual schedule, Carr has kept INN one of the more faunched-for and better zines going. It now definitely belongs in the same file with A BAS, HYPHEN, GRUE, and others of similar schedule. There's less material this, but what there is is meatier, better stuff. There's Terry's own six-page editorial, for me the highlight of the entire issue; Ron Bennett's report on the Solacon 'tself (CE pt.12), which I found more hurried, and less interesting than earlier chapters, perhaps because Ron was so hurried and involved with so many things at the Con; Carl (Terry Carr) Brandon's "On The Road" pt.2 which is now gaining momentum, but sticking closely to the original (which I always thought of as a typical Dave Rike hitchiking report in itself...); Bill Donaho's "Adventures in Fandom #3" in which he details the return from the Clevention--I've spoken to Harvey, the Jeep owner, and with Jean & Andy Young about this, and it really is true!--in as fully an interesting fashion as the first two Adventures; a quickie by Bob Bloch, which isn't a major Bloch piece; Warner's "All Our Yesterdays" which deals this time with a little known zine of the '40's, FRONTIER--is Harry running out of zines? What about SPACEWARP?--and, seventeen pages of letters, all well worth reading. Man, with stuff like this, plus the various reprints Carr sticks in, and fabulous cartoons, you can't go wrong. Highly Recommended

RON BENNETT



ABM

COLONIAL EXCURSION 9

The Halls of Montezuma

It was Tuesday, 26th August and that hateful Bill Rickhardt again woke us just after four. It must have been five by the time we staggered out of our respective beds. I'd been sharing the room at the Amerillo motel with Bob Pavlat, Ted White and Jim Caughran.

Jim got into Bob's car as the three of them drew away, the idea being that he could help share the driving. I loyally went back to Fred Prophet and Jim Broderick and we drove out Westwards along Highway 66 towards New Mexico. We stopped at a small, flat town for breakfast, drawing up at a roadside restaurant just as Bob, Ted, Jim and Bill Donaho were leaving. Bill eyed the pancakes and sausages we ordered and helped me clear half my meal.

The sun was coming up and I went outside to take a couple of pictures, using my sunglasses as a filter. Across the road grain elevators stood with a polished formality, reaching up into the reddening sky. The horizon stretched away in the distance, probably further than I'd ever seen it before. This was Texas, the Texas of the super James Dean epic, "Giant", the Texas of the Gary Cooper films I'd seen as a boy, the Texas of the superlative stories I'd read in Readers Digest. From that moment, I'd believe any story I heard of Texas, I knew.

We drove on, and soon were in New Mexico. The road winds its way through passes cut into the plateau which comprises the territory. The overall effect is that one is continually driving in a basin. To the north and south red-brown mountains laze past; the mountains ahead and behind you never seem to move. John D. MacDonald gave a pretty good description of the place in "Planet of the Dreamers", and his account of the road appearing to slip beneath the wheels of a moving car, while the countryside stood still, is very real. The hills are bare, and somewhat frightening. This is the type of near-alien countryside where you feel that anything might be over the nearest range of hills. It's Indian country and I'm loathe to consider the feelings of the first white men who travelled through New Mexico.

The Indians offer souvenirs at every opportunity. Moccasins, blankets, leather goods are all on sale at every small village or Navajo-owned roadside restaurant. We sailed comfortably into Albuquerque, which seemed to stretch on and on. As far as we could make out the town is about four streets wide and ten miles long. We passed the Spanish styled University of New Mexico, and continued on the Highway 66. We suddenly found ourselves up to a cream and blue Ford and passing it noticed Ted White's beard waving at us from the driver's seat. Jim Broderick immediately got out his movie camera and while we drove alongside Pavlat's car, we took pictures of Pavlat taking pictures of us.

We went through what the map told us was an Indian reservation, and through Gallup, soon entering Arizona, which seemed even redder and barer than New Mexico had been.

Here we saw something of the Painted Cliffs from the road, but these weren't impressive. Noreen had told us she wanted to see the Painted Desert and the Petrified Forest, but we roared through the Navajo Reservation which comprises the area, along a stretch of highway which was still under construction, and into Holbrook. Here we drove off the highway, and into the court of the Holbrook Motel. Nick, Fred, Jim and Bob went into a huddle over finances. These conferences were becoming a regular part of each night's stop-over, and as I was a guest of the caravan, which was kindly paying my motel fees, I figured this was no business of mine, and propping myself up on one of the double beds in Pavlat's room, started typing a letter home.

The conference evidently decided that the motel's rates were a little exorbitant and that we should book in as but two to a room, whilst in fact there were the usual four. Ted, Jim Caughran and I joined Bob on a short trip into the town centre, while Bob looked over some specimens of the local rock souvenirs. I bought a packet of cactus seed which I immediately mailed home. The kindly lady who owned the souvenir shop accused us of being scientists from Los Alamos, as we were examining the particles of uranium and other rocks so intently.

Back at the motel, another conference took place, while I finished off my letter. It seemed

that originally we had intended getting into Los Angeles around the time the convention would be starting, on the Friday morning. It was now Tuesday evening, and we appeared to have a day in hand. Should we spend it going to Las Vegas, or should we press on and get into Los Angeles a day early. The schedule had to be set so that we travelled through the Mojave Desert at night. As it turned out, we managed to fit everything into the programme, having missed out on the Painted Desert. We were thus able to get an early start the following morning.

This point settled, we all went out to dinner, driving round the town until we came to a suitable place. I kept reminding Ted White that as we were the respective Presidents of OMPA and EAPA, everything we said to one another would have to be reported in OFF-TRAILS and THE FANTASY AMATEUR. In light of our travelling back across country together, I'm glad this suggestion wasn't taken too seriously. Bill Donaho looked a little hurt as I ordered a deep-fried steak. He'd been hurt when I had ordered a chicken fried steak and after the waitress had taken our orders, told me that this new dish was the same as the old. More mutterings about Englishmen and fish and chips. The waitress intrigued us. She was fair, but spoke with a marked accent which stood out from other southerners we'd met. Even Bill Donaho couldn't place it. It turned out that she was Spanish.*

Back at the motel, we turned in just after nine o'clock in readiness for the hectic day ahead. We didn't know at the time what a sendoff we'd get. In Pavlat's room, Bob shared a bed with Ted White, and I shared the other with Jim Caughran, the same arrangement as the previous night in Amarillo.

A loud knocking on the door woke me up. Bob was struggling into some clothing and through bleary eyes I saw him go over to the door. It was the motel manager. I seem to remember he had a large dog with him. At the time I half thought it was Rickhardt doing his wakey wakey act at four in the morning. The manager seemed upset. He asked whether we were trying to break our way into jail, which at the time I thought rather clever of him, but I don't really think he was joking. Bob paid the four dollars he demanded and he left. I turned over and went back to sleep. It was 11:30.

Bill Rickhardt did do his little act, and exactly on four o'clock, too. As we were comparing notes of the manager's rounds the night before and learning that he had discovered someone hiding in the shower of another room, he came up, complete with dog and irate manner. I can't say I honestly blame him. He told us that in all his years of motel managing he'd never had anything like this happen to him, to which Bill Donaho, who was passing with a couple of suitcases, answered, "Well, you can't have had much experience." Mr. Motel Manager immediately pulled out a gun and prodded it into Bill's stomach.

We managed to get away, each of us in one piece. While I'm basically a fairly honest fan, I don't mind playing fannish games and attempting to get away with hotel fees. The fans who have slept on my room floor at Kettering seem to grow in number each year. But after all, we did pay up eventually. Either the manager should have thrown us out or having taken our money should have left us alone. Probably he wanted to make sure that such a bunch got off his premises without taking his furniture along. Still I don't suppose many future fannish caravans will stop over in Holbrook.

-Ron Bennett

* Spanish she was, but she didn't speak with a Spanish accent. It was more of a "cultivated" accent. -tw

THE PNF OF IZ You know, Carl Brandon's magnum opus, the one which ranks second only to THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR--that one--is still for sale. Thirty-two pages, illustrated, magnificently gestetnered on beautiful blue masterweave, the original printing ran two hundred numbered copies; already nearly a quarter of these have been sold. Thirty-five cents, to me (Ted White) gets you your very own copy. Do it now!

THE ADVERSARIES Twenty pages, this publication was Kent Moomaw's best and last effort. Illustrated and foreworded. Only seventy-five numbered copies were printed. If you missed it in VOID, or want a separate complete copy, it costs 25¢.

THE WAILING WALL

Rather than review a fanzine, this time I'd like to review a prozine: GALAXY Magazine. A lot of changes have taken place recently on this zine, and with a mind towards that, I think a new assessment is due. Under review here are the current GALAXY (August, 1959) and GSF Novel (Odd John).

Appearance-wise, the August GALAXY is an improvement over recent issues. Wood is getting the hang of cover paintings, and though this piece is still inferior to much of his EC and Will Eisner work, it shows a better control of definition, and better use of color. Inside, Wood is evident in four, instead of the usual one, styles, which include his usual comic-book-plus-wash for "No Life of Their Own"; a photographic wash (technically his best of the issue) for "License to Steal"; a looser brush-and-wash for "Lex", which is his artistic best; and a straight heavy brush in typical pulp blacks-&-whites with no wash for "The Waging of Peace". All of his stuff this time is superior Wood, revealing a gradual trend towards Magazine Illustration, away from his Mad-influenced exaggerated comic-book style. The other illustrators are Dick Francis (a bad one for "Citizen Jell", but then, he had little to work with; and a good one for "The Spicy Sound of Success" in which he exceeds the quality of the story), Don Martin (who sets the stage and calls the pace for "MUGwump Four" a bit too obviously; but then, his style obviates any subtler approach), and Dillon (whose style fits perfectly into "The Malted Milk Monster", and whose work approaches here Art-mit-capital-A). The general quality of art is high for the rates paid, among the lowest in the field, and is better than usual in fact. I imagine GALAXY holds its illustrators by allowing them a broader area in which to work--unrestricted by line-cuts, they can experiment with some quite effective washes, as with the good Francis and the Dillons this. Layouts are also improving, becoming less cold, and leading towards greater reader-involvement.

I think more attention should be paid, not merely to attractive layouts, but to those which entice the reader into the story. They should, along with the illustration, make a story which is otherwise only cold print on a page seem warm, human, intriguing. The better pulps had this developed to a fine art; to a formula, in fact, which

coupled with the proper art never failed. In leading towards experimental, "modern" illustration, GALAXY began a wave of what then seemed like a gradual repugnance of the reader to-

PROZINE review

towards the magazine, and the building of an "unfavorable image". Despite their artistic merit, their value as designs, the coldness of many of these drawings--not really illustrations at all; they were complete separate things, rarely bound to the stories they professed to illustrate--repelled the reader, and led him to expect similar qualities in the stories thus illustrated. By adding Wood, who is basically an old-school action artist, and Martin, for comedy relief, GALAXY has begun a gradual swing back towards a closer reader-magazine empathy. (I might parenthetically note that I think the frigid atmosphere of no illos at all, while it may be an immediate budget saver, hurts deeply such magazines as FANTASTIC UNIVERSE, and only the chatty blurbs in F&SF save it in this department: word pictures are used instead of the more direct articles...)

If GALAXY is regaining lost ground in the art department, it has yet to do as much in the fiction department. Of the eight stories in this issue, only one was of any value as science fiction, and one as

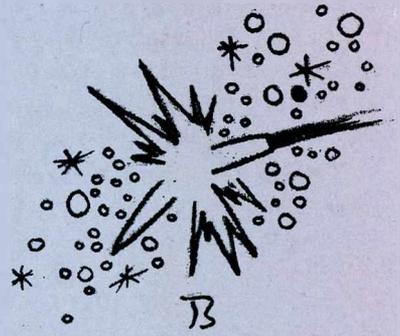
science fantasy; the others led the way, decreasingly, from poor hackery through sheer uncaring butchery to purest idiocy. Basically, all but the two good stories referred to accent anti-science, illogic, ignorance, maudlin values, superficiality, and a presumed moronic intelligence level on the part of the reader. I doubt if this wins such authors any new friends. Some are thus by design ("No Life of Their Own", "MUGwump Four") some, I think, due to the author's inability to regard his stories seriously ("The Waging of Peace").

"No Life of Their Own" by Clifford Simak is narrated by a 'child' whose age is never given, but who cannot be over eleven, and not under seven. Like all fictional narrators, he has the ability to report verbatim all conversations, even when they go beyond his own vocabulary. Too often he is merely Simak hacking out another first-person story, all characterization forgotten. There is a basic defect in using a juvenile narrator in a science fiction story (Heinlein usually makes his so precocious that we forget their youth), that being that first, a juvenile narrator often lacks the qualities necessary for reader-identification, and second, a juvenile vocabulary, if adhered to, is almost useless for writing stf, and a juvenile set of concepts even more so. Science fiction relies upon a logical or pseudo-logical rationalization of the "impossibilities" which will crop up in a story. The scientific doubletalk, if well and convincingly handled, does much to assuage disbelief. Stf is a logical person's reading material. Children, however, haven't the grasp of material logic (though they often have their own set) nor the minimum of factual knowledge to make a science fiction story believable, if they are telling it. Fantasy, of course is another matter, as is mainstream literature. But in Simak's story, as in most stf stories told by children, we lose identification (what do I care what the kid does or thinks; it doesn't interest me), and we get impatient with the apparent idiocy of all involved. Of course this is more likely in a story such as this one, in which the plot is contrived to an incredible degree.

Simak, evidently too lazy to do any real work on either story or plot, presents us with some fantastic gibberish. One of the alien settlers in the rural community which forms the background to the story, announces: "'Before I came to Earth, I was a worker in the field of optics, and it may be possible that I can grind a set of lenses that would allow your son to see the halflings. ... He is of the age to still have that ability to peer beyond reality. It may be that all his vision needs is a slight correction.'" The halflings live a micro-second ahead of us, you see, and the children of this alien can see them easily, though they lose the ability when they grow up. He 'tinkers' about a bit, and "They looked just like any other glasses except that the lenses had funny lines running every which way, as if someone had taken the glass and twisted it until it was all crinkled out of shape." Naturally, with the glasses the kid can now see that micro-second ahead into the future. That's all the explanation, by the way, there is for these remarkable glasses which our alien invents on the spur of the moment. They are received without curiosity by all concerned. Another of the aliens has been 'tinkering' with a time machine, which--surprise!--isn't a time machine exactly, but turns out to send stuff into the halfling world. This of course turns out to be a cornerstone of the plot. And so on. Every time something is needed, like, say, a way to open a two-way hole into the halfling world, somebody 'tinkers' and there we are with just whatever we needed. This isn't science fiction; this is wishful thinking.

And such a preponderance of muddly thinking and reliance upon 'tinkering' leads me to dub this a Tinker Toy Story.

"Citizen Jell" is a Simple, Homey Story by Michael Shaara, About A Fine Old Man From Another Planet. He comes to Earth to retire among us primitives. He has a Box. It not only Makes Things for him--duplicates anything and memorizes the object for future duplication without recourse to a prototype--it will also act as a matter receiver for anything available commercially throughout the galaxy. If Mr. Jell uses any of these products, though he will be billed and traced. So he waits until temptations are overpowering, and then uses the Box wholesale. Naturally he is Traced. End of story. If it had been Sturgeon, it might have made it. But not as it stands, another Tinker Toy story.



Jim Harmon's "The Spicy Sound of Success" takes one of Gold's pet ideas, previously used in "The Stars My Destination," and best in HL's own "The Man With English"—that of short-circuited sensory perception in which one might smell sounds, see odors, etc. Harmon explains this with the sheerest gobbledegook—"transphasia"—which is sometimes encountered on alien planets. It attacks with total indiscrimination, electronic equipment and human beings, it says at the beginning of the story. Later on, we find that when necessary (to the author) radar is not affected by it. The passages concerning the moments under transphasia are well written, marvelously purple in content, and the only thing of value in the entire story. The problem—A disease, what? We never know the first thing about it, except several mutually contradictory facts—is never solved, but merely substituted for by a fleeting problem of alien creatures who appear at the end of the story to Put Things Right. A bit of tinkering by the author, apparently. Blended into this with a rusty hatchet is a rather good idea: that the Captain of the spaceship is the greenest, freshest, since tenure in space leads to a dangerous complacency. Unfortunately, the idea is only hinted at here and there in the story, with the explanation left to the reader to figure out. This he does by the second page—even before he knows where the story is set—but Harmon continues to only coyly hint at it through to the end of the story. Harmon too resorts to Tinker Toy writing: "'I don't suppose we could understand each other /during transphasia/ if it wasn't for our morphistudy courses in reading cross-sense translations of Centauri blushtalk and the like'" which was thrown in after considerable dialogue while battling this transphasia...

Silverberg's "MUGwump Four" starts out on a level suggested by the Don Martin cartoons: a light unassuming bit of humor. Here at least such doubletalk as "'The cranch interval overlapped and his telephone matrix slipped'" has a place—we think. Our hero is shunted time-wise from one group to another, always bewildered, a bit simple-minded, never worried really, till the ending. He is returned to the moment just previous to the beginning of the story. "Inwardly, Al wanted to scream. No scream would come. In this continuum, the past (his future) was immutable. He was caught on the track, and there was no escape. None whatever. And, he realized in frozen horror, there never would be." Which ending thus robs the story of all its assets. I wish Gold had exercised his famed editorial blue pencil here just a bit and removed that final paragraph.

"License To Steal" by Louis Newman, is listed as a non-fact article, which means it is a dehydrated story, all the life and action of narration removed, and presented in a dry bored voice. It would have made a wonderful plot for Fredric Brown. But even as an "article" it does not escape Tinker Toyism. A race is rendered sterile by "a strange nucleonic storm which had passed through their system," and when the protagonist must get from one system to another quickly, he uses "the first model of the Timebird, with its primitive meson exchange discoordinator..."

W.T.Haggert's "Lex" is the only decent, self-respecting science fiction story in the entire issue, although it's not major-league by a good deal. Still, it is an honest treatment of an old idea: a machine which gains intelligence and personality. Haggert has taken a long close look at the idea and come up with Lex, a small factory, fully automated, devoted to the manufacture of electrical equipment. Lex's "brain" is organic, and far more compact than it's creator's contemporary-world computers; great buildings of tape reels. The creator is Lexington, who sets Lex up on an initiative basis, with a pleasure center which he can stimulate after "she" has done a good job. Gradually Lex, watching Lexington closely to see that he is pleased with "her", assumes a maternal-wife role, and in the end cremates herself as Lexington's funeral pyre when he dies of a heart attack. The story is told compassionately and facilly through the eyes (but not the voice of) of a young engineer whom Lexington hopes to groom to take over for him. The story is well paced, honest, scientificational, and above all seems "real"—as though it might really happen, and wasn't the psychotic nightmare of the author.

William Tenn turns in the top story of the issue, however, in a psycho-science-fantasy, "The Malted Milk Monster", which might better have appeared in BEYOND, were that magazine only still appearing. Our protagonist finds himself in the fantasy world of an unattractive pre-teen-age girl, whom he had christened the Malted Milk Monster. His problem is to get out again. He almost succeeds, only to find himself Repressed--shunted into a never-used cubicle of her mind. Despite the claustrophobic-confinement theme so familiar to GALAXY (and present to a degree in every story), this is a good story, a meaningful science fantasy, believable in that sense, and engrossingly well characterized. The entire story has unity of concept and construction, and is undoubtedly one of Tenn's recent bests. It joins "Lex" as one of the only two above-average quality stories in the issue.

"The Waging of Peace" is a typical Fred Pohl story, serious or mock-serious theme, with social and satirical overtones, worthy of real development, and handled so sloppily and cheaply, with such contempt for the reader as to be a long drawn out razzberry. Pohl here echoes his tone in his editorial for the only issue of STAR SF MAGAZINE: "You fellows are clods, and here's something I think fitting for you." The story is a curious mixture of unbelievable farce (though apparently not intended as such) and serious sermonizing. Whether Pohl means this stuff to be taken seriously, it is presented as such, and, like SLAVE SHIP, is a horrible botch from beginning to end. The idea here is that after an unexplained overthrow of the US Government by a Simple Simon with a rifle, almost all advertising is banned. People need no longer consume products at wasteful rates. However, all manufacturing is being done in sealed and automatically guarded caverns, and now that people aren't buying, and the factories are still supplying, things are piling up. How can we turn the factories off? Simple, says Simon: blow them up; destroy them. Naturally (!) they can't be destroyed, so Simon (that wasn't his name, but it fits) calls a conference and his secretary suggests they disguise themselves as raw materials and get in that way. This they do (!) but they blow up only the raw materials intake. Now, of course, the factories will have to shut down. Yes. While everyone is happily celebrating the Triumph of Man Over Machine, not even wondering what might happen after everything is all used up (because, after all, the author knows what the end will be, and that isn't in the works) the factories start supplying new products: "'We cut off the raw materials, but evidently that won't stop the factories. They're learning to do without. Force fields, magnetic flux--I don't know! But that truck was full of appliances that didn't use any raw materials /but they were packaged, an overlooked point/ at all!'" But is this to be the ending? Are we to speculate upon this miracle of cybernetic science? No: "'But these things,' he said sickly, 'don't look as though they'll ever wear out. How can they? They aren't made of matter at all! And when the new models keep coming out--how are we ever going to get rid of the old ones?'" Wow. This is an application of Tinker Toy Thinking in such a grand manner as to stagger me. Pohl not only aims his stories at pedestrian readers, he peoples his stories with pedestrian characters who can see and act no further than the end of their nose. In his efforts to find tricky new extrapolations, and clever twists, Pohl overlooks the obvious, the logical, every time. This is, in short, a perfect example of Damon Knight's "Idiot Plot" and my very own "Tinker Toy Plot".

Which seems to be about its only justification.

An examination will show that of the six unsuccessful stories, their chief fault is bad or muddy thinking. I don't know how much control Gold has over this--all editors seem to feel they can't get what they want--but stories of this nature, in which the logic is at best at a 45-degree angle from reality, or are even anti-logical, seem to gravitate towards GALAXY. These are stories populated with a new genus of Cardboard Characters, the morons, who exist solely as functions of plots, rarely coming alive as human beings--as people we feel we can understand and identify with, and like or even dislike. We can believe in insane characters, when they are avowedly so, but it is the unsane, thrust upon us by GALAXY's authors whom we find repelling. And deservedly so,

GALAXY

is not a healthy magazine, and hasn't been for some time. The unhealthiness of its stories have, I think, helped alienate its readers, which has contributed to an unhealthy

circulation. Now, with changes in format designed to combat this, and in art, and perhaps even in fiction--two good ones is above par for me in reading GALAXY--perhaps the magazine is recuperating. Perhaps the shock of change is jolting it into a new perspective. I hope so...though I fear that such editorials as the current one, dealing with cookbooks in a surrealistically stffictional way, and evolving into a corner of GOURMET Magazine, are a step backwards.

What GALAXY needs is to erase its reader image, that of a sterile, unchanging, cold-white magazine. It needs a new face and a new look. It needs new department heads and new departments. It needs a different colored cover border. It needs freshness and sanity and life, and not a backwater stagnancy of good times past. If it finds these things, there will be hope. The recent changes have opened the door a crack. Push it open the rest of the way, HL!

The GALAXY SCIENCE FICTION NOVELS have found a new home. Evidently finding distribution difficult for an independent line of only four books, Guinn has made an agreement with Beacon Books to distribute and imprint the GSFNovels. The first under the new arrangement is Odd John, a book released as a GALAXY NOVEL already back in 1952. The book number is Beacon 236; it is the 36th GALAXY NOVEL. Though a basically dull, heavy book, it has been given new life by the cover blurbs--"...all women his playthings and all men his pawns," etc. and ad nauseum. Beacon is primarily a publisher of cheap imitation-sex books, and apparently this is the new "sell": sex. Too bad. The cover is typical Naked Girl Menaced By Lustful Rapist--Odd John, as it turns out--but once inside, the makeup is that of the older GSFNovels, of the four just previously published. Publishing credit is given to Guinn and Galaxy Publishing Co., not Beacon. The spine is also a hold-over, with the Beacon imprint added to the extra bottom inch, the new books being of the 'tall' pb variety. The only other change is that the books are now GSF SELECTED NOVELS, "for Beacon".

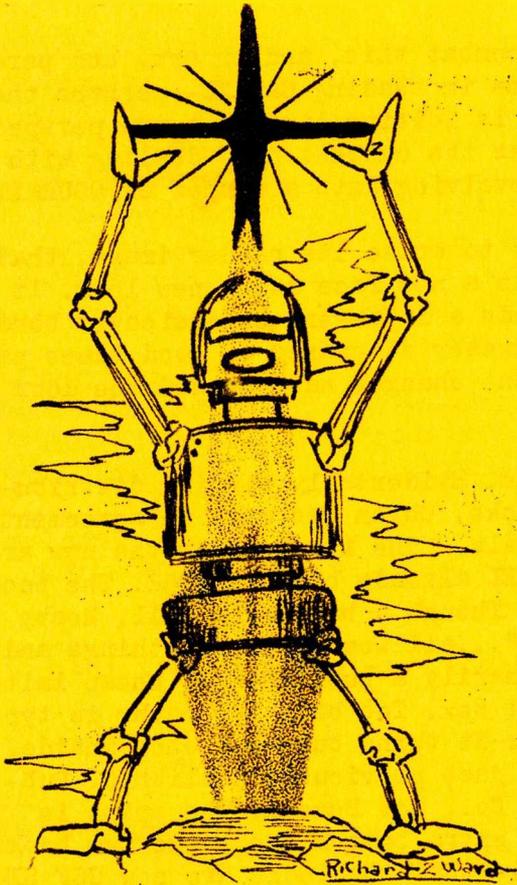
While I think Guinn was wise in seeking out a larger pb publisher to handle his GSFNovels, I think he was very unwise in his selection of Beacon, although perhaps he found contractual arrangements easier there. Beacon is a second-string, third-rate publisher, not carried in many areas, and its reputation cannot do either GALAXY or science fiction any good. And certainly identifying Odd John as a "sex-book" will only serve to repel science fiction readers, and disappoint the sex readers.

I hope Guinn reconsiders in favor of a publisher such as, at least, Avon, Berkeley, or Pyramid, which while not at the very top (and thus probably unapproachable), at least have treated stf decently.

--Ted E. White

MORE CAPSULE FMZ REVIEWS: JD-ARGASSY #46, Lynn Hickman, 304 N. 11th, Mt. Vernon, Illinois; 12pp; 10¢, trade, or comment. This issue is another all-letter issue, and following so close upon the heels of the last issue as to be competing with VOID's old schedule. In fact, the only thing which keeps JD-A from direct competition with VOID is the looser air about the zine which keeps it in the snapzine, or RUMBLE/GAMBIT class. The only thing about the zine which irritates me is the lack of separation between editorial matter and outside matter. For instance, Lynn uses only common paranthesis to set off his comment on the letter. How about it, Lynn: double paranthesis at least? Recommended

SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES #43, Al Lewis & LASFS, 2548 W. 12th St., Los Angeles 6, California; 36pp; 20¢, comment, or trade. This issue is a slight let-down after #42, but still solidly plugging away towards making the top. This has Al Lewis' editorial (in which he confuses many facts about TAFF--Don Ford didn't work with Vick on the WAW WITH THE CREW fund); a serious, intelligent article by Rick Sneary; Johnstone's Minutes; a profile of Johnstone by Rich Brown (perhaps these things wouldn't be such back-slapping affairs if close friends weren't picked to write them...); a minor piece by Norman Metcalf; a rambling one by Fritz Leiber that sounds like an impromptu speech; an ineffable poem by Djinn Faine; still quite excellent fmz reviews by 'ESP'; three letters; a report of a Hanover con by Klaus Eylmann, which while valuable perhaps for the information conveyed was otherwise not worth printing; and the best (as usual) item of the issue, Ellick's "Squirrel Cage". Still Well Recommended



Science fiction fans have a screw loose. They'll admit it, often with pride. But they're not the only fans who are eccentric, to say the least. What would you call someone who would go to Mexico City for his honeymoon--and spend most of his time riding the streetcars? Or a group that will drive 200 miles or more on a weekend just to ride a special streetcar--usually the oldest one on the system--at three or four times the regular fare? Or the group that rides the last car over a line being abandoned (at 1:00 am) or charter a car to follow the last regular car, and thus be the last passenger car over the line, finishing in the rain at 3:00 am?

These are "juice" fans.

Most science fiction fans recognize that there are other types of fandom--or rather other fandoms devoted to different central themes. The most obvious one is stamp collecting, which has grown into big business, with millions of people buying the various special issues turned out by governments large and small throughout the world. Other collecting fandoms that come to mind include coin, book (first editions, or Bibles, or erotica, or...), magazine, comic, arrowhead, mineral, button, cut glass, postcard (comic or greeting or scenic or French), or you name it. Many of these have subdivisions within categories, and are highly specialized, with organized societies, publications, and conventions.

Such collecting activities the science fiction fan can understand, as he has usually gone through such a stage in his reading and neofan days.

There are other fandoms, though, which make less sense to the non-initiate. One of these is the railroad fandom, with the off-shoots of street-car and electric railroad. This usually starts out as a form of nostalgia for the old engines and cars that you used to hear and see and ride, and which are rapidly vanishing from the scene. The modern diesel air-horn doesn't have the mournful, chill-producing tone that the whistle of a 4-6-2 Pacific had, especially on a cold winter night, or a rainy, misty fall morning--"the lonesome whistle".

However, collecting steam engines--especially the big articulated that weighs over 100 tons--and street cars just isn't the hobby of a man who lives in a city, especially in an apartment. You need room to run them, and room just to sit them out and look at them. So, the fan went to the mountain. Instead of collecting engines, he collects pictures of them; instead of operating them, he rides them, whenever he can.

other fandoms:

bill evans

RAIL FANDOM

Trolley fandom is a specialized branch of railfan activity. Instead of being interested in the high-stepping Pacifics and Mallet hogs, the trolley fan dreams of Niles cars and Birneys and Peter Witts. He is interested in the electric cars that ran in the cities and the electric interurbans that linked together vast segments of New England, the middle west, and California at one time. He will include the bable-cars which preceeded the trolley, and the rapid transit subway and elevated, but his first love remains the trolley car. First and foremost, he likes to ride the cars. His ambition is to ride all of the lines still running in the US (very few now) and any foreign lines he can manage. (What better way to get to ride the Mexico City cars than to get married and take the honeymoon in Mexico City? But it only works once, with one wife...)

Just riding regular lines isn't enough. They organize special trips--fan-trips--with a chartered car or cars to cover little used trackage, car barns, trackage due for abandonment, etc. Trolley fans will travel hundreds of miles for such trips--Washington trips have had fans from St. Louis, New Orleans, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Boston, New York, Toronto, Richmond, Philadelphia, and way points. Local fans have arranged trips over lines in Boston, Johnstown, Richmond, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Kansas City, etc. When a line is abandoned, the last car is usually filled with fans, and a newspaper reporter or two, even if it is 1:00 am.

In addition to desiring to ride the cars, the fans want pictures; pictures of the cars, of the lines, of the barns, of the fan trips, of everything but other fans. The pictures may be taken by just riding the line and getting on and off and waiting for cars to come along--this takes time and a lot of fares--or by using an automobile (the fan is not above using this devil's invention which is killing off his pet) to trail the line and catch cars. Or, they may be made on fan trips, where picture stops are made at points of interest, and cars placed for the best shots. For movie fans, the car will be backed up a couple of blocks, and then run forward, while a dozen cameras record its progress, usually on color film.

Most fans have pet systems. They want pictures of all the cars that ever ran on that system, and their predecessors, in all stages of repainting, and rebuilding. On a system such as those in New York or Chicago, this means a lot of pictures. They want to know everything about the car--who built it and when, what kind of motors and trucks and controls it had and when they were changed and why, what wrecks it was in, what happened to it; was it sold to another company or scrapped or preserved as a hen house, or what.

A good example of the picture collector is presented by a retired Washington coal-and-ice dealer, who has been taking pictures of Washington street cars for fifty years. He has a room full of negatives; the early glass ones are not easy to file. In addition, he has kept a diary in which he records the cars he saw each day, and on what line. This includes notes on new paint schemes, new cars coming into service, new track being laid, new wire going in, etc.

Another characteristic of trolley fandom is the meeting. One of the principal features of every one I have ever attended is the showing of either slides of cars and trips or movies of the same. Most fans get a satisfaction in showing the pictures that no one else has; they gloat over the envious looks of others. And it doesn't matter if they have been shown before; the fans like to see the same films over and over.

As in most fandoms, there are feuds. In Washington D.C., there are at least four groups, with many of the same members, that are more or less feuding with each other--and with groups in other cities. The fights usually do not break out into open warfare; gentle sniping and subtle backstabbing are the order of the day. The national organizations, though, have had splits as noisy as the WSFS affair.

Most fans are collectors. In addition to collecting pictures, they collect associated items such as maps and timetables--especially those of long-gone systems--and the older they are, the more valuable (if you think "The Outsider" is expensive, try to buy an 1885 issue of "The Official Railway Guide" for under \$50.00, or a copy of "Denver, South Park and Pacific" for \$100.00). Transfers issued 40 and 50 years ago are

worth their weight in silver, if not yet gold. Destinations signs and fare registers and controller handles and such esoteric items, obtained legally or otherwise, occupy honored places in dens and bedrooms. (There is the story of the fan who kept a fare register in the bedroom and pulled the bell-cord every time...)

And then there are the collections of streetcars. Scattered throughout the country are at least a dozen trolley museums, where old cars are kept for exhibit and operation. Fans spend weekends and evenings restoring the cars to their original condition, laying track for operation, and stringing wire. On gala occasions--such as holidays--visitors will be invited, and the old cars run up and down the mile or so of track. If the visitor is well known as a fan, he may be allowed to operate the controller and air-brake. (Imagine being allowed to use Harry Warner's DDT&T Mimeo...) One of the biggest museums is in New England, with over two dozen cars. Another, in Colusa, California, has just obtained permission from the city to take over some former Sacramento Northern electric trackage, due to be abandoned by the company, and re-electrify it and operate its cars over the streets on Sundays.

In publications trolley car fandom far outstrips stf. There are a large number of small journals--TIMEPOINTS, WHEEL CLICKS, HEADWAY RECORDER, ELECTRIC RAILWAY SOCIETY JOURNAL (British, naturally)--which feature news of local and national events, plus short historical material of the local area. In addition, a number of very professional publishing operations are going, issuing historical material mainly. Interurbans, in Los Angeles, is publishing a history of Pacific Electric (the "Big Red Cars") and predecessor companies; this includes such items as a complete roster of all motive power operated on the PE system since 1911, with pictures of each car type; a detailed survey of each line, with maps showing all the changes from start to end of operation; a survey of passenger service through the years, with details of changes of hours and frequency in service and the reasons behind them; a history of the Los Angeles Railway Co. (the local street cars) as it was involved in the operations of PE in LA; and histories of each of the companies that were combined to make PE in 1911, with maps and rosters for each. So far, about half of the material has appeared; nicely multilithed and copiously illustrated, it occupies about 400 pages. Another group, in Chicago, is devoting itself to a history of the streetcars and interurbans of the middle west, with one 150-200 page volume a year. So far they have covered Wisconsin, Indiana (two volumes), Iowa, Illinois (two volumes). Similar projects are underway for Philadelphia, Chicago, Washington and New York.

Perhaps the chief difference between the railfan publications and stfan publications is that the former are historical and technical, while the latter are devoted more to writing, communication and discussion. The railfans are interested in preserving and documenting a period of American history that has been generally overlooked by professional historians; too often such material is wanted by the professional historian long after all sources have disappeared (imagine trying to write a good history on the early canals, complete with specifications of the canal boats and locks, location of bridges and stables, details on the construction, dates of opening each section, etc.)

The average juice fan is a reasonably mature person of between 20 and 50. There is very little of the lunatic fringe evident in most of their activities; such persons as tend this way are firmly squelched, as they would impair the good relations with the operating companies so necessary for the successful running of fantrips. In some areas, though, a few "little monsters" have appeared, and thrown the whole group into trouble. However, as an activity that has a strong nostalgic interest, the followers tend to be older and less noisy.



BERGERON

They can dream, though. Should a stf fan succeed in developing a time machine that could go back no more than 75 years, he would have a ready market. Every juice fan dreams of the days when the Blank system was running with the original cars, or the Indiana Railroad had its high-speed interurbans thundering over the Indiana plains, or the Cable cars clanked through the streets of Chicago and New York. They dream of being able to go back and see (and photograph) and ride their pet cars, with no buses or automobiles to interfere.

Me? I'd love to go back and see the San Francisco cablecars before the earthquake, the SP red electrics run out of Portland, the ferries in the Bay connecting the Interurban electric and Key trains, before the bridge was built, the second and eighth and ninth avenue els in NY...I can dream too, can't I?

—Bill Evans

LETTERS, like, continued... two polls should be taken, for cross reference.

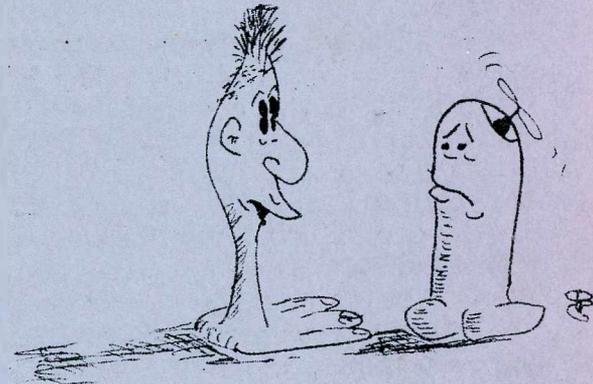
By doing this, a fairer picture would emerge as to the position of the zine taking the poll--which seems always to get an exaggerated showing in its own poll. With three polls to average, we might get a better yet idea. -tw))

I would like to add one word further anent your remark about FANAC not quite qualifying for top honors in a "fanzine" poll. Nonsense. Quite the contrary to your beliefs, I do not feel that 'most fans regard fanzines as composed of material...other than news.' Fanzines are judged by their quality of, well let's call it 'enjoyability' and not their contents. If we went around judging on content we'd soon be in the same spot the Emmy producers were this year on TV...a different catigory for each contestant. It adds up to more winners, true, but also a gigantic farce as well. FANAC richly deserved its first place spot this time: it is one fanzine that I break open every time with a high degree of anticipation and finish with a great deal of relish.

One other comment, before I leave, which will no doubt arouse your combative instincts, but that's not the reason I'm saying it. I just want to get it off my chest.

It's this Moomaw business. Somehow his suicide, his utter cowardice in failing to face the first reality with which he was ever confronted in life, has worked a rather strange and magic effect upon fandom which is quite the opposite than that which produced my emotions. Fandom has grasped the "speak no ill of the dead" superstition and transformed it into something remarkable to behold. Moomaw is no longer the rather inept writer he always was but suddenly a genius of the first water who was somehow unrecognized when he was alive...or, rather, he was recognized as a genius but by mysterious means everybody neglected to mention it aloud until after his death. His adolescent fumbings to adjust to the world around him are no longer the mere transition period all adolescents face but somehow a glorious awareness of Ultimate Truth.

Bosh! Not being a subscriber to this particular "speak no evil of the dead" business, I do not feel hesitant to say that I do not now feel and have never felt that Kent was more than a mediocre writer; though God knows I am not qualified to be a literary critic and this is no more than a personal opinion. None of his writing has impressed me as more than average fan writing, and this includes "The Adversaries". A collection of Kent's writing would be completely unjustified from the standpoint of his writing ability alone. From his personality, perhaps--I don't know, I did not know him very well. But taking his suicide into account, I'd rather think not. I have nothing against suicide per se--in fact, I'd be happy if certain other people indulged in it--and I'll admit that in some situations (incurable, painful disease, etc.) there seems to be no other way out, but from Kent's standpoint I think it was sheer cowardice and completely unjustified. And thus I admire him neither as a writer nor as a person. Sorry, but that's the way I feel, and I just wanted to set it down in VOID for the record. (I think you're overestimating the applause for "The Adversaries" and the remarks about Kent's writing ability. I always thought he was a good, capable author (which is why he had a column in VOID), but his death in no way inhances his ability in my mind...and I don't think it does in others' either. It's simply because people naturally tend to evaluate a person and his works after he's dead. But I do agree that his suicide was an act of cowardice; only it's quite possible it was



"...Kellogg sent me!"

caused by a series of events, one after another, which caused a period of depression. Kent's whole life was fandom, and when it looked as though he would lose quite a bit of contact with it, I believe his life didn't seem too important. (Incidentally, this opinion is extrapolated from knowing Kent for four years.) -gb) (I think two things further need to be pointed out--aside from the fact that my opinion of Kent's writing ability and quality was not affected by his death--those being that first, it is foolhardy to pass moral judgement, as Gregg has done here, upon another person's actions. While Gregg undoubtedly views the situation from a combination of objective and subjective (his own) viewpoints, and finds that Kent was a coward to sacrifice a promising young life the first time he ran into a barrier--a barrier which Gregg obviously thinks little of--this in no way affects Kent's own subjective judgement of the situation he found himself in. I agree with Benford that there was probably no single thing which caused Kent's action; things mounted until they were unbearable. Kent was an introvert, and introverts are far more aware of their failings, guilts, inabilities, and the pressure of the "outside world". While I am personally unhappy that Kent did what he did, and think he was foolish, and do not consider his act "noble" nor "brave", I cannot condemn him for it. I don't think any of us have the right to pass judgement. Second, apparently Calkins read little by Kent. I know that his Cult letters were often joys to behold, and his Southwestercon Report and, yes, "The Adversaries", I hold to be good fannish writing. Kent had the ability to organize his thoughts and to give a finished appearance to a first-draft. He might be compared in style, nature, and ability to Rich Elsberry, who as I remember was never thought of as "mediocre." I don't think that of Kent's writings, and never did. -tw)) c1484 East 17th South, Salt Lake City 5, Utah]

G . M . C A R R : I suppose you noticed in the various comments about "The Adversaries" how definitely they divided into two general categories: A, being those fans and/or readers who attended the Midwestcon/Southwestercon and who invariably remarked at the tremendous perceptiveness of his writing; and B, those fans who did not know the actual facts upon which his fiction was based, and who tend, therefore, to carp about it because he did not write the events as having occurred in a more (to them) plausible or fannish manner... Harry Warner, Jr.,'s comments, in particular, display the fatuity of the latter type. (A number of criticisms of stories such as Kent's rest upon the fact that the critics haven't the experience (or perhaps perception) to realize that fannish events, as imagined in fan fiction, just don't happen that way. A mixture of the mundane is necessary.-gb)) c5319 Ballard Ave., Seattle 7, Washington]

E T H E L L I N D S A Y : "The Adversaries" is quite a unique item I am sure, but apart from any such considerations, I found it very well done. I can sympathise with your feelings as a friend of Kent Moomaw's when you become angry at some of the discussions surrounding his death. That's only natural. That fans should be curious why he died, I think only natural too. However the only justification for such curiosity would be if it came from a worry that such a thing could happen again, and that perhaps by knowing the why it could be prevented. There again, only someone like yourself knowing most of the facts will be in a position to judge whether that could be so. c6 Langley Ave., Surbiton, Surrey, England]

F . M . B U S B Y : CRY gets some oddball mail also (I mean stuff we don't print, and where do you get off thinking such snide remarks about our lettercol?)--sheets of illoes that must have taken all of five minutes to scribble, accompanied by "send this back if you don't want it for the next issue" but with no return postage--etc., etc.

Yes, Greg, it is a loss when your "personality oozing through the cracks in the zine" is missing or nearly so, in the only zine with which you're currently connected. And if Ted were down to half-a-zine and appearing only sparsely in that one, I'd be equally concerned.

Ted, "he didn't have MG fall into the pool while inebriated, though, now did he?" (to GMC re "The Adversaries") would seem to imply that GMCarr did just that at the 1957 Midwestcon. Fanwise, I'm somewhat anti-GMCarr these days, but let's be fair: on the Friday evening to which I assume you refer, GMC showed up at the pool in her swimmin'-suit with the avowed intention of going swimming. The sign at the pool labeled it "Closed" as of one hour previous, but a number of us (including, I believe, yourself) convinced her that this was a ridiculous stricture, so she did go into the pool--under her own steam and volition. She was packing a few drinks, to be sure, but was certainly not out of control--a certain discernible exhilaration was due more to the occasion than to the potables. OK, there was a certain amount of horseplay around the pool, but GMC neither fell nor was thrown in; she took a competent if not spectacular dive off the edge, swam and floated around in the water for five or ten minutes, and emerged. Then came the tug-of-war with Tucker, for her towel, while Ed Chamberlain shot flash pictures--all good clean faanish sport. A few minutes after that, we (Elinor, I, you, the Toronto mob, and the Tuckers) straggled along to Ed Chamberlain's party.

Foof--

strikes me that GMC has left enough legitimate openings for hammering, that it's silly to waste your strength on poorly founded items like the above quote. (Good of you to clear things up, but I was referring, facetiously, to the rumor Tucker was trying to spread to that effect; an in-group joke, surely, but hardly injurious to GMC, who knew the story, and perhaps laugh-provoking to others...-tw))

I agree with you, Greg, that a workable group-publishing effort can be much more reliably-regular than any individual. Redd's citing of N3F as a group only proves that groups, like individuals, come in various degrees of dependability.

Sorry to see that Inchmery Fandom took Bill Rickhardt's sheet to be representative of the Detention Committee. Joy, girl--Rickhardt hasn't been around Detroit enough in the past few months to be anything more than an honorary member of the Con group. And, although I can't currently find Bill's FLIP, I don't see where Joy gets the impression that Bill himself is for Junkieville. Bill is a dope only in a very limited and colloquial sense of the word, and only occasionally at that. If it's the peyote routine that's creating all the revulsion, rest assured that peyote is not a narcotic in any sense of the word--the stuff is about as habit-forming as Nux Vomica, and its effects are strictly at right-angles to those of opiates. But mainly, Inchmeryites, anything Bill Rickhardt said about all that guff ((and I don't believe he did)) was strictly from his own typing finger, and had nothing whatsoever to do with the Working Members of the Detention Committee--or with Detroit, for "that matter; he speaks of New York, perhaps. (Last I saw of him he was finally bound for San Francisco...-tw))

USS Trimble has, I think, a good view on TWIG. Somehow, too, I don't see jumping ol' Twigger for using woody dep't-titles, when everyone went ape at Geis' similar use of psychiatric terms for all dep'ts in keeping with his title, PSYCHOTIC. (The column headings in PSY contained a certain element of humor, as well as relevance; especially when combined with Kellogg's drawings (and whence he?). Terwilliger's titles seem to reflect a sort of cute overplay of a mediocre idea, and actually add nothing to the column. But then, he doesn't have a Kellogg, either. -gb) [no address on letter]

BRUCE FELZ: There are many comments in VOID 16-1/2 on "The Adversaries". I have been more-or-less refraining from comment, myself, since I'm not sure what to make of it, and any criticism from me is open to a charge of "How do you know? You've never been to a convention." But it does seem that the story builds up quite well to the first meeting of MGolds and Ford, then springs too suddenly into the drunken argument bit. And the character of Robert Olds doesn't seem to ring true, despite Ted's feeling that the story has verisimilitude, man! Points under consideration: the lengthy time MGO had been in fandom while married, and the idea that such a short-tempered person would have been able to put up with his wife's fanac for so long. ((I dunno. I sometimes get the impression that fans' husbands/wives are putting up with "this foolishness" only if the fan contains his/her fanac. If MGolds' husband thought someone had insulted his wife, he might easily tap over the edge of reason, since he'd already been strained by the expense of the trip, hotel, etc.-gb))

Hell, yes, fandom is going hardbound! Actually, the two-or-three installment items in a fanzine are just getting the backlash from other items, such as TAFF reports which run over a period of a year or more, and in several fanzines. Those almost have to be collected in one volume or it's impossible to read them.

What in the name of all that's ridiculous prompted that series of charges against the Detention Committee by Joy Clarke? I damn sure didn't get any such idea out of Rickhardt's FLIP. I remember passing it off as slightly worthless, but don't recall anything that could lead to such idiotic remarks, even from Inchmery Fandom. I hope Broderick did give them their money back.

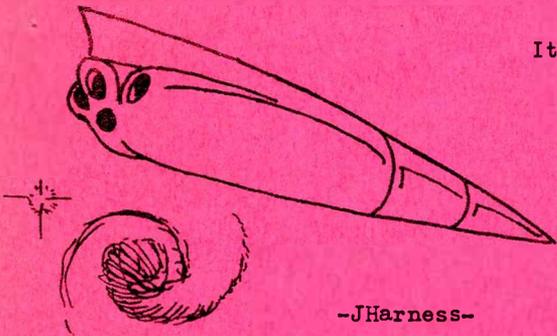
Tsk-tsk, Terry Carr: don't you know that the meaning of fannish words such as gafia change #primarily because of ignorance of the true meaning on the part of the users? Purists, indeed.

Mercer is evidently wrong about blaming a personal grotch for Ted's review of TWIG. Everyone ought to know that Ted just enjoys being nasty about such things. (Touche!-tw) And it appears particularly stupid for Mercer to scream blue murder when he admits knowing neither the zine, the editor, the subject (Moomaw), or, evidently, the reviewer. (By the way, Ted, the term in this case is 'nasty sod' instead of 'nasty sob'.)

The one reasonable gripe Mercer has is that "Detention Tales" doesn't scan. I was quite able to enjoy it, even though I've read only a couple of the original bits. (They weren't included in either High School or College English down here.) And by damn, it is worthwhile, too, as have been most Brandon items I've seen. (Strange, I got quite a bit of Chaucer--he was stressed as one of the three greats of English literature. The others were Shakespeare and Milton, though, so it would seem to be more a matter of opinion than anything else.-gb))

VOID 17 showed up today, and resulted in a flying trip to the bookstore to purchase the ML edition of CANTERBURY TALES. It has been a while since I've read Chaucer, and I'm not a rabid admirer of his writings, so I checked the meter of "Detention Tales" against the Chaucer original. They don't agree, so my complaint that "DT" doesn't scan can't be countered by saying that it sticks to the original, with any validity. As I said, I enjoyed the Tales, but a little more care could have improved the meter. (Considering your example of corrections (not printed), I'd tend to think the Tales would be better if Terry took some liberties with the meter...some of Chaucer's English is rather confusing.-gb)

I like the idea of a yearly poll, for comparison purposes. I presume you will delineate all rules and weighting schedules beforehand.



-JHarness-

It would seem that the only policy for faneds holding parts of Bennett's "Colonial Excursion" is to get them into print any time they choose. After publication, in order, of parts I-III (PERIHELION, APORRHETA, YANDRO), there have been three others published in a slightly spasmodic fashion: XIII in SHAGGY, then IV and VIII in OOPSLA. (XII is now out in INNUENDO) Meyers has said he plans SPECTRE 5 (with part V) for early July or thereabouts. So we might as well have Part IX in one of the next VOIDS, I guess. (No sooner said...)

I quote

FANAC: "Go away, Art Lee."

Well, all right, "The Wailing Wall" this time proves TEW can like a fanzine which he reviews. So I'll change my classification from 'slash-and-jab artist' to 'dissector'. (Thank you.) But even the former carried no intentional derogatory connotation. I still think such reviews should be of use to the editor in question, even though it's an utter impossibility to please everyone on the mailing list who may decide to criticise the zine. It seems to me that fanzines should be somewhat of a compromise between the editor's idiosyncracies and the attitude of the more objective critics in fandom. (It is rather funny, but now faneds (including some of the better ones) are clamoring to have their zines reviewed in the Wall. Ah, but I'm a step ahead of them still, you see...-tw))

Geis ought to set himself up in a university city somewhere, and he'd have no trouble at all selling pornography, particularly if he palmed it off as someone else's stuff that was imported by smuggling it across etc.

Supporting a Cause: one evidently tends to read between the wrong lines, and get utterly wrong interpretations of what one on the opposite side says. A case in point is Lynn Hickman's complaint about being called a dirty campaigner. Does this Cause business fog the brain every time an opponent says or prints something? (Apparently--he's still at it. Whether he misinterprets what I say intentionally in order to hold a superior hand in this game, or whether he's unduly sensitive, I don't know.-tw) [4010 Leona St., Tampa 9, Florida]

REDD BOGGS: There seems to be a great conspiracy in fandom and elsewhere to preserve me not pickled for posterity like Bloch, but in a state of Shangri-La, as a teenage fan. That's what Jim Harmon said I looked like: a teenager. And a fellow at work recently looked at me with amused skepticism when I spoke casually of something that happened in England during world war 2 when I was with the Eighth Air Force; he told me that he thought I was no older than 22 or 23. And now you come along and suggest that SPACEWAYS was "before my time," implying that I was just entering fandom at the time that Art Rapp's SPACEWARP came along in 1947.

For the record, then--and wipe that look of amused skepticism off your face--I subscribed to SPACEWAYS during the last year of its existence. I also subscribed to or received such fanzines of the same era as Rusty Hevelin's NEBULA; Phil Bronson's FANTASITE; John Gergen's TYCHO; the pre-Burbee SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES; Gilbert and Jenkins' SOUTHERN STAR; and a good many others. I not only had a subscription to SPACEWAYS, but Warner printed my first fan article early in 1942, as well as a poem a few months later, and two or three letters. I was inactive in fandom from mid-1942 till mid-1946, while I was in service and shortly afterward, but I'd been active for almost a year in postwar fandom when SPACEWARP burst onto the scene in neat hand-lettered format. That was in April 1947, just about the time that I finally published my first fanzines, co-editing TYMPANI with Bob Stein of Milwaukee. During the summer of 1946 I wrote so many things for fanzine publication that some of them still haven't been printed! I'm far from being an oldtimer in fandom like Tucker, Ackerman, SAM, or even Warner himself, but I discovered the microcosm sometime in late 1940 or early 1941, and that, dear FooFoo!, is almost two decades ago.

The letter from Justin G. Schiller of the International Wizard of Oz club was amusing. Despite my good intentions of leaving Oz to the realms of tinted boyhood memory, I am currently buying and reading Oz books. I'm up to The Scarecrow of Oz at present. I've ordered the next book (Rinkitink in Oz) But the bookstore gave me some news that I hadn't heard: that Reilly & Lee are no longer publishing Oz, Reilly & Lee have turned the series over to Henry Regnery, another Chicago firm, and existing stocks of the Oz books are erratically available, being in the midst of transportation from one warehouse to another. That Reilly & Lee are giving up Oz is surprising; it's like Street & Smith giving up ASF. [2209 Highland Place N.E., Minneapolis 21, Minnesota]

LARS BOURNE: The proposed Moomaw anthology will not be published by Impeccable Publications. I sent out queries for fanzines that Kent wrote for, and announced that I was taking subs. After receiving one sub and no material I gave up on the whole thing. And if I can remember who sent me the money he'll get it back. (As I said, compiling all Kent's wordage in fandom would be quite a task, and perhaps a useless one, as all those who were really interested in him read his material in the original publication.-gb)[2436-1/2 Portland St., Eugene, Oregon]

BOYD RAE BURN: Tucker is bringing THE NEOFAN'S GUIDE up to date. It will be out in August, White lecturing on how Adkins is pushing Terwilliger out of TWIG is rather funny in view of what is happening in VOID...but it is easier for you with this setup I guess, and maybe it's a choice for you between having this set-up, and not putting out VOID at all. ((Correct-gb))

Your personality oozing through the cracks in the zine makes a difference to this reader. This letter from Justin G. Schiller sounds pretty phoney, but there seems so little point to such a hoax, maybe the guy is serious. I like your reply to the blathering of Reamy. Jean Young is the first person I've seen commenting in print on Courval's suicide, since the initial announcement in FANAC. I was very surprised on the complete lack of comment up to now. (Courval's suicide had much in common with Moomaw's (draft, etc.), and fandom probably absorbed the shock as part of that from Kent's death. Actually, if you're thinking in terms of what-this-means-to-fandom, they're both very nearly the same. -gb))

I can't remember whether it was in regard to Terry Carr's reference to Laney that I said he was misusing "sercon". But "overly serious, lacking humor and perspective, and so forth" is not "sercon". Was Laney a "do-gooder or self-appointed censor" and all the rest of the definition of the word? ((At times, very definitely yes. His campaign against the LASFS smacks of this. He was constantly trying to 'clean up fandom' so that it would meet his standards, and sometimes went overboard. Of course, Laney's standards wouldn't have agreed with Russell K. Watkins'...-tw)) In other words, was Laney an Orville Mosher type? I hardly think so. And fie on you Terry Carr. I did not say in a recent CRY that fans have been misusing the term "gafia" to mean getting away from mundane life by immersing oneself in fandom. I said, regarding the need for a new Neo-Fan's Guide "...otherwise we'll be getting such things as 'gafia' being used to connote hyper-activity." Now you, Terry, being a reasoning person, unlike your grandmother, will surely appreciate that what I said was not what you claimed I said. I believe that once "gafia" did mean to Get Away From It All (mundane life) into Fandom. The FANCYCLOPED-IA gives: "Gafia (Wilson) Get Away From It All; motto of escapism." But doesn't say escapism from what. However if it ever did have the meaning you state, it has become completely inverted lo these many years. ((Carr is correct about the original meaning. The term died out until ressurected by, I believe, Art Rapp, who used it in its present meaning through ignorance of its original one. -tw)) And if any meathead should ask why I seem to have no objection to "gafia" possibly having changed its meaning, and yet am fighting the corruption of "sercon", the reason is that "gafia" in its original Carr-claimed meaning would now be a fairly useless word, and its present meaning is universally accepted. However, "sercon" in its correct usage is a very useful term, as there is no other word which has the same meaning, and it is silly to abandon such a useful term just to make it a synonym for "serious".

I wonder if Chaucer is studied only in U.S. schools. I've never heard of it being studied in the schools of any other English speaking countries--not as a general thing, that is. ((Magnus, while working for his Masters in English Lit. and Education had to read all of the original Chaucer, as written, and not in any of the more modern "translations". I notice the original contains most of those fine old four-letter Anglo-Saxon words, too...-tw)) ¶9 Glenvalley Drive, Toronto 15, Canada

ELINOR BUSBY: Dug the Kent Moomaw story, but thought it would have been better if the Marion Zimmer Bradley story had not been written. It didn't say enough more than the previous story. But it was a very good story, and the character of MGolds was an amusingly accurate synthesis of GMC and MZB (insofar as I know the former and know of the latter). How typical, how unutterably typical, that GM was one of the few readers who didn't realize that MZB was meant, too! ¶2852 14th W., Seattle 99, Washington

TED JOHNSTONE: Somebody should tell Bob Silverberg that there are three publishing centers in the country--Baltimore, Berkeley, and Los Angeles. Referring only to non-apa generalzines, I can think of more coming out of LA than both of the other two put together. From Baltimore comes VOID, DISJECTA MEMBRA, and what else? ((VARIOSO, for one.)) From Berkeley (actually SanFran, for the summer) are coming INNUENDO, FANAC, and GOOJIE PUBLICATIONS. Out of the LA area, with fair regularity, come SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES, LNF, QUIXOTIC, PSI-PHI, and EQUATION; with somewhat less regularity come EXCALIBUR, GYRE, and MIMSY. ((How does one get MIMSY? I've been sending trade copies for over three-quarters of a year, to no avail...despite Bjo's promise to put me on the list at the Solacon.-tw)) In preparation are LE COINE, EXILE, and BARAD-DUR. LA seems to outnumber the fan-centers Bob refers to as "dominating" the current run of fandom. ((Yup, LA does outnumber Berkeley or Balto fandom, but it's not really a question of how many fans or fanzines each has, but the attitudes and opinions, etc. in fmz which influence fandom. You can hardly say PSI-PHI, QUIXOTIC, or EQUATION influence the fannish scene very much, if only because they're new publications. I think Bob meant "dominating" in the sense of drawing comment, news and other material first; not sheer weight of numbers.-gb))

By the way, Greg, as I peruse the letters here I see more comments on the loss of quality and personality since Ted took over. I'd like to see for myself, so if you have some spare copies of earlier issues of VOID, I'd like to have some. If you demand money, I'll even go so far as to pay for them. ((Copies of early VOIDS are available from the publisher for 15¢ each.-gb)) ¶no address on letter

ARCHIE MERCER: First--the serial, which I didn't read till I had it complete. It's a well-enough written piece and like that, but it's entirely the "straight-forward" type story, in which characters are postulated, they react according to type, and the story ends without anybody getting anywhere in particular. This is essentially a mundane type of story, and I don't get anything in particular out of reading them. Perhaps I haven't delineated the category very well there, but the main thing to my mind is that the events written about were not worth writing about. Too entirely ordinary for words, like.

I've tried to judge the thing dispassionately, apart from the writer, but there's another point. In view of the circumstances, I think it should have been run under a pseudonym. Brandon, perhaps. In fact, it mightn't have been a bad idea if the writer's identity was never revealed. Because surely nobody who's heard the fannish news could possibly read a Moomaw story entirely disinterestedly as for instance one could read a Benford story, or a White story, or a Mercer story. [434/4 Newark Rd., N. Hykeham, Lincoln, Eng.]

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Next issue will have a comprehensive review of AS- TOUNDING, plus just about anything else which comes in (which we like, of course...you know that). And letters. Try us with one. VOID 19 will be out around the end of July, still proudly sticking to a monthly schedule.

TERRY CARR FOR TAFF

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